



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol LXXXI No 018 1 OCTOBER 2024 - Meskerem 21, 2017

Tuesday

Price Birr 10.00



Ethiopia's triple UNWTO awards for eco-tourism excellence

BY YESUF ENDRIS

Ethiopia's tourism sector has seen consecutive global recognition in recent years, with destinations in the country being consistently named among the world's best eco-tourism sites by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). In 2021 and 2022, Wonchi and Choke Mountain's Eco Villages were honored as top eco-tourism villages. In 2023, the Lepis ecotourism village in the Oromia State received the same recognition,

making Ethiopia the recipient of UNWTO honors for three consecutive years.

During this year's World Tourism Day, celebrated at the iconic Entoto Park, the Ministry of Tourism reaffirmed its vision to position Ethiopia as a leading global tourism destination. Tourism Minister Nasise Chale highlighted the significance of Ethiopia's UNESCO-registered heritage sites and cultural festivals like Meskel and Irreechaa, particularly during September, which she

dubbed "the month of tourism" in Ethiopia. These events are major draws for international tourists and key to the country's tourism strategy.

Ethiopia's appeal extends beyond its cultural heritage, with a growing interest in outdoor activities such as hiking, especially among the youth. The increasing number of parks and hiking destinations promises to offer even more opportunities for visitors in the future.

See Ethiopia's triple ... page 3

Ethiopia insists Egypt to ratify CFA on Abbay River

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia, in the UN General Assembly, has encouraged Egypt to ratify the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) on the Nile River that would return the country to peaceful conduct of its relations with the riparian states.

Ethiopia also urged the downstream country to choose the path of negotiation and international law as well as reorient its colonial-based policy on the Abay (Nile River).

Ethiopian Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, delivered his country's first right of reply to the unfounded accusation of Egypt against Ethiopia in its policy statement at the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA79.)

The diplomat emphasized the importance of regional cooperation and development in managing the shared water resource.



Amb. Yosef Kassaye

Egypt is thus encouraged to ratify the CFA and play a constructive role in regional development, Ambassador Yoseph Kassaye stated.

"Egypt has the golden opportunity to return to peaceful conduct of its relations with the Nile River riparian states. Egypt is thus encouraged to ratify the CFA and play a constructive role in regional development," he underlined.

Following his remarks in response to Egypt's earlier statement, the Ambassador characterized it as a "categorical rejection of our efforts to ensure dignified life to our people."

Amb. Yosef reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to the principles of equitable and reasonable utilization of the Nile's waters, emphasizing the country's right to use its natural resources for the benefit of its people.

"Ethiopia recognizes the river Nile is a transboundary water resource that must be used by all riparian countries based on the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization," he said.

He further added that transboundary resources are also best managed based on basin-wide

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Ethiopia's Nat'l Dialogue: A path to enduring peace

BY HAILE DEMEKE

Over the past few years, Ethiopia has faced significant internal and external challenges that have threatened its sovereignty. In response, the country has embarked on a historic effort to resolve deep-rooted conflicts through an inclusive National Dialogue,

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Ethiopia condemns heinous terrorist attack in Mogadishu, Somalia

ADDIS ABABA- Foreign Affairs Ministry of Ethiopia (MoFA) has condemned the heinous terrorist attack in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Foreign Affairs Ministry of Ethiopia has condemned the heinous terrorist attack and conveyed its condolences to the family of the deceased.

Ethiopia reiterates its commitment to stand in solidarity with the people of Somalia in their fight against terrorism, the statement issued by the ministry added.

News

State identifies over 389 tourist destination caves

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA:- The Oromia state said that it has identified over 389 tourist destinations caves based on research, said State Tourism Commission.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) Commission Tourism Development and Promotion Director Fantahun Tadesse said that there are several manmade and natural tourist destinations within a state. It has been working on boosting economic benefit of tourism by effectively promoting and developing state's tourism potentials.

As a result, it has identified over 389 tourist destination caves based on or undertaking research. It has been fulfilling caves map and master plan as well as infrastructure to enable tourists to visit these caves, he said.



State government has been exerting efforts to fulfill residents' infrastructure quests at all levels particularly to overcome infrastructures problems in tourist destination areas in a bid

boost tourism revenue in the state, he added.

Nasioll Cave is among which identified by research. It has been working on putting in place road, water, electricity, guest houses

and reception infrastructure in this area. The wide ranges of activities are underway to develop and promote the area to make tourist destination in collaboration with East Hararge zone, he noted.

Hence, these activities would be completed near future. In addition to this, it would create a special opportunity for local and international tourists to visit other caves, birds, forests, wild animals and others who come to visit this cave, he underscored.

The state has been undertaking various measures to make state tourism sector competitive by creating jobs, facilitating environment protection, adapting science and latest technologies.

He indicated that developing and making state's tourism potentials effective requires the participation of all segments of the communities.

Manufacturing sees significant growth under 'Let Ethiopia Produce': DPM

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA:- Ethiopia has made significant strides under the "Let Ethiopia Produce" initiative, bolstering the manufacturing sector and promoting export trade, according to Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Temesgen Tirunch.

Speaking at a recent event honoring prominent investors, Temesgen emphasized the country's achievements in manufacturing despite facing internal and external pressures in recent years. He acknowledged that Ethiopia had turned these challenges into opportunities through proactive policies and initiatives.

The Deputy Premier noted that the "Let Ethiopia Produce" initiative has been instrumental in enhancing multi-sectoral competitiveness, promoting import substitution, boosting export trade, and creating decent jobs for many citizens across the country.

He reaffirmed the government's ongoing support for the manufacturing sector as a critical driver of economic growth and underscored the importance of continuing efforts through initiatives like "Let Ethiopia

Produce, Consume, and Export." He stressed that while achievements are commendable, there should be no complacency, and the nation must confront future challenges with resilience to accelerate socioeconomic development and reach its prosperity goals.

Awardees at the event echoed similar sentiments. Belayneh Kindie, a recognized investor, stated that the award motivates further efforts in the manufacturing sector, which is the top driver of Ethiopia's economy. He also noted that the recognition strengthens the connection between the government and manufacturers, aiding in export promotion and quality production.

Belayneh added that the manufacturing sector contributes significantly to income tax collection, boosts income generation through processed goods, and supports import substitution.

Seid Damtew, another awardee, expressed that the national recognition fuels his commitment to the manufacturing industry, which he considers the backbone of Ethiopia's economy. He called for more government support to foster knowledge transfer and



economic development through private sector investment.

Feleke Bekele, also recognized for his contributions, lauded the platform for fostering enthusiasm among stakeholders in addressing pressing issues within the sector. He urged the government to address challenges, particularly in providing incentives, enabling a favorable financial environment, and offering other packages to support investor participation.

Ethiopia's manufacturing sector continues to play a pivotal role in the country's journey toward economic resilience and growth.

The 'Let Ethiopia Produce' initiative is a government-led program aimed at promoting industrialization and economic development in the country. It encourages domestic production of goods and services, reduces reliance on imports, and promotes exports.

Ethiopia unveils nationwide smart city initiative

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Urban and Development has unveiled a comprehensive smart city initiative to transform 275 towns across the country into smart cities by 2024/2025.

The initiative, which aims to modernize urban services and improve living standards, is part of a broader effort to enhance Ethiopia's urban development.

Approached by local media, Urban and Development State Minister Fenta Dejen stated that the plan outlines a phased approach, starting with 31 cities in 2023/2024, including the capital Addis Ababa. This initial phase will serve as a model for the large-scale rollout that aims to transform a staggering 2,500 towns into smart cities by 2026.

According to Fenta, Key components of the smart city concept include modernizing office services, providing accessible and fast services, and implementing e-services.



The ministry has already begun working on smart city projects in six cities: Addis Ababa, Adama, Bishoftu, Debre Birhan, Dessie, Jimma, Hawassa, and Bahir Dar.

To ensure the successful implementation of the initiative, the ministry is collaborating with

foreign nations and learning from international best practices. It is also developing training materials, standards, and regulations to support selected cities in implementing their smart city plans, the state minister elaborated. The ministry's vision for smart cities extends

beyond technology. It includes improving living standards for city residents, enhancing public transportation, and creating clean and green environments. By investing in infrastructure projects such as corridor development and green spaces, the ministry aims to make cities more livable and sustainable.

