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Ethiopia optimistic about Sudan, Egypt's CFA accession

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) has called on Sudan and Egypt to join the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA), following its recent entry into force.

In a press briefing yesterday,

See Ethiopia optimistic ... page 3



Photo: Eyob Teferi

Ethiopian Flag symbol for unity, patriotism : *President*

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The Ethiopian National Flag Day celebration signifies national unity, patriotism as well as showcases social and historical ties of its people. President Taye Atske Selassie made the above remark during the celebration of the National

Flag Day which was observed yesterday under the theme: 'Our Flag for our National unity, sovereignty and the elevation of Ethiopia' for the 17th times. He noted that: " Our flag is a symbol for sacrifice, liberty, sovereignty territorial integrity and national unity. " "Not only the day represents the sacrifice that

our forefathers /mothers paid to pass over the nation to the posterity but also it holds special place in our heart," he underscored. The President further highlighted that Ethiopia remained the ancient African country that sustained its liberty for many years. *See Ethiopian Flag ... page 3*



CFA's effectuation to beat odds, foster members shared future

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- The Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) entry into force would be a foundation to determine equitable utilization over of the Nile Basin and foster member countries shared future, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). In its social media page, the ministry stated that the principles enshrined in the CFA would manage to fix obsolete evil ideologies, comprehend equitable and rational utilization

See CFA's effectuation ... page 3

African youth encouraged to champion food sovereignty

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) emphasized the need for African youth to work collaboratively in driving food sovereignty and promoting agro-ecological advancement across the continent.

The announcement was made yesterday during the launch of "The 1st Thousand African Youth Summit on Food Systems and Agroecology 2024," under the theme "Youth Driving African Food Systems Transformation through Agroecology."

In her opening remarks, MoPD Minister Fitsum Assefa (PhD) highlighted the summit's main objective: to find solutions for improving agricultural production and productivity while addressing climate change and related challenges.

The summit, attended by 250 participants from 45 countries and over 2,000 virtual



attendees, focuses on discussions around Africa's food systems, agroecology, and productivity, all aimed at achieving food sovereignty in the coming years. "African food systems are particularly vulnerable to climate change," said

Fitsum. "However, by adopting effective agroecological practices, utilizing modern farming techniques, protecting indigenous seeds, leveraging technology, and promoting sustainable food chains, we can develop an

See African youth ... page 3

News



Doubling investment key to transforming smallholder farming: PSI

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Improving the lives of smallholder farmers in Ethiopia requires doubling or tripling the current agricultural capital investment, according to the Policy Study Institute (PSI).

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, PSI's Agriculture and Rural Development Study Center Director, Tadesse Kuma (PhD), emphasized that without substantial investment in agriculture, progress in the lives of smallholder farmers would be limited. He stressed that while there are no major gaps in agricultural policies, the challenge lies in policy implementation. Increasing capital investment in the sector is critical to improving productivity and ensuring sustainable development.

"The country can achieve significant progress in agriculture by focusing on key areas such as infrastructure development, genetic improvements, technological adaptation, and market linkages," Tadesse stated.

The director also highlighted the detrimental effects of climate change on Ethiopia's agricultural sector, particularly on smallholder farmers whose livelihoods depend on animal husbandry and crop farming. To mitigate these impacts, he recommended enhancing farmers' resilience through improved genetics, technology changes, and active community participation in climate adaptation measures.

Tadesse pointed to ongoing government initiatives, such as the Green Legacy project, agricultural mechanization, sustainable land management, and the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), as crucial elements in building resilience against climate change. These initiatives provide opportunities for generating income, advancing technology, and preserving natural resources.

Smallholder farmers, the backbone of Ethiopia's agriculture, face challenges like limited capital, outdated practices, and climate vulnerability. The government is making significant efforts to boost investment and implement strategies to improve their livelihoods and promote sustainable development, essential for building resilience against ongoing pressures.

ECC surpasses revenue target, collects 88.1 bln Birr

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDISABABA - The Ethiopian Customs Commission (ECC) has announced a significant revenue collection of 88.1 billion Birr during the first quarter of this fiscal year, exceeding its ambitious target.

Chief Commissioner Debele Kabetu, speaking at a media briefing yesterday, revealed that the initial target was set at 87.2 billion Birr. However, the Commission exceeded expectations, collecting 88.1 billion Birr, achieving over 100 percent of the planned goal, with a performance rate of 0.86% beyond the target.

When compared to the same period of the previous fiscal year, this year's first-quarter revenue increased by over 38 billion Birr, representing a 77 percent growth, Debele highlighted.

"We started the year with the theme 'Let's Build the Institute to Achieve Excellence and Income Success,' and the results speak for themselves," he said. Debele explained that the revenue was generated from customs duties and other sources, contributing to the national treasury



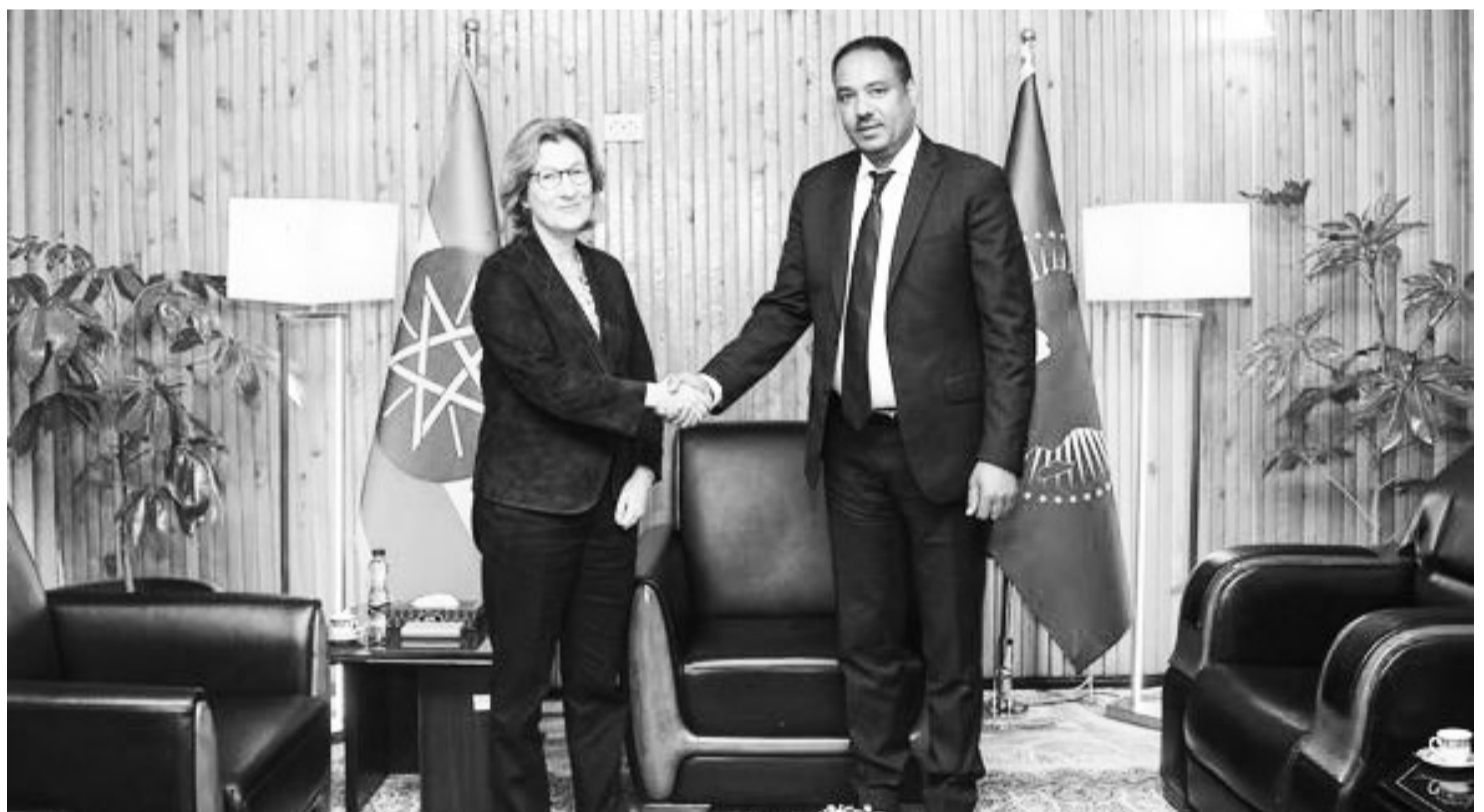
and supporting the government's daily expenditures and development activities.

The Commissioner expressed confidence in maintaining this momentum, vowing to repeat the success in future quarters.

He also emphasized the ECC's efforts in combating contraband and illegal trade. Through enhanced oversight of both incoming and outgoing shipments in port areas, the Commission managed to secure goods worth billions of Birr.