While the journey to becoming a smart city is complex, several Ethiopian cities, including Hawassa, Adama, and Bishoftu, are already making significant strides. By embracing technology and focusing on sustainable development, these cities are paving the way for a brighter future for Ethiopia's urban population, Fenta remarked.

The initiative holds immense potential for Ethiopia's urban landscape. By embracing smart technology and prioritizing sustainable development, it aims to create a more vibrant, efficient, and livable future for millions of Ethiopians.

News

USAID promises to continue support in Ethiopia

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDISABABA—The government of the U.S. and its people will strengthen the necessary support to Ethiopia, The U.S. Embassy has disclosed

Embassy organized Ethiopian Support Program Closing Event (ESP) yesterday aiming at briefing the past five year's achievement in Ethiopia, especially areas in promoting dialogue and peaceful resolution.

At the closing event, the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ervin Massinga said that the necessary support from USAID will be continuing to Ethiopia in the upcoming years.

As to the Ambassador, USAID has been playing a significant role in addressing conflict-related trauma, humanitarian accesses, peaceful and constructive dialogues during the past years. Besides, over 1,000,000 people have been benefited and a number of schools constructed in the conflict affected areas. As a result, students are back to the school who were dropped out due to the conflicts.



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He further stated that providing the relevant support to Ethiopia is not just practice, rather it is a way of life. The U.S. has been supported the conflict-ridden areas to address communities who exposed to difficult situation due to war, natural disaster, and related issues.

Massinga added that a numbers of Ethiopian-local partners were engaged in psychosocial treatment to the aforementioned areas and now people are coming up to normal situation in some areas. To increase community development and peaceful resolution as well as true dialogue in Ethiopia, the U.S. will

continue its support in the years to come.

ESP Senior Program Advisor, Lidya Getahun on her part said "ESP has lasted for five years and it was possible to work with 174 partners. By opening offices in the Amhara, Oromia and Tigray states, it has worked together with indigenous organizations working to empower women and youth."

As to her, alongside with Addis Ababa, especially in the areas where the conflict took place, renovation work was done on libraries, youth centers and other social service facilities

assisted by the USAID. She also said that 375 activities have been done in various areas of the country to address communities challenge in the past over five years. For instance, libraries have been renovated in Ambo and Nekmet in Ormoia State and Mekelle in Tigray State in the above-listed years.

Panelists from Amhara and Tigray States and other relevant bodies in attendance and discussed the past five years activities and the future cooperation to address communities various challenges in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's triple UNWTO awards...

The government is committed to expanding the number of parks and hiking destinations to enhance the country's tourism offerings, the Minister noted.

Tourism State Minister SileshiGirma emphasized the progress made in developing new infrastructure, including resorts and hotels, to support sustainable tourism. Ethiopia was also named the "Tourism Champion of the IGAD Region" this year, further cementing its status as a regional tourism leader. The country's strategy aligns tourism development with global sustainability standards, promoting environmental protection and community involvement.

A standout achievement in 2023 was the recognition of Lepis Ecotourism Village, located near ArsiNegele in Oromia, as one of the world's best tourism villages by the UNWTO in its General Assembly held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Lepis was praised for promoting rural development and preserving natural beauty, cultural diversity, and local traditions. Its attractions include horse trekking, scenic forests, mountain ranges, rivers, waterfalls, and bird-watching

spots. The success of Lepisunderscores the potential of community-based tourism initiatives to protect landscapes and empower local communities.

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili commended Lepis for fostering local participation and inclusivity, key aspects of Ethiopia's eco-tourism development. The government's focus on sustainable and culturally rich tourism sites is positioning the sector as a critical pillar of Ethiopia's economic growth.

The continued international recognition of Ethiopia's tourism villages and the government's commitment to developing eco-friendly and culturally rich tourism sites are positioning the sector as a key pillar in the country's economic growth strategy. As the tourism infrastructure improves, the government is also expecting more destinations to be unveiled, and to attract greater global attention. Ethiopia, as a country having unique blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and sustainable practices, the tourism sector is highly anticipated to become a leading contributor to national revenue and job creation.

Ethiopia insists Egypt to ratify...

arrangements agreed to by riparian countries.

The diplomat highlighted the paradox in the Nile Basin, noting that Ethiopia, an upper riparian country that contributes 85 percent of the flow to the Nile, and the other eight source countries seek cooperation based on international law.

Meanwhile, "Egypt, the lower riparian country that contributes no flow to the resource, relentlessly works against cooperation and undermines international principles," he underlined.

Amb. Yosef called on Egypt to abandon what he termed as "colonial-based policy on the Nile" and instead work on integrated development on the basis of equity.

Stressing Ethiopia's development efforts, including the Abbay Dam, the Ambassador noted that those are crucial for alleviating poverty and bringing light to millions of Ethiopians deprived of such basic necessity.

"It is bringing integration to our region through energy, trade and connectivity," the ambassador said, referring to the Abbay Dam project.

"It (Egypt) advocates for monopoly based on colonial-era arrangements, seeks a veto over the water development efforts of the countries

that originate the water," he said.

Yosef reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to continue pursuing its development on the river Abay on the basis of equitable and reasonable utilization of the resource.

"It is our hope, through time, Egypt will reorient its colonial-based policy on the Nile and work on integrated development on the basis of equity," he said.

More importantly, the old playbook that seeks to secure unfettered flow of the Nile by preoccupying the source countries with conflict and insurgencies will not work, he underscored.

On this basis, "Ethiopia calls on Egypt to immediately stop its destabilization efforts in the whole of Africa", he elaborated.

The ambassador concluded his speech with a call for negotiation and adherence to international law: "Time to negotiate and find a win-win solution is now. We urge Egypt to choose the path of negotiation and the path of international law."

The coming months will be critical in determining whether Egypt heeds this call for collaboration and joins the CFA, potentially ushering in a new era of regional cooperation in the Nile Basin.

Ethiopia's Nat'l Dialogue: A path

starting at the grassroots level and progressing steadily since its inception.

These challenges, which put the nation's sovereignty at risk, prompted the establishment of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC). The commission was created to address widespread internal conflicts and crises that have plagued various segments of society, with the ultimate goal of fostering long-lasting peace and stability while healing historical divisions.

Architect Yohannes Mekonnen, a lecturer at Addis Ababa University and Deputy Leader of the Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice Party (EZEMA), highlighted the commission's role as a vital link between the government

and grassroots communities. He emphasized that the ENDC is instrumental in promoting harmony among citizens and addressing problems at their root. "The commission acts as a social contract between the government and society, ensuring that grassroots issues are resolved before they escalate," he noted.

Yohannes also pointed out that many nations around the world have implemented national dialogues to resolve internal conflicts and prevent state collapse. He stressed that while National Dialogue is key to peace, it requires careful implementation, as it can either lead to stability or further crisis. Ethiopia's National Dialogue is seen as a crucial step toward lasting peace and stability.

Government Chief Whip in the House of People's Representatives Tesfaye Beljige echoed these sentiments, noting that nation-building is a continuous process that spans generations and requires collective effort. "Dialogue is the only path to harmony and lasting peace. Every peace-loving Ethiopian must play their part in this process," Tesfaye said. He also acknowledged that while some anti-peace groups may attempt to derail the dialogue, Ethiopia's long history of cultural co-existence will serve as a foundation for its success. Also, this historical foundation can serve as a catalyst for success in the ongoing national dialogue.

Political researcher Mulgeta Debebe (PhD) added that dialogue is preferable to conflict,

stating, "It is better to spend ten years on dialogue than a single day at war." He urged Ethiopians to learn from past crises and embrace the National Dialogue as a means to transform the country towards peace and prosperity.

As the National Dialogue progresses, it is hoped that this inclusive approach will pave the way for a more unified and peaceful Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's National Dialogue is a significant initiative aimed at fostering national unity, reconciliation, and democratic governance. The dialogue seeks to address the country's past challenges, promote inclusivity, and build a shared vision for the future.

Opinion

International Organization for Mediation: Global history in the making

BY MELAKU MULUALEM K.

Nowadays, there are a lot of inter-state and intra-state violent conflicts and wars that can jeopardize the peace and security of the world. The world has passed through two deadly World Wars that affected almost all nations in the world in one way or another. The United Nations Organization was established in 1945 to avoid a third world war and maintain peace and security.

The United Nations has crafted various dispute settlement mechanisms to avert another world war. According to Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement..."

To implement these dispute settlement methods, various international organizations are established. The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Similarly, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) is an intergovernmental organization to solve disputes through arbitration. The PCA provides services for resolving disputes involving states, intergovernmental organizations, and private parties.

However, so far there is no established intergovernmental organization for mediation method of dispute settlement. This gap is identified by China which takes the initiative in 2022 to establish the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed). Mediation, which combines both legal and diplomatic methods, helps to resolve disputes between states through equal-footed constructive dialogue, trust and consultation.

Mediation is not new to many cultures in the world. Especially the role of elders in mediation activities is significant. But this experience is not yet elevated to the international level of mediation to solve violent conflicts of states through established international organization. Mediation helps to resolve a wide range of disputes such as border conflicts, trans-boundary resource conflicts, diplomatic conflicts, commercial disputes, and the like.

The initiative of China aligns with the Charter and basic principles of the United Nations Organizations. For the last two years, China has organized four major sessions to discuss with various governments so as to establish an intergovernmental organization that works on mediation. About nineteen developing governments have supported this innovative idea of establishing mediation organization. Ten of them are from African countries. At the end of the sessions, these countries developed a

Joint Statement. Based on the statement, the Preparatory Office was established in 2023 in Hong Kong. The main objective of the office was to coordinate, promote, and prepare draft convention and related instruments of IOMed. Hence, the office has prepared a draft convention of IOMed.

The last session was held in Ethiopia on 24 September 2024 in which Ambassadors of African countries, representatives from the African Union, and other international organizations presented. Ethiopia, which is actively working on the establishment of the organization, is the co-organizer of the session. These sessions helped other countries to discuss the establishment of the organization. In the last session, a lot of ideas have also been ventilated. The fifth session will be held in Hong Kong, China.

The draft convention has incorporated a preamble, establishment clause, government council, secretariat, panel of mediation, scope of cases, procedures, settlement agreements, capacity building, financing, privileges and immunity, and final clause. The convention of IOMed is translated into English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian languages. All versions are equal to be used by members. According to the draft convention, the Headquarters of the organization will be in Hong Kong, China. There will be a signing ceremony for the convention in Hong Kong and IOMed will start executing its mandate by 2025.

The mediation method is quite different from litigation. In mediation, parties are encouraged to negotiate based on interests than potions. In the case of court (ICJ) and Arbitration (PCA) parties to the dispute will present their files and conduct arguments, but they do not know what will be the outcome or decisions to be given by judges or arbitrators. Moreover, in the case of ICJ and PCA, there will be a winner and loser of the decision i.e. zero-sum game. Because of such negative impacts of litigation, there is a growing demand for mediation in the international communities. Mediation transcends the drawbacks of arbitration and court methods of dispute settlement.

In the case of mediation (IOMed), however, both sides of the disputed parties will sign on what is agreeable to them i.e. the outcome will be a "Win-Win". In the first two decisions (ICJ and PCA), parties can be relapsed into violent conflicts and wars. But in the case of IOMed, there is little possibility of a return to disputes. According to various sources, the possibility of getting a satisfactory solution from mediation is more than 80%. The outcome of mediation will bring satisfaction to parties in conflict. This is to mean that parties can choose their destiny in the mediation. Mediation doesn't simply solve the immediate problem. Since it is not an adversarial method, it reduces the stresses of parties in conflict. It also helps

the preservation of good relationships of parties.

International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) can also fill the gap of global governance injustice which is dominated by the Western countries. Even if there are many international criminal activities in the world to be investigated, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is being criticized for putting pressure on Africa and other least-developed countries. IOMed can mitigate such unnecessary pressure from global governance injustices.

IOMed has a lot of significant importance to maintain peace and security in the world. To begin with, it is one of the instruments of peace-making in the world. It also upholds international order and works based on the basic principles of the United Nations. It can also amplify the voices of countries in the Global South. Moreover, it can serve as a valuable complement to existing international dispute resolution mechanisms.

IOMed doesn't aim to replace the current conflict resolution mechanisms; instead, it will enrich it. IOMed gives priority to harmony, equality, justice, and respect. It is flexible, cost-effective, voluntary, and confidential, far from prejudice, preserves relationships of parties, and is convenient.

Even if China took the initiative, the organization belongs to the Global South and nations of the world at large. Membership will be open to all countries of the world. To make this initiative realistic, China will shoulder much of the financial burden at the time of establishment until it gets ample finances from member states and other organizations. Member states will also contribute relatively little money to the organization.

There are various reasons to join IOMed. These include the organization paving the way towards a more peaceful, harmonious and prosperous future, solving disputes through a fair and a "Win-Win" approach rather than a "Win-Lose Or Lose-Lose" approach and establishing sustainable peace and security; the financial burden for members being very minimal; eligibility to be officials of the IOMed secretariat; it will be a good opportunity of participation in the international law-making process; the presence of various capacity building programmes for the staff of the organization; it will also be a platform for sharing experiences and best practices of various countries; it also helps to advance justice and rule of law; it complements international dispute settlement mechanisms; it will give quicker solution than courts; it respects the principle of sovereignty and equality of states and the like.

IOMed is a good opportunity for Africa and the Global South at large. Currently, there are many violent conflicts in Africa. Most of them can be solved through IOMed. Parties to conflicts can get faster solutions to their problems. Through the mediation process, both sides can get common ground that may lead them to

reach voluntary and mutually acceptable agreements. The process of mediation is not as complex as that of international court and arbitration. This makes IOMed convenient for African countries.

In my opinion, some of the mediation can also be conducted through online systems. As long as there are preferences by the parties mediation can be done using state-of-the-art technology. This is because of the flexibility of mediation mechanisms. Such an approach will save time and cost for parties in conflicts.

Litigation is no longer the first option to solve disputes. Resolving problems through court should be the last resort. Before using the option of court, mediation can solve many problems in the world. Hence, mediation can ease the file burdens in international arbitration and the International Court of Justice. This will complement the peace and security activities of the United Nations Organization. If mediation fails to solve the problem of the parties, there will be the option of arbitration and court which are costly, and time-consuming, and the outcome can disappoint one or both parties.

For the mediation process, there should be a third party who is neutral and facilitates negotiations between and among various contending parties. IOMed will have such neutral mediators who can provide proposals by using creative approaches to solve problems. These mediators do not take sides; rather they facilitate the negotiations between parties and also help to get clarification of issues at hand. Impartiality is the heart and soul of IOMed. Its members can designate mediators of their own.

Not all dispute resolution mechanisms are perfect by themselves. Similarly, not all problems can be solved by the mediation method. However, it is possible to say that mediation is one of the best methods to solve violent conflicts of states, and between other entities.

To sum up, IOMed is another prominent action in the world of diplomacy. This convention is open to be signed by governments of the world. It is inclusive to all nations who believe in the establishment of such an important intergovernmental legal organization. Africa and other countries in the Global South should grab this great opportunity to solve their problems. The first signatories of the convention will be the founding members of the IOMed. They will be at the forefront of making global history. Those who join later will get the right of accession to the organization.

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

Editorial

CFA: Landmark cooperation, sustainable development drive

Ratified by the legislatures of Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and South Sudan, the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework of Agreement (CFA) has taken an implementation phase and will be overtaken by the Nile River Basin Commission (NRBC), which is duty bound to lead cooperation and projects of reciprocated importance.

It is not exaggeratedly elucidated that Ethiopia has all the time reiterated its unwavering aspiration for an equitable and reasonable use of water resources for its development endeavors; to mean the country is striving to ensure sustainable development through the effective water utilization. Taking the principal role of energy supply in achieving sustainable development that benefits fellow citizens into account; Ethiopia has so far been committed to meet its energy needs using renewable sources such as hydropower entertaining fair and reasonable fashion.