By strengthening internal capacity, coordinating with institutions and stakeholders, and implementing intelligence, random inspections, and document checks, Ethiopia was able to save 50.5 billion Birr by preventing illegal trade and smuggling, Debele reaffirmed.

Formed to enhance trade facilitation and revenue collection, the ECC is responsible for enforcing customs laws, collecting duties and taxes, and preventing illegal trade and smuggling.



EU recognizes Ethiopia's significant role in HoA's peace

ADDIS ABABA (ENA)- State Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Mesganu Arga, yesterday conferred at his office with the Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service (EEAS), Rita Laranjinha.

During the course of the meeting, the State Minister noted that Ethiopia has a strategic partnership with the European Union and that it wants to further strengthen its comprehensive relations.

He also briefed the Managing Director

on current developments in the Horn of Africa (HoA), according to Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Laranjinha, on her part said, the EU recognizes the significant role Ethiopia is playing in peace and stability in the HoA.

She stated that the European Union is committed to its relations with Ethiopia and assured that it will continue its support for the fight against terrorism in the region.

She further added that the European Union appreciates the fast economic growth that Ethiopia is showing and that the EU will work to further strengthen the link between companies in the EU member states and the Ethiopian business community.

Ambassador Misganu said that the economic reform has created a favorable environment for trade and investment and called on companies from EU member states to participate in Ethiopia's key investment opportunities.

News

Visiting Ethiopia dream for years : British Tourists

ADDIS ABABA (ENA)- Tourists from England said that visiting Ethiopia has been their dream for many years expressing their surprise by the situation they witnessed in person.

The tourists approached by the Ethiopian News Agency at the National Museum, which is their first destination of their visit to Ethiopia, have expressed excitement about Ethiopia's attractions and development activities in the capital Addis Ababa.

Mank Williams and Anthony Chibnuzzi stated that they had a long time desire to visit Ethiopia, expressing their surprise by the situation they witnessed in person.

William, who is in Ethiopia for the first time, said that he is very much excited to see the wonderful Ethiopian tourist attractions located in various parts of the country that he has known from afar.

"We're going to be touring around that we've heard so much about for many of the places.



Mank Williams

We're really looking forward to seeing them in Ethiopia."

William, who visited Lucy's remains at the National Museum of Ethiopia, said that seeing this archaeological heritage in person, which he only knew about in college, gave him a great sense of excitement.



Anthony Chibnuzzi

The tourists have planned to visit the well-known historical heritage sites in Ethiopia, Rock-hewn Churches of Lalibela and the Afar's Danakil Depression as well in the following days.

Williams also appreciated the ongoing corridor development works in the capital Addis Ababa and the buildings and modernity of the city, the restoration of the buildings.

The other tourist from London, Anthony Chibnuzzi on his part said it is his first time in Ethiopia expressing his first impression about lots of smiling people, happy faces, and lots of warm greetings in the capital.

Even if he did not expect the capital Addis Ababa to be so green, he observed the city is very green and the weather outside is nice and cool.

Indicating that Lucy is the first destination on their trip at the National Museum last Saturday, he expressed his excitement to see the various historical heritages that Ethiopia is known across the globe.

He is looking forward to continue his tour along his friend and to spend enjoying some of the culinary delights and some coffee among others.

"We have been planning this trip for a long time. Certainly, we wish to come sooner. I look forward to spending the next days; for a week here exploring more."

Ethiopian Flag symbol for unity...

By the same token, Adem Farah, Head of the Democracy System Building Coordination Center with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister on his part emphasized that flag is an indication of justice, national unity, equality and patriotism.

He stressed that paying tribute to the day means respecting members of the Ethiopian National Defense Force(ENDF), patriots including those people who sacrificed to safeguard Ethiopia's sovereignty.

The leadership and staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) also commemorated the 17th National Flag Day. The occasion was also simultaneously observed across Ethiopian Diplomatic and Consular Missions overseas.

Speaking on the occasion, MoFA State Minister Ambassador Mesganu Arga said: "National Flag Day is a historic day on which we renew our vows to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia as well as celebrate those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in upholding homeland's sovereignty."

Amb. Mesganu stated that is not only a symbol of Ethiopians' sacrifice for independence but also a transcendental icon of Pan-Africanism and unity in diversity.

The Ethiopian flag, he noted, among others encapsulates fellow citizens' collective journey towards realizing democratization and economic development aspirations.

National Flag Day in Ethiopia is celebrated annually under the auspices of the House of Peoples' Representatives to promote national unity, sovereignty, and the country's development.

Honoring the people that strive to build the nation across all sectors would also mean respecting the Flag Day while giving due emphasis to transferring the essence of the day to the coming generation, he added.

The day was celebrated in the presence of senior government officials, patriots, member of the house of the parliament, and other members of the society. It was marked in various public institutions, states, two city administrations, national defense force camps under various events.

Ethiopia optimistic...

Minister Habtamu Itefa (PhD-Eng.) highlighted the significance of the CFA, stating, "The ratified CFA is becoming our [riparian's] rules and regulations." He extended a direct invitation to Sudan and Egypt, reiterating Ethiopia's commitment to cooperation.

"If you have concerns regarding the CFA, it is all-inclusive. Let us connect to discuss and utilize it together," he said. The Minister emphasized that the CFA promises mutual benefits for all countries in the Nile basin, ensuring no one is excluded.

Habtamu described the agreement as a remarkable achievement for all riparian nations advocating for justice and equitable access to water resources. He pointed out that previous agreements on the Nile favored downstream countries, leaving upstream nations like Ethiopia without fair utilization rights.

Characterizing the CFA as the "backbone" of equitable water resource management, the Minister noted it marks a significant departure from past practices. "We believe

there has been injustice in how the Nile has been utilized, particularly by our brothers and sisters downstream. The Cooperative Framework Agreement poses no threat to anyone; it is an inclusive agreement," he affirmed.

The CFA comprises 15 major principles focused on three key areas: the utilization of the Nile for development, water management practices, and information-sharing mechanisms. The first 15 articles address these principles, while the remaining 30 outline institutional and legal frameworks.

Minister Habtamu underscored Ethiopia's vital role in the Nile system, noting that the country contributes over 85 percent of the river's water but previously had no influence over its management. With the CFA now in place, he expressed optimism that Ethiopia and other upstream nations can collaborate effectively on water utilization and development plans.

Additionally, he announced that the Nile Basin Commission, an independent body aimed at supporting development in the Nile Basin, would soon be established based on the CFA.

CFA's effectuation...

and foster mutual understanding and shared responsibility.

The ministry has also highlighted that this remarkable achievement, which has been in the making for over a decade, is a testament of member state's dedication, perseverance, and collaborative spirit is firmly believed to enhance cooperation, reasonable management and utilization of the shared water resource.

According to its statement, "Ethiopia is confident that the entry into force of this agreement will yield significant benefits for the basin states and contribute to a more prosperous and sustainable future."

In addition to promoting equitable and sustainable management of the Nile River's resources among all riparian countries, this agreement would be a spring board towards enhancing collaboration on water sharing, energy production, and environmental protection.

On the other hand, the Ethiopian Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Yosef Kassaye has recently underscored that Egypt has a "golden opportunity" to restore peaceful relations with Nile riparian states by joining the ratification process.

Criticizing Egypt for seeking a colonial-era monopoly over Nile waters, Ambassador Yosef as also reiterated that the Abbay Dam is fostering regional integration through energy and trade, which Egypt fails to recognize.

During the course of the ratification process, various international scholars and senior personalities were advocating Egypt to join the framework agreement by capitalizing on its (CFA's) multitude significance among riparian states.

It is to be recalled that Egypt has been accusing Ethiopia to the UN and in every possible situations as if it is manipulating the Nile water solitarily.

agricultural ecosystem that ensures food security and biodiversity protection."

The Minister also noted that the summit provides Ethiopia an opportunity to share its experiences in combating climate change, particularly through its Green Legacy Initiative, wheat production, Yelemat Turfat initiative, and tourism development.

"The youth are the builders of today's nations, thanks to their energy and adaptability, especially with technology," she added.

Africa, currently facing food insecurity and frequent conflicts, is vulnerable to external pressures such as food aid dependency, Fitsum stressed. Therefore, prioritizing agricultural improvement is key to addressing these challenges across the continent.

African youth encouraged...

Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) General Coordinator Million Belay echoed the importance of the summit as a platform for African youth to develop solutions to their own challenges. He noted that the youth will focus on conflict resolution, technological innovation, agro-ecological entrepreneurship, and biodiversity protection.

Participants are also expected to return to their countries with concrete initiatives related to agroecology. During their stay, they will visit the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, Entoto Park, and Yelemat Turfat as well as the Green Legacy Initiative and corridor development projects in Addis Ababa.

The summit, running from October 14 to 16, 2024, is set to be held biennially in different African countries.