Unequivocally, Ethiopia has no intention of harming any country, other than running activities to utilize its water resources fairly and responsibly to ensure real progress. The case of the Grand Abbay Dam is an exemplary move along this line. The dam offers substantial benefits to downstream countries beyond Ethiopia as it precludes the farm lands, human and animal lives of some riparian countries from being destroyed. If truth be told, the dam is a potential to serve as a center of cooperation and fraternity. Yes, the development of the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework of Agreement helps pave the way for the vision of communal growth to come into force.

Besides, as mushrooming population growth, droughts, and famines generated ever-greater water needs in the Nile Basin in the era of 21st century, the amplified calls generated by upstream nations for the proliferation of a new legal framework has to be wholeheartedly acknowledged for golden common opportunities. True, the agreement is really a forward-looking concord that can be a viable weapon to emancipate the content in general and riparian nations in particular from poverty and lack of coordination.

The CFA also encourages the notions for benefit sharing within its principle of equitable and reasonable utilization and provides countries with a bundle of benefits. Considering the geography of the Nile Basin, although upstream water utilization does not affect other upstream states, implementing the CFA with the active involvement of Egypt and Sudan would add a momentous value, indeed! Hence, a basin-wide agreement on the Nile Basin has to be accorded so as to govern the interests of both upstream and downstream states regarding the use, allocation and management of the Nile watercourse.

No doubt, CFA presents the best option for institutional basin-wide cooperation. CFA's potential for fostering basin-wide cooperation depends on the inclusion of all Nile Basin States though it is a significant step towards cooperative management of the Nile watercourse. Besides, the impending entry into force of the CFA is no doubt a landmark development for upstream states. Here, ensuring the participation of Egypt and Sudan is of paramount importance in fostering sustainable management of the Nile watercourse.

The good thing is South Sudan's ratification of the agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework (CFA) marks a significant step for Ethiopia's water diplomacy and its proposal for the fair utilization of Nile water. Yes, fair utilization of the Abbay (Nile) water is a milestone that demonstrates Ethiopia is reversing the longstanding hegemonic utilization of the Nile water through diplomacy.

In sum, Ethiopia has been carrying out myriads of tasks over the past years to reach the current level of the agreement on the Nile River, and the diplomatic work carried out by coordinating countries to ensure equitable benefits has been bearing fruits, in fact. Since the primary objective of the CFA is to ensure the long-term and sustainable management and development of the shared Nile waters, all riparian nations have to be for it and foster cooperation to effectively and fairly utilize the vast potential of the Nile water.

Opinion

The Full speech of H.E. Ambassador Teye Atske-Selassie delivered at the 79th session of the UNGA Political Debate

Mr. President,

As a country that was one of the fifty-one founding members of the United Nations, Ethiopia is a strong proponent of effective multilateralism centered on the United Nations. Ethiopia views with grave concern the challenges the United Nations faces in discharging its role in peace and security, and socio-economic development.

Nevertheless, ensuring readiness and capability of the United Nations to resolve global challenges has been a generational quest. Five years into the establishment of the United Nations, in the year 1950, Ethiopia in its policy statement stated to this august Assembly, "we are filled with anxiety concerning the surprises which the future may hold in store, fears that the United Nations may be called upon to face events even more serious than those of the present time and that such problems may greatly exceed its powers and capacity."

That future is now! We are faced with persisting peace and security challenges across the globe. There is a devastating existential threat emanating from arms race, extreme poverty, inequality, and climate change. At the same time, global commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals is receding and the debt crisis in developing countries is worsening. Furthermore, our constrained ability to manage the emerging multi-polar world carries the risk of undermining multilateralism.

As envisaged, the United Nations is called upon to face challenges that are proving to exceed its powers and capacities. It is our view that collective security will be realized if states are able to exercise their authority and carry out their responsibilities to safeguard their national security. The conventional dictates, including peacekeeping missions, can deliver the desired results when we prioritize support for national efforts and capabilities. We must therefore, at all times preserve the sovereignty and political independence of states as the foundation for effective collective security. We also call for greater economic and security cooperation among member states, which is pivotal to empowering national institutions.

The shortcomings of the United Nations reflect the reluctance on the part of the international community to promote the effective realization of the principles and purposes of the Charter. The United Nations should be at the center of efforts to resolve global peace and security challenges. Without a substantial role of the United Nations guided by the principles of the Charter, we risk making the General Assembly a non-consequential platform with no guarantee for a meaningful contribution to global peace and security. On its part, the United Nations should play its role by demonstrating impartiality, independence, competence, and credibility among all its members.

Furthermore, we underscore the urgency

to reform the United Nations Security Council and its working methods. The reform of the Security Council is not only about rectifying the injustice done to Africa but also about the credibility of the Council itself. The impacts of Africa's exclusion and the Security Council's inability to discharge its cardinal responsibilities manifest in its disproportionate focus on the internal affairs of African countries. In addition, the Council's lukewarm attitude towards regional solutions; and the implementation of measures detached from reality on the ground are results of Africa's non representation. We, therefore, call on member states to commit to prioritizing Africa's representation in both categories of membership of the UN Security Council with all the rights and prerogatives as articulated under Africa's common position. There is no shortcut or half solution to this longstanding quest for equality.

Mr. President,

The African Union has designed Agenda 2063 as a blue print for the continent's development. The agenda is being implemented in synchronization with the UN Agenda 2030. The fact that the SDGs are off-track mostly due to lack of financing is a source of concern for Africa. The compounding debt crisis also requires urgent and sustainable solution. Therefore, those member states with impact on global financial institutions should make the necessary financial resources available.

On its part, Ethiopia has been consistent in its efforts to achieve these development goals. In parallel with resolving a complex security challenge through an African Union-facilitated peace process, Ethiopia has redoubled its efforts to forge peace and development. We are making progress in poverty eradication and realizing people centered development. We introduced transformational shifts to our monetary and economic policies and to advance our digital infrastructure.

We are confident our development path will bring about great benefits to our people. We call on all actors in development finance to work with us with a sense of solidarity and cooperation to navigate the challenges of reform and attain sustainable economic growth and development.

Mr. President,

I have the distinct pleasure to announce to this Assembly the milestone the Nile River Basin has achieved this year. The Cooperative Framework Agreement of the Nile River Basin (CFA) is poised to enter into force with the required number of ratifications. The entry into force of this first-ever Nile River Basin-wide treaty - the Cooperative Framework Agreement - will pave the way for sustained cooperation and shared growth across the entire river basin.

See The full ... page 17

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

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Advertisement and Dist.

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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Impact of macroeconomic reforms on reviving manufacturing sector, drawing in investments

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is worth mentioning that the newly implemented macroeconomic reform measures have kicked off addressing economic encounters such as foreign exchange crises, surges in prices, debt management sustainability, and more of the same. In the present circumstances, the reform has been yielding results within the bounds of alleviating inflation and other things of a similar kind at the earliest possible time.

As the country has been putting in place a broad range of effective strategies that can take the country's economy to new heights, scores of cheerful trajectories have been witnessed in the length and breadth of the country.

When the federal government of Ethiopia plunged into effectuating the macroeconomic reform policy, some naysayers over and over again had been dragging through the mud the positive developments of the policy. They left no stone unturned to besmirch this breakthrough initiative. However, through the passage of time, the reform jumpstarted producing results and coming to fruition, proving the wet blankets wrong.

It is highly believed that if stockholders in the approved manner make use of macroeconomic prospects, the economic reform actions would highly breathe new life into the efficiency of the manufacturing industry.

Apart from creating a stable macroeconomic approach, consolidating the involvement of private sector and other things of a similar kind, the reform plays a paramount role in providing a unique opportunity to the manufacturing sector. Other than that the procedure would give the green light to address foreign exchange distortions, balance trade, and tackle inflation and others.

In the same manner, Ethiopia's macroeconomic reform is a crucial step in uncovering new business opportunities for the nation by attracting both national and international financiers.

The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) Governor, Mamo Miheretu said that the undertaken economic reform measures would highly contribute to the effectiveness of manufacturing industry if investors properly utilize macroeconomic opportunities, according to information obtained from local media.