Opinion

ENDC towards fostering inclusivity, building unified society

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is worth remembering that a broad range of bodies have been standing by the side of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) with a focus on expanding national dialogue which is going to take place just around the corner.

As things stand at the moment, they have continued supporting the commission on numerous occasions with the purpose of reaching into consensus on most fundamental issues of the country. In the present circumstances, the federal government's commitment to backing up the success of the national dialogue has set in witnessing promising results. In view of the foregoing, the commission has been making progress in the right direction.

It is widely acknowledged that the Commission consisting 11 members have been going to the ends of the earth with the objective of assisting the progress of inclusive techniques of discussion and reconciliation that have the potential of reaching a consensus on essential hurdles, and assisting Ethiopians to live under the same roof in peace, love and harmony.

In actual fact, ENDC has been undertaking a diverse range of effective activities in combination with a number of stakeholders at federal and regional levels to make the national dialogue a success utilizing all possible means. In the same way, the move helps to resolve political differences and disagreements through a wide-ranging inclusive public dialogue that bring about common consensus.

The vast majority of literature emphasizes that the transformative potential of national dialogues can only be realized if they are genuinely inclusive of society. In order to be truly inclusive, it is necessary to help balance power asymmetries and ensure actual decision-making power. Highly inclusive and participatory national dialogues may render discussions unwieldy, however, and make it difficult to resolve key political questions. The success of national dialogues can largely depend on finding the right equilibrium between efficiency and inclusiveness, according to documents.

The documents went on to say a credible, broadly accepted, independent, respected, and charismatic convener, mediator, or facilitator can significantly affect the strength of the national dialogue, indicating seriousness and trust in the process. These qualities of the moderator can make or break the process of national dialogue. Ethiopia should recognize the fact that this is not a job employment position.

Added to these, decision-making procedures can enable or constrain the ability of national dialogues to reach an agreement and implement it. While consensus can help to expand agendas and to include often excluded voices, an inability to reach consensus can benefit the more established forces, as the absence of movement can mean preserving the status quo.

Consensus-based decision-making needs to be complemented by other pragmatic mechanisms where deadlocks can be broken, such as the use of working groups. The process ought to be inclusive of the grassroots community in the rural part of Ethiopia often deprived of access to technology. Last but not least, the national dialogue requires confidence-building



measures.

There is broad agreement that since its inception the Commission has been undertaking preliminary groundwork for holding the much anticipated national dialogue in the nearest future.

As far as this it has tossed around ideas with religious fathers, elders, civic societies, women, youths and more of the same with the purpose of collecting ideas that set the scene for conducting successful national dialogue and building common understanding and consensus among the various nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia.

It is expected that the commission will put a wide array of multifaceted national agenda in the course of the national dialogue. As far as this ENDC has undertaken a serious of successful undertakings and made positive strides in its phases.

As holding National Dialogue clears a path for resolving grievances, ensuring peace and tranquility, resolving grievances and other things of a similar kind, every Tom, Dick, and Harry should join hands for the full realization of the project.

In a media briefing held recently, ENDC Commissioner Prof. Mesfin Araya emphasized the commission's commitment to collaborating with the Diaspora, recognizing their crucial role in promoting and sustaining durable peace in Ethiopia. He noted that, the Diaspora is one of the five key actors significantly contributing to peace and development efforts, and they possess a deep understanding of the importance of dialogue and negotiation.

To date, ENDC has conducted approximately ten successful webinars and other official gatherings with Diaspora members from Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Australia, the Americas, and beyond. The chief commissioner highlighted the commission's inclusive approach, which involves working with displaced individuals, persons with disabilities, youth, women, and various other segments of the society, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, or social status.

"Calls are still flooding to militants and other external agents to be part of the dialogue and to make wise use of this noble opportunity. It is critically important to facilitate inclusive national dialogues and homegrown peace-building mechanisms to ensure sustainable peace," he stated.

The commission has already reached over 1,000 districts across all states and city administrations and plans to transition to the National Dialogue convention stage within three months. Previously, the ENDC collected agendas in various states, including Addis Ababa, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambela, Harar, Sidama, Dire Dawa, and Central Ethiopia, with the agenda-gathering process currently underway in Somali State.

During the agenda collection process, ENDC has registered over 50 political parties for involvement in the National Dialogue, with six parties signing agreements to collaborate. Prof. Mesfin expressed readiness to address Diaspora concerns in an organized manner, explaining that National Dialogue can occur in three scenarios: during conflict, post-conflict, and as a proactive measure to address potential conflicts.

There is no doubt that the Commission has been preoccupied with a wide spectrum of preparation procedures crucial to further the success of the national dialogue which is going to take place in the foreseeable future. As all segments of the society are given equal partnership and voice in the course of the national dialogue, the accomplishment of the national dialogue will not be like nailing jelly to a tree.

As the commission is fully ticking all the boxes required for the holding national dialogue in the country, realizing the desired target will be as easy as falling off a log. Though the entire process is no bed of roses, everyone should stand by the side of the commission to attain the desired objective in the not-too-distant future.

Taking into account the role national dialogue plays in smoothing the path of harmony among the people of Ethiopia, all segment of the society should actively take part in the upcoming dialogue which is going to be held in the short-run.

As it is highly believed that the national dialogue oils the wheels of unity among Ethiopians residing under the umbrella of Ethiopia and in every nook and cranny of the world, every Tom, Dick, and Harry should join hands for the attainments of the objectives.

The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has recently received agenda items gathered from the diaspora for the upcoming National Dialogue, according to information obtained from local media.

Ethiopia is carrying out several activities to conduct an inclusive national dialogue. As part of this process agenda-gathering, activities have already been completed in several parts of the country. The agenda-gathering effort aims to collect diverse perspectives and issues from across Ethiopia to inform the upcoming national dialogue process and make the process more inclusive.

Accordingly, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has recently received agenda items gathered from the diaspora. The Addis Ababa Diaspora Association handed over the agendas and a video clip to the Chief Commissioner of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission, Prof. Mesfin Araya.

At the occasion, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission Chief Commissioner, Prof. Mesfin Araya expressed gratitude to Addis Ababa Diaspora Association for bringing their agenda and the video clip that helps to facilitate the national dialogue process.

The commissioner said the commission is committed to incorporate agendas proposed by Ethiopians living abroad, emphasizing the importance of fostering dialogue on national issues and enhancing inclusive participation.

The chief commissioner added that the commission is ready to embrace agendas of the diaspora community, urging the diaspora community to bring their issues for national dialogue and consultation.

Highlighting ongoing efforts to bridge fundamental national differences and facilitate engagement through established operating guidelines, the chief commissioner stated that the commission remains open to receiving agendas from Ethiopians at home and abroad.

To date, the commission has conducted over ten online consultations with Ethiopians across Africa, the Middle East, Europe, North America, and beyond. Drawing on examples from other nations, he noted that many have successfully navigated internal challenges through similar consultations that lead to peace and development.

Addis Ababa Diaspora Association Vice President Solomon Gizaw on his part echoed the activities of the commission as a beacon of hope for peace and security.

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

Editorial

Congratulations on the dawn of a new era

The burgeoning population witnessed in Africa accompanied with the ever-rising water needs in the 21st century has attracted a systematic and doable mode of utilizing common water resources. Cognizant of this fact, the Nile Basin countries have now taken the right track to grow together bringing to effect a binding basin-wide agreement.

The step taken by the countries in general and the Nile Riparian countries in particular—instituting the Cooperative Framework of Agreement (CFA)—has registered a momentous epoch towards inking common growth.

Completing a trying trek towards ensuring sustainable development through the effective water utilization, thanks to the commitment of riparian states, the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework of Agreement (CFA) has come to effect as of October 12, 2024. Congratulations Africa!

The Nile River Basin Commission (NRBC) will spearhead the cooperation and projects of reciprocated importance. The countries have ratified the Framework and pushed it to the decisive pace. As CFA presents the unparalleled option for institutional basin-wide cooperation, all countries are expected to positively entertain the issue and be part of the game-changing scenario.

It has been well recognized that Ethiopia has time and again recapped its unwavering aspiration for an equitable and reasonable use of water resources for its development endeavors all the way through the effective water use. Undeniably, it has so far been working hard to pull other sisterly countries towards the sacred and beneficial step to foster common growth under the scaffold, the CFA, which has confidently helps pave the way for the vision of collective change.

True, the framework is really a forward-looking accordance that can be a workable approach to emancipate the content in general and riparian nations in particular from poverty and lack of coordination. It has also provided nations with equitable and reasonable utilization as well as a bundle of benefits and sense of fraternity.

Hence, all states have to join the framework and move in unison for the practical application of the just commenced great move. Since CFA's potential for fostering basin-wide cooperation depends on the inclusion of all Nile Basin States, they all have to come up with firm commitment to push this significant step into fruition. Yes, it is high time for Africa to reinvigorate cooperative management of the Nile watercourse.