The measures would offer unique benefit to manufacturing sector. Mainly the foreign exchange floating would highly benefit in improving and strengthening the involvement of private sector creating a stable macroeconomic approach.

The reforms would support to develop competitive manufacturing sector to deliver positive economic outcome. They would enable to create more jobs, register promising performance and others, he added.

Furthermore, the action would enable to correct foreign exchange distortions, balance trade, and reduce inflation and



others. Mentioning the measures are golden opportunities for private sector, especially for manufacturing industry to create sustainable jobs, resolve foreign exchange shortage, and expand investment, Mamo urged the private sector to galvanize their energy and utilize these opportunities.

Currently, investors can repatriate their 100% of income, dividend and other export earnings. This would enable investors to focus on their tasks, he added.

According to the Governor, the banking sector has been shifting, offering almost its generated resources or deposits to private sector creditors, which are basically intended to address manufacturing sector challenges in order to increase production and productivity and import substitution.

It is abundantly clear that the macroeconomic reform has been playing a paramount role in expediting the country's sustainable growth. As the intended target of the macroeconomic reform policy cannot be achieved at the earliest possible time, everyone should stand by the side of the federal government.

In the same way, the reform serves as a stepping stone to finance, improve competitiveness, fashion new market opportunities and abolish trade barricades and whatnot.

Although the reimbursements may take time to fully put in place, the reform steps as an exhilarating view for Ethiopia's business community and foreign direct investments. If the whole thing keeps going in the same path, investors from various parts of the world will invest in Ethiopia at the earliest possible time.

The comprehensive economic reform of Ethiopia will create an enabling environment for investment in the financial sector in the country, VISA Company Country Manager Yared Endale said. The country manager recently told ENA that the economic reform would encourage foreign investors to invest in the financial markets of Ethiopia.

The reform creates more confidence for foreign investors to be able to come and operate in the market and increase the volume of foreign currency flow to the country, he added. Above all, Yared noted that it transforms the landscape of the financial sector in Ethiopia.

"The opening up of the market and the foreign direct investment is really

encouraging a lot of investors outside of the country to be able to have more confidence to come and operate in the market." According to him, all this transformation is really changing the landscape of the financial sector in Ethiopia.

Moreover, the country manager explained that the economic reform would further bring opportunities for domestic banks and financial institutions to grow their technological capabilities as the opening up of the market inspires and attracts foreign competitors who come with a lot of experience to invest in Ethiopia.

"Now the market is opening up. The competitors are coming with a lot of experiences which create opportunity for our banks to grow their technological capabilities. This will really increase the appetite for the banks to be able to transform," Yared said.

The macroeconomic reform policy functions as a pivotal step towards the country's economic transformation. As a matter of fact, this landmark deal has become instrumental in advancing essential macroeconomic and microeconomic reforms in Ethiopia.

Apart from playing a paramount role in expediting essential reforms in Ethiopia, the intended purposes have got underway augmenting the business environment. It is expected that the macroeconomic reform policy will end up stabilizing the country's economy in the course of time.

Ethiopia's full implementation of macroeconomic reforms has significantly enhanced the country's trading system, providing a more favorable environment for businesses, Democratic System Building Coordination Center Head with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister, Adem Farah remarked, according to information obtained from local media.

Speaking at the official inauguration of the Ethiopian Export Trade Exhibition Center recently, Adem emphasized the positive impact of the reforms on the business community. The government is committed to practical and sustainable export trade reforms, especially to expand its base, promote and create conducive environment in the sector, he reassured.

"The full implementation of macroeconomic reform has created a favorable trading environment that addresses the needs of

businesses," Adem stated.

Therefore, he urged businesses to capitalize on these favorable conditions to expand their operations, increase competitiveness, and contribute to Ethiopia's sustainable economic growth.

Creating reformed and favorable trading condition is a major strategic goal of the Home Grown Economic Reform policy and the national 10-year development plan, he noted.

For favorable trade environment and sustainable growth, improving infrastructures and connection, revising law frameworks, facilitating bureaucracies, reducing barriers, and introducing effective administration are strategic directions of development.

The government, among others, expects major strategic results, including competitive domestic market, swift supply and trade chain that enable to assist interactions of customers and producers, improving export competition and performance from the trade reform measures.

Besides facilitating economic stability and enhanced growth, the recent macroeconomic reform would bring meaningful impact in addressing private sector challenges, Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association (AACCSA) disclosed.

It is recalled that AACCSA organized a half day discussion forum recently in collaboration with Ethiopian Coffee Association under the theme: "The impacts of the major revision of a country's foreign exchange system on the national economy."

In her opening remark, AACCSA's President Mesenbet Shenkute said that the recent macroeconomic reform would help to reduce foreign currency crunch, increase investment and encourage export among others.

As to the president, the private sector has been facing foreign currency shortages and loan accesses in the past over many years.

She added that the sector has been playing an indispensable role in creating jobs, boosting production and productivity and maximizing revenues, while challenges related to infrastructure gaps, inflation, and others have hindered the sector's competitiveness at the international level.

However, the recent macroeconomic reform, mainly the implementation of floating foreign exchange rates, will address the aforementioned challenges.

As macroeconomic reform has been proceeding in the right direction, everyone should work in close collaboration with the federal government for its successful implementation.

All and sundry should do everything they can to give the cold shoulder to worrywarts that have an intense aversion to Ethiopia's development. As nothing makes them happier than dragging through the mire Ethiopia's promising developments, they have sustained coming up with barefaced lies that do not reflect the tangible existence on the ground.

In the Sphere of Diplomacy

A sharp opposition against hawkish forces in the Horn

BY EYUEL KIFLU

The 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in New York from September 10 to 28, 2024, provided a platform for leaders and high-ranking officials from around the world to articulate their countries' interests and positions on pressing global issues. Among the various representatives, those from the Horn of Africa took the stage to address significant national concerns, reflecting the region's complex geopolitical landscape.

One of the most striking speeches came from Somalia's Prime Minister, Hamza Abdi Barre. In his address to the assembly, he accused Ethiopia of neglecting Somalia's needs, despite the historical support Ethiopia has provided to the Somali people. This accusation raised eyebrows, as it seemed to suggest that Somalia was "biting the hand that feeds it," undermining the collective efforts of countries that have sacrificed for Somalia's peace and security.

Moreover, Somalia's emerging alliance with Egypt, a relationship that has sparked fears of potential destabilization in the region. Observers suggest that Cairo is attempting to use Mogadishu as a pawn in its ongoing efforts to exert influence over Ethiopia, particularly regarding the contentious Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This strategic partnership raises concerns that it could exacerbate existing tensions and lead to further discord in the fragile Horn of Africa.

The Ethiopian government has voiced its worries multiple times regarding Somalia's collaboration with Egypt. Ethiopian officials argue that such alliances threaten the delicate stability of Somalia and the broader region. Compounding these worries are reports suggesting that military supplies from Egypt intended for Somali forces could fall into the hands of extremist groups like Al-Shabaab, which continues to pose a significant threat to security in Somalia and its neighbors. The potential for arms to inadvertently empower terrorists has raised alarm bells among those invested in the region's stability.

Moreover, there is significant opposition within Somalia to the government's growing ties with Egypt. Many Somalis believe that this relationship undermines the contributions made by Ethiopia and other neighboring countries that have played a vital role in Somalia's recovery and stabilization. This internal dissent reflects a broader debate within Somalia about the future direction of its foreign policy and the implications of aligning with Egypt, a nation often viewed as a rival to Ethiopia.

During the General Assembly, Ethiopia reiterated its concerns over these developments, calling for collaborative regional strategies to address shared challenges, including terrorism, the urgency

of UN reform, humanitarian crises, and others. Ethiopian representatives urged for dialogue and mutual understanding rather than divisive alliances that could lead to further conflicts.

Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs Minister, Taye Atske Selassie, on the 79th session of UNGA called upon the actors to immediately stop their reckless actions in the Horn of Africa and urged the international community to recognize the imminent risk originating from this irresponsible act.

He stated that the recent maneuvers of actors from outside the Horn of Africa region would undermine the hard-won war against terrorism. "We therefore call upon these actors to immediately stop their reckless actions. We also call on the international community to recognize the imminent risk originating from this irresponsible act and to take concrete measures to prevent the loss of hard-won gains in combating terrorism in the Horn of Africa."

Explaining the recent security situation across the Red Sea region and Indian Ocean, FM Taye said we see a great need to chart a new path for inclusive maritime security engagement with equal participation of countries.

Furthermore, terrorism continues to be a grave threat to the peace and security of the Horn of Africa, he pointed out. The Foreign Minister elaborated that the growing rise of violent extremism like Al Shabaab and its international and internal affiliates have continued their vicious attack against civilians and security of the region.

He recalled that the East African region has reached a milestone in degrading terrorism through the resilience of the people of Somalia and the sacrifice of the sons and daughters of Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda and his country, Ethiopia.

The authorization of the Security Council and the International Finance for the African Union peace Support operation has indeed played an instrumental role, he pointed out. In this regard, the Minister urges Somalia's offices to recognize the tremendous sacrifices that have been made.

"I'm confident the government of Somalia will soon reckon with and recognize the sacrifice we made to Somalis liberation from the grip of terrorist groups." Mentioning Ethiopia's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Somaliland, Taye revealed that it is based on existing political dispensation in Somalia.

"Our objective is shared growth and prosperity in the region. Similar agreements have been concluded by other states, and there is no reason for the government of Somalia to incite hostility that obviously intends to cover internal political tensions."

The Foreign Minister also rejected the unfounded allegation levied against his

country. "Ethiopia's name can never be associated with any one of the allegations. I rather call on the federal government of Somalia to join hands to eliminate terrorist groups that are causing chaos and mayhem on the people of the region."

The recent maneuvers of actors from outside the Horn of Africa region undermine these efforts, according to him. Nevertheless, Taye underscored that Ethiopia will not be deterred from its resolute commitment to combating terrorism. And finally, the Minister reiterated Ethiopia's commitment for the maintenance of global peace and security, and upholding multilateralism.

Also, the minister met with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and discussed the current situation in the Horn of Africa (HoA), according to Foreign Affairs Ministry.

In their discussion, the two sides underlined the need for de-escalating tension in the region to ensure peace and security.

During the assembly, Ethiopia reiterated its position on the Nile River, utilizing its First Right of Reply to respond to Egypt's statement. The Ethiopian representative asserted that Egypt's stance contradicts the universally accepted principle of permanent sovereignty of states over their natural resources and their right to use them for the benefit of their people.

The representative emphasized that the dam is providing electricity to millions of Ethiopians who have been deprived of this basic necessity and is fostering regional integration through energy trade and connectivity. He highlighted the dam's importance for millions of Ethiopians and acknowledged that the Nile River is a transboundary water resource that should be used by all riparian countries based on equitable and reasonable utilization.

However, he criticized Egypt for not contributing to the Nile's flow while relentlessly opposing international principles, advocating for a monopoly based on colonial-era agreements, and seeking a veto over water development efforts by upstream countries. He expressed hope that Egypt would eventually reorient its colonial-based policy on the Nile and work towards integrated development based on equity.

The representative called on Egypt to cease its destabilization efforts in the Horn of Africa and urged Cairo to choose negotiation and international law as paths to a win-win solution. He noted that the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) on the Nile River will enter into force on October 13, 2024, presenting Egypt with a golden opportunity to return to peaceful relations with Nile riparian states. Ethiopia encouraged Egypt to ratify the CFA and play a constructive role in regional development.

The Ethiopian government has voiced its worries multiple times regarding Somalia's collaboration with Egypt. Ethiopian officials argue that such alliances threaten the delicate stability of Somalia and the broader region

Law & Politics

Zooming in on past lessons to make upcoming tall order a success

BY MEKDES TAYE (PhD)

Ethiopia has been wallowing in the quagmire of recurrent political turmoil, taking a toll on the nation-building process. Building national consensus on major issues has been elusive due to backlogs of predicaments and emerging woes. The years of divisive rhetoric and polarized outlook on some emblematic figures of the country have made lasting peace and sustainable development daunting. On various occasions, the country missed watershed moments to create a gray line and ensure a middle ground, thereby fostering national consent.

The hardline positions some political parties have been entertaining somehow morphed into national setbacks, fracturing harmony and unity. Arguably, these parties imposed their political interests and programs on the general public for years. The hawkish political stand and infertile ground for dovish politicians cultivated a rise in political hostility, impeding peaceful power transfer and dialogue based on good faith.

The parties that took power were exerting their own philosophy and agenda, most of the time through the use of force. Thus the power and the perspectives have been flowing from top to bottom to the people, which is against the principle of democracy.

Hostile political culture coupled with narrowly defined interests that exclude public interests and undemocratic leadership stymied progress and created fear of possible backsliding.

In the plain truth, the country has been going through recurrent violence and conflicts making the road to sustainable peace bumpy. Political power grew out of the barrel of a gun and the imposition of the government's selfish interest on the public through the use of force has made a full-filled peace and inclusive development a tall order. Hopes for a possible turnaround of political cultures and democratic paths were dashed at different times. The failure to resolve the years of unresolved issues meant increased public grievance and chaos. That is at least what unfolded in the past years.

Despite the sweeping reform that followed the 2018 change, the country has been beset by violent acts and even war resulting in human casualties and property damage. Some of the causes trace back to years of disagreement over some major political, and governance systems of the country in addition to

various socioeconomic demands. The longtime bone of contention and recent incidents have been behooving the country to face the elephant in the room and carve out a better future.

In what could be a vital step to redress the issues, the incumbent has established the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC). This national body has been undertaking various activities with major works poised to enter the year.

One of the commissioners of the ENDC, Yonas Adaye (PhD) had an interview with Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)'s news channel (ETV). He had touched upon various relevant points regarding the Commission and its tasks.

The primary point that he cleared up was the necessity of the Commission for the country. He mentioned that since the previous political systems and decisions were made as per the intentions of the ruling powers and this had caused the messes to naturally follow; this trend needs to end somewhere. That is why the Commission stands to grasp the minds of the people to reach an inclusive consensus and address it to the concerned body to be part of the policies and decisions and even to be the root for the governmental bodies. The commission believed that it should be the people who should decide on the fate of the country. It is through this way that the challenges the country is facing now could be solved and transformed as expected.

As he said, the commission's tasks had five pillars or stages. The first stage is the exploratory stage. In this stage, the commission had done a vast investigation and analysis of literature. In this process, he said that they have studied regional and global experiences. From this examination, they have learned both from successful and failed national dialogues. He mentioned Tunisia, Poland, and South Africa as examples for conducting successful national dialogues.

Tunisia is the one that applied national dialogue and benefited as perceived. Since the country was in a crisis, the people were coming to deal with their own issues by themselves and negotiating on those controversial issues. Opposite political parties too were actively involved in the process because what matters for them is the broader picture, which is 'Tunisia'.

Since the opposite political parties and influential people exceeded the

interests of their country over their own, they were committed to coming to the table to echo the voices of their people. They then benefited and continued as a sovereign country as planned.

Yonas (PhD) pointed out that since Tunisians' national dialogue process was owned by the locals, they succeeded. Thus taking a lesson from this country, the Ethiopian National Dialogue made agreements with organizations that represent the community for instance. It signed an agreement with the Ethiopian Civic Society Organization.

Among the failed national dialogues at least based on the allotted timeframe, Yemen can be cited here. Though the country was trying to stage national dialogue for longer years, it couldn't do that. As the leaders said in their briefing, they had achieved 90 % and they are working on resetting 10 %. They have been facing challenges that have prevented them from achieving their objective.

The national dialogue of Sudan was also another instance that this big task can be deemed a failure. The major obstacles included people's lack of trust and undemocratic tendencies in the process.

Yonas also talked about the challenges that the commission has faced. He said that the leading challenge they encountered has been the political culture of the people. It is always believed that the winner takes all aspects. That is a wrong trend. Thus, based on the phases, the national dialogue showed its commitment to achieving its goals for the nation. As per the phases, the commission is doing its best to target its objective. As the commission continues to exert its utmost effort, the nation should continue to put its hands on the deck so as not to miss the golden opportunity again.