The coming into effect of the CFA is a clear memorandum urging nations which have not become party to it to think well and properly weigh the significance and come to the track soon. And a lot has to be done for its further effectiveness.

No need of explaining the fact that the primary objective of the CFA is to ensure the long-term and sustainable management and development of the shared Nile waters. Hence, to get all sorts of efforts bear fruit, all riparian nations have to be wholeheartedly support the move so as to augment cooperation thereby effectively and fairly utilizing the vast potential of the Nile water.

This landmark agreement signifies a shift towards a more unified approach to the Nile's resources thereby fostering regional integration and economic growth.

No doubt, countries have capitalized on the CFA with a view to reducing transaction costs, recording continuous improvement within long-term relationships, bringing about a better value and greater community wealth, among others. Since the framework has targeted at sketching out principles, rights and obligations for cooperative management and development of the Nile Basin water resources.

It is a new dawn for the Nile Basin countries. The binding agreement, the CFA, entitles all the riparian countries to utilize the waters without causing significant harm to downstream countries. The two downstream countries must choose the path of cooperation and join their fellow countries' far-sighted move.

Opinion

Two more occasions to raise our flag very high

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

A national flag is a universal feature shared among peoples and nations of the world. There is hardly any country that does not have a flag of its own that represents its history, culture, geography and any national and cultural symbol.

Ethiopia also adopted this current flag for the first time in the 1890s. The flag carries meanings related to prosperity, wealth, bright hope and the sacrifice paid to the sovereignty and unity of the country. The colours and the means that they represent are mostly shared and coincide from country to country. But still, people attach special feelings and importance to their flag.

Since its first adoption, the Ethiopian flag has passed through minor modifications on the emblems that are laid in the epicentre as they are usually added and changed to reflect the ideologies of the regimes that ruled the country in different times. Otherwise, the tricolour schemes have remained the same throughout the times.

These three main colours have also become symbolic and inspirational that they are adopted by various countries in Africa, after independence from colonial rule.

Leaving the historical part aside a deep meaning associated with the national flag has kept the people of Ethiopia together for the decades that passed. Throughout time the flag has been not only a symbol that represents the country but also a motivational factor in many of the historical milestones in the country.

For instance, the Victory of Adwa can be mentioned as one of the earliest historical incidents where Ethiopians raised their national flag very high. The victory that Ethiopia as an African country won against the colonial expansionist forces is indeed a highly estimable historical achievement that helped not only Ethiopians to walk full of pride but also all other black people who were languishing under colonialism. That is why the principal colour schemes of Ethiopia's flag was hoisted not only in Ethiopia but also in many other African and Caribbean nations that were highly inspired by the monumental victory.

Another big historical event that can be mentioned as having raised the country's flag very high is the all-time famous historical achievement of the legendary athlete Abebe Bikila marathon victory won in the 1960 Rome Olympics. Abebe won a gold medal and broke the then-Olympic record running the whole 42 kilometers bare feet. The flag hoisted since then has been flying very high many times till now as the country has been blessed with countless elite and legendary athletes, men and women following Abebe. Furthermore, many other African athletes have also become famous and outstanding after this unprecedented and still unique victory. For instance, African countries like Kenya, Uganda, Eritrea, and Morocco have shown repeated victories in world athletic championships.

At this moment Ethiopians still have many forums where we have to exhibit excellence and commitment so that our success can raise our flag higher. For instance, Ethiopians are faced with an economic challenge that they have to fight and conquer by working hand in hand with the government and business community among others. Just as in the past the people have to struggle with the same motivation especially to realize the goals of the macro economic reform which is launched to transform and modernize the economy. It is a historical stage where Ethiopians have to give due attention, concentrate all their capabilities and conquer the decades-old enemy, which is poverty once and for all.

The people of Ethiopia have also got another big opportunity where they can work strenuously to keep their flag flying as high as in the past. It is to be recalled that the government with the unreserved contribution of the people have been undertaking the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) for the last 13 years. Now the dam is nearing completion as it has reached close to 95 % of its overall construction stage and some of its turbines have started generating electricity.

For a country like Ethiopia where there are scores of hydropower dams that generate hundreds of megawatts of electricity, what makes GERD unique is not that it is very big or generates many folds of energy as compared to the others. But the fact that it is being sponsored by the people and government of the country shows the resilience of the people against any foreign pressure.

Especially at this very time, Ethiopia's decades-old struggle has come to a very happy end as the Nile Basin Initiatives Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) has been ratified by six member states and has entered into force since 13 October 2024. This enables to breaking of the decades-old imposition of colonial period agreements by the lower riparian countries and puts in place a fair and equitable use of the natural resources by the member countries.

In addition to this Ethiopia is now working towards ensuring access to the sea. The country that was once an active player in the Red Sea and surrounding areas has lost its access and active role due to the problems created against it since the times of the colonial period.

However, for the country that is home to over 120 million people and located at the crossroads of the volatile Horn of Africa region as well as the Red Sea and Middle East, it is difficult to continue without reliable and direct maritime access. Therefore, by employing peaceful, diplomatic and give and take methods the government is taking the necessary measures to reclaim the country's historical access and benefits from the sea.

People from all walks of life should cover and work strenuously to realize these big national feats and as usual keep their nation's flag flying very high.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Enhancing Ethiopia's coffee and tea sector: *A strategic approach to growth*

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

The Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority (ECTA) is making significant strides in improving the production, quality, and export of the country's renowned coffee, tea, and spice products. With a commitment to enhancing the entire value chain, ECTA aims to increase productivity, expand market destinations, and boost foreign exchange earnings. This comprehensive approach is reflected in the results achieved over recent years.

To ensure high-quality products reach international markets, ECTA has emphasized maintaining quality and reducing wastage. This involves meticulous processes from production to marketing, allowing Ethiopian coffee, tea, and spices to be presented in the best possible light. By enhancing product quality and adding value, the authority has successfully increased coffee production geared for foreign markets, significantly enhancing foreign exchange earnings.

In line with this mission, ECTA has prepared a 15-year strategic plan that identifies six key pillars aimed at fostering development and marketing initiatives. Authority's Director General Adugna Debala (PhD) emphasized that, through these reforms, the coffee sector is achieving better results year after year. For instance, in the 2023/24 fiscal year, Ethiopia exported 300,000 tons of coffee, generating over 1.4 billion USD in revenue. This success is attributed to various reform efforts focused on streamlining the market chain and improving farmers' access to suppliers and exporters.

One of the primary goals of ECTA is to shorten the market chain. By creating a favorable environment for farmers to connect with suppliers and exporters, the authority has minimized product wastage and maintained higher product quality. A new system has been established to ensure that coffee can be delivered from farmers directly to exporters within a specified timeframe. If exporters do not fulfill contracts within three months, those contracts expire, promoting efficiency and timely exports.

The results are notable: prior to these reforms, Ethiopia exported between 180,000 to 190,000 tons of coffee. Now, thanks to streamlining efforts, this figure has increased to 300,000 tons. Furthermore, the authority has successfully introduced an additional 100,000 tons of blended coffee to the international market.

Ethiopia markets two main types of coffee: commercial and specialty. Commercial coffee, while produced in larger quantities, is typically lower in quality and commands a lower price on the international market. In contrast, specialty coffee is smaller in size, higher in quality, and commands a premium price. For instance, three years ago, one ton of commercial coffee sold for around 2,800



Ethiopia's coffee exports fetch USD 1.43bln in revenue

USD per ton, while specialty coffee fetched over 5,500 USD per ton, almost double the price.

Recent strategies have focused on increasing the production of specialty coffee while reducing the reliance on commercial coffee. The director general reported that the proportion of specialty coffee has risen from 30% to 60% over three years, leading to a substantial increase in income—from 700 million USD to 1.4 billion USD.

To further enhance production and productivity, ECTA collaborates with research institutions to identify effective coffee species for different regions. This has led to the successful introduction of new coffee varieties and the removal of older, less productive plants. As a result, coffee production has escalated from 600,000 metric tons to a projected 1 million metric tons in the coming year.

Currently, Ethiopia exports coffee to five major markets: the United States, Japan, Belgium, Germany, and Saudi Arabia, with Germany accounting for approximately 20% of total exports. Recent data indicates rising interest from South Korea and China, both emerging as vital markets for Ethiopian coffee. ECTA is actively working to capitalize on these opportunities, particularly as China becomes increasingly significant in the global coffee landscape.

The proactive measures taken by the Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority are not only enhancing the quality and quantity of coffee produced but also significantly increasing foreign exchange earnings. With ongoing reforms and a strategic focus on specialty coffee and new market destinations, Ethiopia is well-positioned

to strengthen its reputation as a premier coffee producer on the global stage. As the authority continues to implement its 15-year strategy, the potential for growth and success in the coffee sector remains promising.

To boost Ethiopian coffee exports, several key actions are expected from both government authorities and smallholder farmers: Most of all implementing and enforce policies that foster an environment conducive for coffee production and export along with simplifying export procedures to reduce bureaucracy and enhance efficiency is of greater paramount.

In addition many agree that the improvement of transportation and logistics infrastructure to facilitate timely delivery of coffee from farms to markets is the life line for the coffee sector and other beverages.

Furthermore, the enhancement of processing facilities to maintain product quality and reduce wastage is so crucial. In relation to this, paying due attention for research and development is a spring board for the coffee sector.

Thus, very essential to invest in research to identify high-yield and disease-resistant coffee varieties suited to various climates and regions and collaborate with agricultural institutions to provide training and resources for best farming practices.

Moreover, statesmen should focus to actively promote Ethiopian coffee in international markets through trade fairs and exhibitions with relentless efforts to develop marketing strategies that highlight the unique qualities of Ethiopian coffee, such as its origin and flavor profiles; encourage smallholder farmers to engage in value-added activities,

such as roasting and packaging, to increase profit margins; facilitate access to financing for smallholder farmers to invest in better production techniques and technologies.

In explication the role of agronomists and botanists have irreplaceable role for beverage development with pre prioritized ideas such as implementing recommended agronomic practices to improve coffee quality and yield, such as proper fertilization, pest control, and sustainable farming techniques; participate in training programs offered by agricultural extension services or NGOs.

Finally, it is better to consider the following key practices to boost product and productivity, market opportunity for the beverage sector according to empirics. First of all, imperative would be to organize into cooperatives to increase bargaining power, reduce costs, and improve market access; engage in collective marketing efforts to attract buyers and negotiate better prices; focus on maintaining high-quality standards throughout the production process, from harvesting to processing; invest in post-harvest handling techniques to preserve coffee quality and reduce losses; diversify crops alongside coffee to mitigate risks associated with market fluctuations; use agro forestry practices to enhance biodiversity and improve soil health, benefiting coffee production.

For Ethiopia to significantly boost its coffee exports, a collaborative effort between government authorities and smallholder farmers is essential. By focusing on policy support, infrastructure development, quality improvement, and market access, both parties can enhance the competitiveness of Ethiopian coffee in the global market.

In the Sphere of Diplomacy

Exploring inclusive, collective strategy to redress Horn Africa's entrenched woes

BY STAFF REPORTER

The Horn African region continues to grapple with civil wars and conflicts, leaving many peaceful citizens vulnerable to displacement, migration, and economic crises. These challenges are often rooted in tribal tensions, political strife, and competition over natural resources, and the situation has deteriorated over time.

Marked by a complex tapestry of ethnicities, cultures, and histories, the region faces ongoing challenges related to conflict, instability, and humanitarian crises. Sustainable peace in this area hinges on the implementation of thoughtful and multifaceted peace-building strategies. Fostering dialogue, promoting socio-economic development, strengthening governance, enhancing regional cooperation, and addressing environmental challenges are critical components that can not only mitigate conflicts but also nurture an enduring culture of peace.

Despite previous efforts to foster peace and stability, meaningful change has remained elusive. The ongoing challenges stem from inadequate government action, lack of involvement from civil society organizations, and the exclusion of marginalized groups, including people with disabilities, from peace-building processes. Additionally, research-driven initiatives have been insufficiently prioritized.

In response to these persistent issues, the "African Strategic Plan for Peace and Security" has been formulated, aiming to address the region's instability from 2024 to 2033. This strategy, designed for implementation in Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, and South Sudan, has been developed by Bread for the World (BfW) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), both international development and agricultural organizations.

Samrawit Worku, American Friends Service Committee, Salama Hub UPR Project Focal Point, emphasizes that the Horn of Africa has suffered for decades from various conflicts. Although tensions have occasionally eased, they have often resurged. Climate change has compounded these challenges, further harming local communities.

Past efforts to secure peace and stability in the Horn of Africa have fallen short due to the persistence of violence and civil strife. The new strategy, informed by research and collaboration, seeks to address these entrenched issues. It consists of five pillars: research-based advocacy, inclusion, transitional justice and healing, governance, and climate and environmental justice. By prioritizing effective advocacy and engaging diverse stakeholders, the strategy aims to facilitate conflict prevention and resolution.

Establishing platforms for open communication can facilitate understanding and reconciliation, allowing communities to engage in discussions about shared grievances and aspirations. Supporting local peace initiatives and traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms can foster inclusivity and ownership among local populations

She also highlighted the diversity of problems faced by East African communities, noting that some groups have been disproportionately affected. The strategy advocates for an inclusive approach, allowing all societal members the opportunity to reclaim their dignity and actively participate in peace-building efforts. Special emphasis will be placed on engaging women, youth, and people with disabilities, marginalized groups, civil society leaders, and religious figures.

Moses Chasieh, director of the Salama Hub program office, underscores the inclusion of people with disabilities in the strategy's implementation, especially under its second pillar. Discussions will focus on ensuring conditions are accessible and accommodating for individuals with disabilities, allowing them to voice their challenges and demands during the implementation process. According to him, the strategy aims to create a structural framework that facilitates participation and emphasizes that disability should not equate to inability. In conflict-ridden East Africa, countless individuals with disabilities have demonstrated their capability, underscoring the importance of advocating for disability rights at the political level. This strategy presents an excellent opportunity to advance this agenda.

Raising awareness and fostering community involvement related to disability will be crucial. The effective inclusion of people with disabilities in the strategy's implementation is essential, as their unique perspectives will significantly contribute to addressing the challenges they face.

Moses stressed that ASPS is an African strategic plan for Peace and security developed by two partnering organizations in the Horn of Africa region to ensure significant peace and stability in the area. By 2033, the strategy seeks to advance peace through research, ensure marginalized groups are integral to decision-making, promote transitional justice, hold governments accountable, and implement conflict-sensitive climate action.

ASPS will address drastic challenges of insecurity, marginalization, and lack of governance by employing five-pillar advocacy strategies focusing on research-based advocacy, inclusion, transitional justice and healing, governance, and climate and environmental justice. This strategy aims to support conflict prevention and resolution by prioritizing credible, impact-driven advocacy and dialogue.

Indeed, as witnessed from the experience of various countries dialogue is essential in bridging divides among disparate ethnic and political groups within the Horn of Africa. Establishing platforms for open communication can facilitate understanding and reconciliation, allowing communities to engage in discussions about shared grievances and aspirations. Supporting local peace initiatives and traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms can foster inclusivity and ownership among local populations. These grassroots efforts can lay the groundwork for broader national dialogues that take into account the unique perspectives and needs of different communities.

In tandem with dialogue, promoting socio-economic development is crucial for peace-

building. Poverty and unemployment contribute to frustration and conflict, making it imperative to invest in education, job creation, and infrastructure development. Enhancing access to essential services such as healthcare and education can improve the quality of life and empower individuals to contribute positively to society. Regional partnerships with international organizations can further facilitate economic cooperation, trade, and investment, creating a more interconnected economic landscape that reduces the impetus for conflict.

Strengthening governance and promoting the rule of law also play vital roles in establishing sustainable peace. Transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance structures are necessary to address the root causes of conflict. This involves fostering democratic processes, supporting civil society, and ensuring that marginalized groups are represented in decision-making. Effective law enforcement and impartial judicial systems are essential in delivering justice, which helps to build trust in institutions and reduces the likelihood of violent outbreaks as grievances can be addressed more effectively.

Moreover, enhancing regional cooperation through collaborations among neighboring countries can significantly bolster peace efforts. Initiatives such as joint peacekeeping missions, regional security agreements, and shared economic projects can create interdependence and a mutual interest in maintaining stability.

Finally, addressing environmental challenges and climate change is increasingly critical for sustained peace in the Horn of Africa. Given the region's vulnerability to droughts, desertification, and resource scarcity, environmental degradation often exacerbates tensions and leads to displacement. Integrating environmental sustainability into peace-building strategies can preemptively address resource-related conflicts. Investing in sustainable land management and fostering community-based natural resource management initiatives can promote resilience, ensuring that communities not only survive but thrive together. By acknowledging and tackling the complex interplay of these factors, the Horn of Africa can forge a path toward lasting peace.

According to the organizers, a launching event and symposium event for ASPS will be held here in Addis Ababa October 16-17. The symposium will bring together representatives from governments, civil society organizations, international organizations, academia, and other relevant sectors. Participants will discuss the strategic pillars of the ASPS, share their insights and experiences, and explore opportunities for collaboration and action.

Law & Politics

Africa's call for permanent membership in the UN Security Council

BY WONDWOSSEN ALEMAYEHU

The formation of the United Nations is said to have a strong historical account. In the aftermath of WWI, it came into existence primarily with the name "League of Nations" with the prime aim of deterring further escalation of conflicts which are precariously attributable to catastrophic human and environmental devastation around the globe.