To sum up, past international experience showed that national dialogue cannot and should not be an end by itself. Some nations have been able to reconcile differences and achieve relative peace, while others have descended into a bloodbath. For experts in the area, the success in the preliminary process and post-national dialogue are equally detrimental to achieving the intended goal. In this regard, the Ethiopian people and the government should contribute their share to back the efforts of the National Dialogue Commission to make the dialogue a success. The international community needs to help the country technically and financially. However, cooperation should not be equated with intervention.

Since the opposite political parties and influential people exceeded the interests of their country over their own, they were committed to coming to the table to echo the voices of their people

Society

TVET” To fill skills gap in job market, drive economic growth

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

In today’s rapidly evolving world and the ever-changing business environment, the demand for competent, skilled workers in the job market attaches greater importance to addressing the challenges of skilled human shortages, bridging demand and supply gaps, thereby contributing to the overall progress of organizations, and boosting sustainable economic growth.

To this end, countries invest hugely to capacitate their human capital with the knowledge and skills the job market needs.

Ethiopia is also working to equip its human labor, targeting to create knowledgeable and efficient workforces who are equipped with the needed knowledge and skills necessary to become self-reliant and competitive not only at home but also in the global labor market, thereby realizing faster economic growth that can contribute meaningfully to the overall growth of the country.

In this respect, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policy and strategy is one area that the government is working hugely. The strategy was devised to produce competent citizens who can meaningfully contribute to the economic and social development of the country by producing demand-driven workforces.

As a result, in collaboration and partnerships with development partners, stakeholders, and pertinent bodies, remarkable achievements were registered, and so are these days. It was possible to train thousands of youths in technical and vocational education, address the country’s unemployment challenges, improve the livelihoods of individual workers, and support them to contribute substantially to the country’s socioeconomic development.

Among the many partners working jointly, the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Program (STEP), is the one. The program, implemented by GIZ, focuses on enhancing the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system and universities of applied sciences to improve the employability of TVET and UAS graduates, especially women, in various economic sectors.

The project collaborates with the Ministry of Labor and Skills to align education with industry needs, fostering cooperation between the education and private sectors. Gender equality is a key aspect, influencing all interventions and maintaining a consistent dialogue with partners, it was learnt.

Recently, the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and the Ethio-German Sustainable Training and Education Program (STEP), organized a platform to review the achievements gained in Ethiopia’s Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector over the last decade- the progress made through the STEP Program, the opportunities faced in building a skilled workforce, as well as the lessons drawn from the challenges.



The Ethiopian government recognizes the importance of improving access to quality education and enhancing the capacity of a nation’s human capital

The review was significant particularly as Ethiopia aspires to reach lower-middle-income status by 2025.

Briefing media in relation to this, Education State Minister Kora Tushune said that TVET is not just about skills acquisition; it is also about building a resilient and capable workforce that can drive Ethiopia’s economic and social development in a more organized manner than ever before.

In this respect, the focus of the Ministry of Education is strengthening partnerships, improving access to education, and ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to contribute to national development.

Ethiopia’s TVET sector has made significant strides over the past decades, charting a promising course for the future. As the country faces a rapidly growing youth population, the role of TVET in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and creating employment has become increasingly crucial.

The Ministry acknowledges that equipping trainees with the knowledge and skills needed for emerging industries is vital for individual success and economic growth. By focusing on curriculum development, incorporating technology, emphasizing soft skills, and fostering a culture of continuous learning, training programs can effectively prepare individuals for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. With the right support and resources, the workforce of tomorrow will be well-equipped to thrive in an ever-changing landscape, he added.

Ethiopia, a nation with a rich cultural heritage and a rapidly growing economy, recognizes that its most valuable asset is its youth. With over 70 percent of the population under the age of 30, the government and various stakeholders are prioritizing human development efforts to develop the skills and knowledge of young people. This initiative is crucial for ensuring sustainable development and achieving the country’s economic growth and social progress aspirations.

The Ethiopian government recognizes the importance of improving access to quality education and enhancing the capacity of a nation’s human capital. Thanks to the concerted efforts made over the past two decades, investments in the education sector have led to substantial improvements in Gross Enrollment Ratios (GER), extended reach, and narrowed gender and regional disparities within the general education system.

To further this agenda, the government has taken priority steps to adopt best practices that support sustainable vocational training under the broader technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system. TVET is considered the key mechanism for nurturing skills that enhance labor productivity and help mitigate the country’s unemployment challenges. As explicitly recognized in various government strategy documents and development plans, the

TVET system is vital for skills development and policy coordination, requiring the participation of multiple stakeholders, including the government, the private sector, and development partners.

According to officials, for nearly 60 years, the German Development Cooperation has been supporting the initiatives, fostering a collaborative partnership aiming to reducing poverty and promoting economic growth, and creating jobs. Each initiative aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals and is implemented by Ethiopia-German Corporation agreements.

STEP has been instrumental in enhancing the employability of TVET graduates and job seekers, transforming the vocational training landscape.

The government has categorized higher education into research and applied universities to encourage young talent to engage in TVET and disciplines that promote hands-on training and foster innovation. The Ministry aims to strengthen quality assurance and address the demand for skilled manpower.

“We believe that the future of TVET in Ethiopia hinges on deeper collaboration between the public and private sectors, as well as investments in digitalization and green skills. By equipping trainees with the skills needed for emerging industries, the Ministry will keep on ensuring Ethiopia’s workforces remain competitive and adaptable to global economic trends.

Over the past ten years, TVET has significantly improved the skills and knowledge of Ethiopia’s youth. The Ministry, along with relevant stakeholders, will continue to ensure quality in training and education streams because it is crucial for the country’s development. “We believe that Ethiopia is trekking in the right direction through educational reforms, skills development programs, and active youth engagement. We can say Ethiopia is laying the groundwork for a prosperous future,” he concluded.

International News

Ruto Urges United African Push for Fair Climate Financing at COP 29

African heads of state and Government during the unveiling the 'African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action. Photo: (AU).

African leaders must present a united front at the upcoming United Nations climate change conference to demand a fairer global climate financing system, Kenyan President William Ruto said.

Speaking at a meeting of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), held alongside the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York, Ruto urged the continent to push for reforms that would increase investment in Africa's energy transition and boost its climate adaptation efforts.

He emphasised that the current level of investment—just three percent globally in energy transition—falls far short of what is needed to combat the worsening impacts of climate change.

President Ruto's comments come as African nations face mounting climate challenges, from droughts to floods, with the continent contributing the least to global carbon emissions yet suffering the most severe consequences.

He underscored the need for investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, green transport, and nature-based solutions to ensure Africa's transition to a low-



carbon, climate-resilient future.

"These investments are not only vital for Africa but also the entire global community," Ruto said.

The Kenyan president also stressed the importance of debt sustainability and reforms in the international financial system, highlighting the strain high debt servicing costs place on African nations' ability to fund climate-resilience projects.

The CAHOSCC meeting, attended by African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat and Mauritanian President Mohamed

Ould Ghazouani, set the stage for Africa's strategy ahead of COP29.

Mr Mahamat echoed Ruto's call for unity, stressing the importance of a cohesive African stance to secure increased climate financing.

Earlier, Dr Ruto hosted the inaugural Steering Committee Meeting of the African Green Industrialisation Initiative (AGII), a platform aimed at unlocking investments for large-scale green industrial and infrastructure projects across the continent.

The initiative seeks to foster partnerships between African leaders

and stakeholders in finance, industry, and philanthropy.

"This initiative aligns value chains across the continent and is key to driving Africa's economic transformation through green industrialisation," Ruto said.

The African Union has warned that some countries on the continent have already experienced GDP losses of up to five percent due to the effects of climate change, underlining the urgent need for concrete action at COP29.

Source: Business Daily Africa

The Full speech of H.E. Ambassador...

Ethiopia along with its co-riparian sisterly countries will work towards the realization of the principles of the CFA and the full potential of the Nile River.

Furthermore, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is generating electricity, responding to the energy demands of Ethiopia and the Eastern Africa Region. It is our sincere hope that the remaining riparian countries will join the CFA and play a constructive role in ensuring equitable and reasonable utilization of the Nile River.