The allied powers came together with the far-reaching agenda of establishing a global institution which plays a significant role in preventing conflicts from spreading further to regions and aimed to contain the conflicts before becoming unmanageable to control. However, The League of Nations came to be impotent to stop the escalation of wars in the world and consequently, the Second World War broke out.

The League of Nations later came up to become the seed to the foundation of The United Nations which was supposed to be more effective at preventing conflicts around the world. The allied powers of the First and Second World Wars, namely, the USA, United Kingdom, France, Russia China and other signatories had laid a prime foundation for the formation of the grand international institution: The United Nations in 1946.

The United Nations is composed of six principal organs, of which the General Assembly and the Security Council are principal organs. The former is the deliberative body of the UN, featuring representations from each of the member states, while the latter is responsible for maintaining global peace and security.

The Security Council is composed of 15 member states of which five of them are permanent members and the remaining 10 member states, have a non-permanent seat. The permanent member states of the Security Council include only the allied powers which played a significant role in countering the aggression of the central powers during WWI and WWII.

Now here comes a decisive question of why Africa is not represented in the permanent seat of the Security Council. While Africa is a continent with a population size of over 1.4 billion, yet it does not have a permanent seat in the UN's Security Council. The continent comprising 17% of the world population fails to have a rightful representation in the global institution.

The non-representation of Africa in the United Nations Security Council is unacceptable and unjustifiable by any reasonable measures. Such a controversial scenario makes the United Nations which was primarily instituted for prevailing peace and justice around the world- unjust. The institution which mediates between states for sustainable peace and security in the world is failing to represent the continent which comprises the larger population. The institution which strives for justice has

The non-representation of Africa in the United Nations Security Council is unacceptable and unjustifiable by any reasonable measures. Such a controversial scenario makes the United Nations which was primarily instituted for prevailing peace and justice around the world- unjust

become unjust by filing to represent Africa which is the largest nation in the world.

Africa's absence in the representation of the Security Council implies its failure to have veto power to the resolutions made on itself. As the resolutions of the permanent member states of the council are binding, the continent becomes the mere recipient of every sort of decision made by the council. Consequently, such illogical and unjustifiable conditions should be unacceptable in the era of social and technological advancement.

It is remembered that His Excellency Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in his speech at the African Union's summit in the past

emphasized the imperative importance of the African Union securing a permanent seat in the UN's Security Council. His Excellency appealed for Africa to gain more hegemonic power at the UN.

Recently on the 79th session of the United Nations' General Assembly, the Kenyan President His Excellency Samoei Ruto called for the rightful representation of Africa in the Security Council. The president reiterated that the continent's absence in the permanent membership of the Security Council is outrightly deplorable and unwarrantable. He further questioned in his speech why the largest continent comprising over one-fifth of the world population failed to have a permanent representation in the council. His Excellency Kenyan President Samuel Ruto is quoted as saying the following to the General Assembly:

"We must candidly acknowledge that the international cooperation in its current form has clear limitations. It is constrained by entrenched systems and structures that prevent effective action and meaningful progress. Since the last General Assembly global situation has deteriorated across multiple fronts. Conflicts have deepened, economic disparities have widened, and the climate crisis has intensified. To address these forms, we must reform the global collaboration mechanisms. Making them much more responsive adaptable and impactful. The existing international Security architecture represented by the UN's Security Council continues to hamper efforts to maintain international peace and security. The Security Council by all intents and purposes is dysfunctional, undemocratic, non-inclusive, unaccountable, autocratic, abased, and opaque. An institution that excludes 54 African countries with 1.4 billion people while allowing one nation to veto decisions of the remaining 193 member states in the 21st Century is simply unacceptable. We must urgently seek to make the Security Council representative, inclusive, transparent democratic, effective and accountable. In Africa, we are not advocating reforms and collective actions solely at the UN. We are also in the process of comprehensively reforming the African Union to become fit for fit-for-purpose institution that can effectively represent Africa. Effectively representing African nations globally and deliver prosperity."

The President in his speech to the General Assembly accentuated the rightful representation of Africa for better security and development. He underscored the importance of immediate reform of the Security Council for a better future for the world. He also outlined that the African Union is striving for better representation of all the African countries in the union to ensure sustainable peace and development in global terms.

In the same session of the General Assembly, Slovenia's prime minister his excellency Robert Golob, besides explaining the United Nations' ineffective handling of

the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Sudan and Lebanon, underscored the permanent members of the council's misuse of their veto power under the pretext of national interest and thereby, he emphasized such scenarios in the council should be rectified and even the security council should be restructured being inclusive of the African continent with the context of the world today. Slovenia's prime Minister is quoted as saying the following about the need to rectify the composition of the Security Council's permanent member states in alignment with the 21st century;

"To be honest it is the permanent five security council members who bear most responsibility. By misusing veto power and putting national interest first they effectively blocked the working of the UN Security Council. The concerns and pains that we feel for the civilians, the condemnations of the violations of the charter, and the international humanitarian law should not depend on our geographical and physical proximity to the conflict. We should all put common interest first and the world would be a much better place. Having said that let me come to the reform of the Security Council. Our experience with the Security Council has given us a renewed appreciation for the need to reform the Security Council. We urgently need a true representation of the international community. A council that is fit for the world of today. We need to ensure that the distribution of the seats is fair. The council needs stronger voices of the regions that have been underrepresented such as the African Continent. Reform of the Security Council's composition needs to be accompanied by the reform of the veto powers. The reality is that we will not be able to eliminate veto power. We could definitely regulate this right of veto power more precisely. The security council also needs to exercise its power with higher ambition when it comes to prevention of conflicts and play a stronger role in peace-building activities that involve all aspects of the UN system."

The counterpart leaders of Africa and Slovenia have overtly outcried the urgent representation of African countries in the Security Council enabling Africa to obtain the position it deserves as it represents a significant number of populations in the world adding that the move should be in context with the advancement of the world.

In conclusion, Africa's deliberate forfeit of having a permanent position in the Security Council precludes it from having the opportunity of veto power. Its absence in the veto power position makes it forcibly concede to any form of resolutions the permanent members unanimously pass on. Hence, Africa should strive to impact reformation in the council to acquire its due position.

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International News

KQ suspends flights to Somalia amid network adjustments

NAIROBI — Kenya Airways said Friday that it would suspend all flights into and out of Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, from Oct. 15 due to operational challenges as it adjusted its network.

The airline said in a statement issued in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, that the move would allow it to refocus its efforts on optimizing its route network and improving overall operational efficiency.

“Kenya Airways remains committed to continuously optimizing its flight schedule to better align with demand and performance objectives while ensuring the safety of its crew and passengers,” it said.

The Kenyan flag carrier pledged to contact passengers holding bookings on affected flights to or from Mogadishu issued on or before Oct. 4 and for travel on or before Oct. 15 and arrange alternative travel options, including rebooking, refunds, or rerouting.

Kenya Airways also announced several network adjustments for the upcoming peak season to ensure smoother and more efficient operations. It said from Oct. 27, there would be an additional flight from Mauritius to Nairobi, with services to operate on Wednesday, Saturday, and



Sunday.

According to the airline, there will be one additional flight frequency from Nairobi to the Comoros on Thursdays from Oct. 28, which will operate on Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

It said flights to Zanzibar will increase to seven weekly from Oct. 28, while effective Nov. 1, there will be one additional flight from Nairobi to Kigali, Rwanda, on Fridays, increasing the total flights to Kigali to 25 flights weekly.

Kenya Airways said there will be two additional flights from Nairobi to New York between Dec. 5 and Jan. 4, 2025, which will operate on Thursday and Saturday.

Source: Xinhua

Kenyan Coffee Prices Dip Slightly As Brazil Drought Boosts Global Rates

Kenyan Coffee Prices Dip Slightly As Brazil Drought Boosts Global Rates

The value of Kenyan coffee edged down slightly but remained strong as the Nairobi Coffee Exchange held its first auction of the season, with global prices buoyed by a prolonged drought in Brazil, the world's largest coffee producer.

The price for a 50-kg bag of Kenyan coffee fell to \$256 from \$257 at the previous sale, as the country nears the end of sales from its lower-grade short-term crop.

The auction marked the first sale of the new crop year, with traders awaiting the arrival of higher-quality beans from farmers which is expected from November.

Kenya's coffee year begins in October, and the country is expected to gain from a global supply squeeze caused by drought in Brazil.

Brazil's key coffee-growing regions are facing their driest conditions since

1981, severely reducing output and driving up global coffee prices.

Between May and August, Brazil's agricultural hub endured its driest period in over 40 years, according to Cemaden, the country's natural disaster monitoring agency.