I am also proud to announce to this august Assembly that the Ethiopian Green Legacy, the notable initiative of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed saw the planting of over forty billion seedlings within five years, increasing our forest coverage from 3 to 24 percent. This stands as a substantial global contribution to the absorption of Green-house gases and a tangible measure against the adverse impacts of climate change. Based on its Long-term Low Emissions Development Strategy, Ethiopia is also on the path to sustainable energy transformation by developing and transitioning to non-fossil fuel energy sources. Such efforts

must be supported by the full activation of the global commitments especially through the provision of adequate climate financing.

Mr. President,

Maritime insecurity in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean is a source of great concern for Ethiopia. With over 120 million population and significant maritime trade, Ethiopia entirely depends on the safe and secure maritime activity in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. This region is threatened by conflicts, piracy, and other illicit activities. Over the years, Ethiopia has played an instrumental role in combating the causes of insecurity. We also continue our efforts to work with our neighbors to contribute on a durable basis to ensure peaceful navigation on the high seas. We see a great need to chart a new path for inclusive maritime security engagement with equal participation of countries with stakes on both sides of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

Furthermore, terrorism continues to be a grave threat to the peace and security of the Horn of Africa. The growing rise of violent extremist groups like Al-

Shabab and its international and internal affiliates have continued their vicious attacks against civilians and security of the region.

The region has reached a milestone in degrading terrorism owing to the resilience of the people of Somalia and the sacrifices of the sons and daughters of Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, and my country Ethiopia. The authorization of the Security Council and the international finance for the African Union Peace Support operation has indeed played an instrumental role.

I am confident the Government of Somalia will soon reckon with and recognize the sacrifices we made to Somalia's liberation from the grip of terrorist groups. Ethiopia's memorandum of understanding with Somaliland is based on existing political dispensation in Somalia. Our objective is shared growth and prosperity in the region. Similar agreements have been concluded by other states and there is no reason for the Federal Government of Somalia to incite hostility that obviously intends to cover internal political tensions. I therefore reject the unfounded allegations leveled

against my country. Ethiopia's name can never be associated with any one of the allegations. I rather call upon the Federal Government of Somalia to join hands to eliminate terrorist groups that are causing mayhem on the people of the region.

The recent maneuvers of actors from outside the Horn of Africa region undermine these efforts. Nevertheless, Ethiopia will not be deterred from its resolute commitment to combating terrorism.

We therefore call upon these actors to immediately stop their reckless actions. We also call on the international community to recognize the imminent risk originating from these irresponsible acts and to take concrete measures to prevent the loss of hard-won gains in combating terrorism in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Ethiopia's commitment to the maintenance of global peace and security and upholding multilateralism.

I Thank You Mr. President

Planet Earth

Ethiopia enhancing soil fertility to revamp food production

BY FIKADU BELAY

Despite its abundant agricultural potential, Ethiopia faces substantial challenges due to the prevalence of acidic soils. This issue adversely affects crop yields and, consequently, food security. With over 80% of the population relying on agriculture for their livelihoods, the impact of soil acidity resonates deeply across rural communities.

The country's diverse climate and topography are contributing factors in the development of these acidic soils, often resulting in nutrient deficiencies that hinder agricultural productivity.

Currently, Ethiopia's agricultural landscape is threatened by the increasing acidity of its soils. The crops that depend on the nutrients available in the soil are being adversely affected, leading to decreased growth and fertility. In fact, the situation has deteriorated to the point where some areas have transitioned from productive to non-productive land.

The statistics Ministry of Agriculture data shows that counts million hectares of land have been affected by high soil acidity, with approximately one million hectares no longer capable of supporting crop production. Even on the land that continues to yield crops, the productivity is low due to medium and high levels of acidity.

Despite efforts initiated since 2006 E.C. to combat soil acidity and improve agricultural productivity, progress has been slow. By 2016 only it counts thousands of hectares approximately 43% of the affected land had been treated. This slow response underscores the urgency of the situation.

To address the pressing issue of soil acidity, Ethiopian farmers and agricultural experts are exploring a variety of innovative strategies aimed at soil management and enhancement.

Key among these strategies is the application of agricultural lime, which helps to neutralize soil acidity. Additionally, the use of organic fertilizers is being promoted to improve overall soil health, while crop rotation practices are being adopted to restore the nutrient balance in the soil.

By tackling soil acidity head-on, Ethiopia not only aims to boost agricultural output but also seeks to promote sustainable farming practices that can withstand the challenges posed by climate change. This multifaceted approach holds promise for transforming the agricultural landscape, ensuring food security, and ultimately improving the livelihoods of millions of Ethiopians.



Fanose Mekonen, Executive Director of Natural Resource Development, Conservation and Utilization at the Ministry of Agriculture, emphasized the gravity of the situation. He stated, "Soil acidity has become a major threat to agricultural production and productivity in Ethiopia." With four million hectares of land affected, the consequences are dire.

He mentioned that overall, around 12 million hectares of land in Ethiopia exhibit varying levels of soil acidity, which is a significant portion of the arable land in the country. In regions such as West and East Wollega, East and West Gojam, and Sidama, highly acidic soils are prevalent.

According to Experts, Ethiopia's agricultural lands are also compromised by heavy rainfall, which exacerbates soil erosion and further contributes to soil acidification. The leaching of essential nutrients, such as calcium, magnesium, and potassium, due to rainfall increases the concentration of hydrogen and aluminum in the soil, resulting in detrimental effects on crop growth.

Acidic soils can stunt crop development, making it difficult for plants to access air and water. The vital microorganisms that facilitate nutrient absorption are also negatively impacted, leading to phosphorus deficiencies that are critical for plant growth.

According to Fanose, The Ethiopian government and agricultural organizations are taking steps to combat soil acidity through soil and water conservation measures. Treating affected areas with agricultural lime has shown promising

results, with one hectare requiring an average of 30 quintals of lime. Land treated with lime can yield higher outputs for four to six years, providing a temporary solution to soil acidity.

In his part, Mulugeta Abera, head of soil health and development at the Ministry of Agriculture, noted that soil acidity is particularly increasing in areas with high rainfall. A study conducted in 1989 indicated that 40% of the land in Ethiopia was exposed to soil acidity, a figure that has now risen to 43%. This slight increase over nearly three decades represents a significant threat to the country's agricultural capacity.

In addition to the statistics explanation, it was confirmed in a 2014 E.C. study that approximately 3.7 million hectares of land are affected by varying degrees of acidity. Heavy rains and the complete removal of crop residues are contributing factors that increase soil acidity and threaten agricultural productivity. Even with the application of fertilizers or improved seeds, affected land may still yield minimal results.

Fanose stated that the country is working to implement sustainable solutions to combat soil acidity. Soil and water conservation efforts aim to rehabilitate affected areas, potentially increasing yields by 50 to 100%. Since 2006 E.C., approximately 140,000 hectares have been treated with lime, showcasing a commitment to addressing this critical issue.

The focus on using natural fertilizers and treating acidified land with lime is part of a broader strategy aimed at promoting

sustainable agricultural practices. Research into soil fertilizers, combined with initiatives to prevent soil acidity, is crucial for increasing agricultural productivity, he said.

He emphasized the potential impact of these efforts is significant. Acidic soils treated with agricultural lime can produce significantly higher yields for up to six years. In 2017 alone, efforts were made to treat an additional 300,000 hectares of land, reflecting the urgency of the situations.

Furthermore, the country soil acidity challenging is formidable, but with concerted efforts from farmers, agricultural experts, and government agencies, there is hope for a more resilient future. By implementing innovative soil management practices and promoting sustainable agriculture, Ethiopia can unlock its agricultural potential.

Furthermore, the government body must be working with private company and researcher institutes to addressing the impact of acidity soil and enhancing the Agricultural productivity through cooperatively.

The dedication to overcoming the challenges posed by acidic soils will not only improve food security but also enhance the livelihoods of millions who depend on agriculture for their survival.

As Ethiopia works to address these pressing concerns, it is essential to continue investing in research, education, and sustainable practices to ensure a productive and resilient agricultural sector for generations to come.