With no rain forecast in the next two weeks, the drought is expected to further tighten the global supply of coffee.

Kenya, along with other East African coffee producers such as Ethiopia and Uganda, is poised to benefit from the price surge.

In 2021, Kenya saw a similar rise in earnings when frost in Brazil sharply cut coffee production.

Meanwhile, the Kenyan government is pushing for reforms in the coffee sector, aiming to boost farmers' earnings by reducing the role of intermediaries in the value chain.

Source: Business Day Africa

Egypt: Suez Canal Revenues Plunge 60% On Red Sea Instability

Egypt's Suez Canal has seen a sharp revenue drop of 60 percent and a 49PC decline in ship traffic since the beginning of 2024, as unrest in the Red Sea region disrupts global shipping.

Osama Rabie, head of the Suez Canal Authority (SCA), is quoted by Xinhua, saying shippers are increasingly avoiding the canal due to instability, driven by escalating violence in the region.

The Red Sea has become a hotspot for attacks, particularly since the Gaza conflict intensified in late 2023, with Yemen's Houthi forces targeting vessels linked to Israel.

Revenue from the canal dropped significantly, down to \$7.2 billion in the 2023/2024 fiscal year from \$9.4 billion the previous year, according to SCA data.

The Suez Canal, a critical source of foreign currency for Egypt, is facing growing competition as shipping companies seek alternative routes.

This comes as the country battles deepening economic troubles, including surging inflation and a weakening currency that has it devalue its pound before.

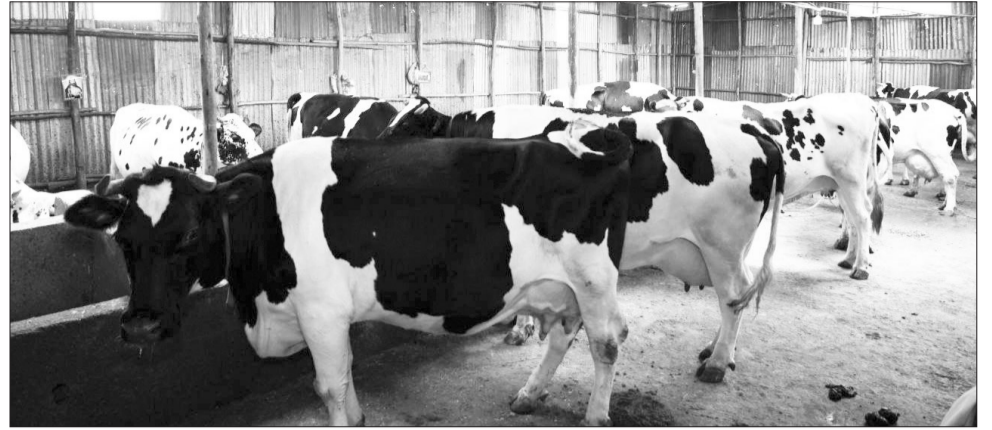
Rabie warned that the challenges posed by regional instability could further erode the canal's earnings in the months ahead, complicating efforts to stabilise Egypt's economy amidst ongoing geopolitical tensions.

This shift from Suez Canal has resulted in delays in delivery and prolonged voyage times that will increase costs for goods, which relies mainly on imports to meet the demand of most of their goods.

The Red Sea, a critical route for oil and fuel shipments globally, is witnessing an uptick in Houthi attacks, employing drones and rockets against foreign-owned vessels.

Source: Business Day Africa

Society



Yelemat Tirufat gaining momentum

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Ethiopia, a nation endowed with vast agricultural potential, faces significant challenges in achieving food security. These challenges stem from a variety of underlying issues, including climate change and economic constraints. Recognizing the urgency of these issues, the government has launched the “Bounty of the Basket” (*Yelemat Tirufat*) program—an innovative initiative aimed at enhancing food production and promoting sustainable agricultural practices across the nation. This program seeks not only to address food shortages but also to empower local communities through entrepreneurship and agricultural innovation.

As the *Yelemat Tirufat* initiative gains traction, it has attracted numerous citizens and entrepreneurs eager to contribute to its goals. Recently, a group of journalists had the opportunity to visit *Sheger City*, particularly focusing on the *Gelan Guddaa* and *Koye-Feche* Sub-Cities. During this visit, they witnessed firsthand how local farmers are engaging in various agricultural practices, including dairy farming, poultry production, honey processing, animal fattening, and aquaculture. These activities highlight the diverse opportunities within the agricultural sector that the *Yelemat Tirufat* program aims to support.

One notable entrepreneur is Muslim Nasir, CEO of FeedWell PLC, who, alongside his partner Abenezzer Engda, is making significant strides in the *Gelan Guddaa* Sub-City. Muslim shared his journey into the agricultural sector and the vital support he has received along the way. “I had been self-employed for five years, but my ventures faced numerous challenges,” he explained. However, alongside his partners—whom he studied in China, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering—he has now embarked on a successful journey in agro-processing. Abenezzer, who graduated with a degree in Economics and International Trade, has also played a crucial role in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

Upon returning to Ethiopia in 2020, the duo explored various business avenues while honing their entrepreneurial skills. “We always dreamed of entering the agro-processing industry,

and we realized we possessed the necessary resources, potential, and market to succeed,” Muslim stated. Together, they established FeedWell PLC, laying out a clear roadmap for their goals. Their initial steps included drafting a comprehensive business plan, identifying reliable machinery manufacturers, and creating a project budget. After approaching financiers, particularly the Development Bank of Ethiopia, they faced a nearly two-year process to finalize their financing.

The establishment of a sustainable and scalable working environment was also a priority for the FeedWell team. They engaged with the Oromia state and the administrators of *Sheger City and Gelan Guddaa* Sub-City, who facilitated access to essential working space and infrastructure. With their plans organized, they developed strategies for both backward and forward supply chain linkages, aligning their efforts with the Prime Minister’s vision for the “Bounty of the Basket” initiative. Their business aims to operate a poultry farm that specializes in raising starter chickens, accompanied by market linkages established through innovative “portable fast food mini shops” that aim to provide affordable, quality, and sustainable chicken products to local consumers.

Quality animal feed is indispensable for maintaining livestock health and maximizing productivity. Recognizing this, FeedWell PLC is committed to prioritizing high-quality nutrition for farmers. By doing so they can enhance livestock welfare, improve growth rates, and boost overall profitability. Muslim has also initiated plans to establish an animal feed production facility, contacting the Ethiopian Development Bank for support. “They conducted a thorough examination of my project and provided me with machinery worth 12 million birr through lease financing,” he confirmed, reflecting on the support that has significantly contributed to their ambitions.

The significance of the “Bounty of the Basket” initiative cannot be overstated. Its focus on agricultural productivity, community engagement, and sustainable practices holds the potential to enhance food security across the nation. When all stakeholders—government, private sector, and civil society—actively contribute this initiative could bring



transformative changes to Ethiopia’s agricultural landscape, ensuring a brighter future for generations to come. The FeedWell team sources inputs from various regions and supplies high-quality animal feed to enterprises engaged in poultry, fattening, and dairy production. Additionally, they have established reliable water and electricity supplies, with strong support from the local administration.

As a testament to their success, FeedWell PLC has already created job opportunities for over five local citizens and aims to expand further. The company is dedicated to providing high-quality feed critical for livestock farming and, consequently, food security.

Sintayehu Sisay (PhD), Head of *Gelan Guddaa* Sub-City Agriculture Office, stated, “We are tirelessly working to empower communities by providing financial support and training in sustainable practices. By equipping individuals with the necessary skills and resources, the program nurtures entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency.”

For this fiscal year, the initiative has set ambitious goals, including the organization of 500 new enterprises, with 300 already established. Among these are 21 active poultry farms and 22 dairy fattening operations operating from a single site, along with two animal feed production ventures. The local government encourages these initiatives, understanding that access to quality animal feed is essential for raising healthy livestock, which in turn produces vital meat, milk, eggs, and other nutritional products for the

community.

The relentless push for development within the agricultural sector under the *Yelemat Tirufat* initiative reflects a deeper understanding of the role that quality feed plays in enhancing livestock health and productivity. By promoting access to high-quality nutrition, the FeedWell team is not just benefiting livestock; they are also supporting the establishment of sustainable and efficient agricultural systems throughout the region. They aim to ensure the productivity of the agro-processing sector, recognizing that high-quality feed promotes efficient growth, successful reproduction, and overall animal health—concepts crucial for improving farmers’ livelihoods and contributing to both local and national economies.

Sintayehu emphasized the importance of effective engagement of human capital in national development. This approach not only facilitates economic growth but also empowers various sectors, particularly agriculture. By focusing on productive practices, especially in areas like poultry farming, honey production, animal fattening, and dairy farming, stakeholders can cultivate a sustainable agricultural ecosystem that benefits both farmers and the broader economy.

He further highlighted that, engaging human capital productively through the *Yelemat Tirufat* initiative showcases a genuine potential to transform agricultural practices and drive national development. Empowering farmers to actively participate in critical agricultural sectors—such as poultry, honey production, animal fattening, and dairy farming—can lead to the creation of a resilient agricultural landscape. Such developments are essential for ensuring food security, fostering economic stability, and contributing to the overall prosperity of the nation.

Through education, access to resources, community support, and market engagement, Ethiopia can unlock the full potential of its agricultural sector. The ripple effects of these efforts will undoubtedly benefit not only farmers and their families but also the society at large. As *Yelemat Tirufat* program gathers momentum, it stands as a beacon of hope for a nation seeking to leverage its agricultural wealth towards achieving food security and sustainable development for generations to come.

Planet Earth

How Ethiopia features in terms of developing food security in the country

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Food self-sufficiency and food security are crucial issues for Ethiopia, given its large population, agricultural-based economy, and vulnerability to recurring droughts and other environmental challenges.

Agriculture is the backbone of Ethiopia's economy, employing a majority of the population and contributing significantly to the country's GDP. However, Ethiopia's agriculture is predominantly rain-fed and vulnerable to climatic variability, which poses challenges to food production and security.

The Ethiopian government has implemented various initiatives and strategies to improve food self-sufficiency and enhance food security. These include agricultural development programs, investments in irrigation infrastructure, promotion of improved farming practices, and support for smallholder farmers through subsidies, credit facilities, and extension services.

Ethiopia has been promoting crop diversification to enhance resilience to climate change and improve food security. Efforts to diversify crops beyond traditional staples like teff, maize, and sorghum include promoting high-value crops such as fruits, vegetables, oilseeds, and pulses, which can contribute to dietary diversity, income generation, and nutrition security.

Ethiopia has been investing in water management infrastructure, including dams, reservoirs, and irrigation schemes, to enhance water availability for agricultural production, especially during dry seasons. These investments aim to increase crop yields, stabilize food production, and mitigate the impact of droughts and water scarcity on food security.

Given Ethiopia's susceptibility to climate-related shocks and natural disasters, resilience-building measures are essential for ensuring food security. These include early warning systems, disaster preparedness, risk mitigation strategies, and social safety nets to support vulnerable populations during periods of food insecurity and crisis.

Despite progress in improving food self-sufficiency at the national level, there are significant regional disparities in food security within Ethiopia. Certain regions, particularly those prone to drought and conflict, face chronic food insecurity and require targeted interventions to address underlying causes such as poverty, land degradation, and limited access to resources.

Enhancing market access and improving food distribution systems are critical for ensuring food availability and affordability, especially in remote and rural areas. Investments in transportation infrastructure, market facilities, storage capacities, and market information systems can facilitate the efficient movement of food commodities and reduce post-harvest losses.

Achieving food security goes beyond ensuring an adequate supply of calories; it also entails addressing issues of nutrition security and dietary quality. Ethiopia's food security efforts increasingly focus on promoting nutrition-sensitive agriculture, improving access to diverse and nutritious foods, and addressing malnutrition, particularly among women and children.

Measures to reverse the level of land degradation



and create a source of income generation for food-insecure households through a focus on biological measures, such as re-forestation and land preservation. The National Green Legacy Initiative launched by Prime Minister Abiy four years back and the consequent Lemat Trufat Program and more than 11 irrigation schemes that are currently under construction or those completed certainly show the level on which the government has prioritized food security.

Moreover, water harvesting and the introduction of high-value crops, livestock and agro-forestry development have been conducted in various parts of the country.

Agriculture is considered to be the starting point for initiating the structural transformation of the economy. Because of this, agricultural development-led industrialization (ADLI) has been pursued as a major policy framework since 1991. ADLI assists the development of agriculture and helps expand markets for domestic production leading to increased incomes for small holders.

High population growth rates continue to undermine Ethiopia's ability to be food secure and provide effective education, health and other essential social and economic services. The central elements of the policy focus on a multi-sector approach, improving family planning services and expanding education.

HIV/AIDS is a formidable challenge to the pursuit of food security in Ethiopia as it reduces and debilitates the productive population and society as a whole. The government has put in place a national policy and countrywide program for the whole population to control and reduce the spread of the disease.

Women have a substantive productive role in the rural sector, including participation in livestock maintenance and management, crop production, and the marketing of rural produce. Integration of gender perspectives in the design and implementation of economic and social policies, programs and projects is considered central to the national food security strategy.

This is critical to the pursuit of food security and economic development generally. Development depends on the appropriate and sustainable use of the environment and the management of natural resources. Given the high environmental degradation in drought-prone and pastoral areas, environmental rehabilitation (soil and water conservation) is an essential element.

Ethiopia has made notable strides in improving food security and agricultural development over the years, although challenges persist. Some key achievements in Ethiopia's efforts

toward food security include:

The country has implemented various initiatives to enhance agricultural productivity, including the adoption of improved seeds, modern farming techniques, and sustainable land management practices. These efforts have contributed to increased crop yields and diversified agricultural production.

Nation has invested in the development of irrigation infrastructure to mitigate the impact of erratic rainfall patterns and droughts. Large-scale irrigation projects, including the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and small-scale irrigation schemes, have expanded access to water for agricultural purposes, boosting crop production and resilience to climate variability.

Smallholder farmers play a significant role in Ethiopia's agriculture sector, accounting for the majority of food production. Government policies and programs have focused on supporting smallholder farmers through access to credit, extension services, market linkages, and input subsidies to improve their productivity and livelihoods.

Ethiopia has taken steps to improve food distribution systems and enhance market access for farmers, traders, and consumers. Investments in rural infrastructure, transportation networks, and market facilities have facilitated the movement of food commodities from surplus to deficit areas, reducing food price volatility and improving food availability.

Ethiopia has implemented community-based nutrition programs to address malnutrition and improve dietary diversity among vulnerable populations, particularly women and children. These programs focus on promoting breastfeeding, micronutrient supplementation, nutrition education, and the cultivation of nutrient-rich crops to combat malnutrition and stunting.

Given Ethiopia's vulnerability to recurrent droughts and climate-related shocks, resilience-building measures and disaster preparedness efforts are integral to ensuring food security. Early warning systems, social safety nets, emergency food assistance programs, and investments in drought-resistant crops help mitigate the impact of food crises and support communities during times of hardship.

Ethiopia's government has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing food security challenges through national development plans, strategies, and partnerships with international organizations, donors, and development partners. Collaborative initiatives aim to mobilize resources, build institutional capacity,

and implement innovative solutions to improve food security outcomes.

It is now obvious that the Ethiopian Government has achieved remarkable results in attaining food security in the country through recent mass based projects like Yelemat Trufat meaning Basket Bounty and Made in Ethiopia projects that are showing promising results.

Fighting food insecurity is currently being conducted in the country through multiple projects that are integrated. For instance a number of dams constructed in Borena Zone of Oromia are enabling the population not only to engage in sedentary irrigation programs to produce crops and vegetables but have become sources of feed and drinks for livestock in the zone.

Promotion of food security in Ethiopia also entails not only producing food but also conserving extra crops and vegetables in a modern and traditional ways through conservations schemes like drying, smoking and keeping aside selected seeds for the next crop season.

While Ethiopia has made significant progress in enhancing food security, persistent challenges such as climate variability, land degradation, population growth, and poverty continue to pose obstacles to sustainable development. Addressing these challenges requires continued investment, policy coherence, and multi sector collaboration to build a resilient and inclusive food system that ensures access to nutritious food for all Ethiopians.

Apart from the above mentioned achievements and challenges, Ethiopia still needs to resolve other forms of challenges that directly or indirectly affect the countries food security initiatives.

The writer is of the opinion that inflation on food prices is already a challenge followed by mismanagement of the distribution of agricultural inputs like fertilizers and selected seeds.

On the other hand, despite their potentials in contributing to the promotion of food security in the country, the extent to which microfinance institutions in Ethiopia are up to their expectations is still not clear. Food security is not only a matter of producing food but having access to food from markets. The current price of 100 kilos of teff has surpassed 10,000 birr and a piece of enjera now is birr 30. What kind of contribution can the microfinance institutions provide to potential clients in supporting them to have access to food? The author hopes they may have the answer.

Food security cannot be attained in Ethiopia by a single handed effort of the government. Civil society organizations and international NGOs operating on food security at household level need to accelerate their efforts, particularly in drought prone zones of the country.

Ethiopia is on track in attaining food security in the shortest possible time but the public needs to contribute their part by extensively participating on urban agriculture and backyard gardening in rural and outback areas. A recent report indicated that the country stood second in Africa in attaining food security.

The upcoming conference on global hunger is expected to come up with workable strategies that could be instrumental in resolving the hunger crisis across the world. Ethiopia will share her experience to the delegates from across the world.