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## Continental, regional block commend Ankara agreement

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** Continental and regional blocks have welcomed and commended the Ankara agreement signed between Ethiopia and Somalia, emphasizing the diplomatic effort in addressing shared challenges and fostering stability and prosperity in the Horn of Africa.

The African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat welcomed the communiqué signed by sisterly nations under the auspices of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye.

“The Chairperson of the Commission welcomes this important act of high responsibility on the part of the leaders of Somalia

*See Continental, regional ... page 3*



## Corruption reporting improves since digital system introduction:

*Commission*

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA –** The Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission announced that it has seen a significant improvement in corruption reporting since the implementation of online reporting system.

Commission’s Corruption Information Management, Lead Executive Officer Mesfin Belayneh told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the organization is applying a modern system to fight

*See Corruption reporting ... page 3*



# Ethiopia, Somalia forge path to enhance cooperation

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA –** Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has affirmed Ethiopia’s aspiration for secure and reliable access to

the sea as a peaceful venture that benefits not just Ethiopia but all its neighbors.

The statement was made during Ankara-facilitated talks on Wednesday, aimed at resolving the tension between Ethiopia and Somalia. Turkish President Recep

Tayyip

Erdogan announced late Wednesday that the two nations had reached an agreement to peacefully settle their differences.

Following the agreement, Prime Minister Abiy  
*See Ethiopia, Somalia ... page 3*

# Takeaways for Somaliland’s president inaugural speech

BY HIZKEL HAILU

**HARGEISA –** Somaliland’s newly elected President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi (Cirro) has highlighted the deep bond between Somaliland and Ethiopia, commending Ethiopia’s unwavering support and its pivotal role in ensuring peace and stability in the Horn of Africa (HoA).

The newly elected president made these remarks during his inaugural speech yesterday, emphasizing the enduring partnership between the two parties. “We value our relationship with Ethiopia, a partnership built on mutual respect and shared aspirations for peace and prosperity,” President Abdullahi stated, underscoring Ethiopia’s status as a strategic neighbor and vital ally.

Among the attendees were Ethiopia’s



former President Mulatu Teshome (PhD) and the Chief Administrator of the Somali State of Ethiopia Mustafe Muhumed Omar. President Abdullahi expressed gratitude for Ethiopia’s contributions to developmental

and humanitarian initiatives, reaffirming Somaliland’s commitment to strengthening collaboration.

*See Takeaways for ... page 3*



## ERC, COIPA Capital agree to advance critical initiatives

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Ethiopian Railway Corporation (ERC) and COIPA Capital have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to advance initiatives and projects.

The ERC and COIPA Capital signed the MoU yesterday to contribute meaningfully to Ethiopia's economic growth and infrastructural development.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, ERC Deputy CEO Getu Gizaw (Eng.) said that the ERC and COIPA Capital will work together to advance critical initiatives, including logistics port projects and others in order to enhance country's connectivity to international markets by developing modern, efficient, and integrated port logistics infrastructure.

The projects reflect ERC's commitment to fostering economic growth, strengthening regional integration, and ensuring sustainable development. "This collaboration demonstrates the power of partnerships in achieving ambitious goals and addressing the challenges of our time. We aim to create world-class logistics and railway systems that drive economic growth," He said.

"As we formalize this agreement today,



Photo : Hadush Abreha

I am confident that the synergy between ERC and COIPA Capital will yield tangible results that benefit not only our organizations but also the broader Ethiopian community. Let this be the beginning of a fruitful and enduring relationship."

According to him, the projects are expected to create thousands of jobs, strengthen ties between Ethiopia and European industries, advance training programs and others.

For his part, COIPA CEO Vito Favorito Sciammarella (PhD) pointed out that his company's commitment to bring the

best European expertise and financing solutions to support Ethiopia's ambitious infrastructural development goals.

The MoU with COIPA Capital will provide technical, financial, and advisory support, leveraging its extensive experience in structuring and financing large-scale industrial parks. It will attract international investors, secure financing via international banks and export credit agencies, enhance the country's capacity to design, construct, and manage large-scale infrastructure projects, it was learnt.

## Commission to further contribute to Nat'l dev't

\* Celebrates 76th Int'l Saving, Credit Cooperatives Day

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Initiatives are being implemented to maximize cooperatives' contribution to socioeconomic development, the Addis Ababa Cooperatives Commission said, as the enterprises' annual average lending capacity reached 2.7 billion Birr.

The Commission in partnership with the Addis Ababa Saving and Credit Cooperation Federation (AASCCF) celebrated the 76th International Saving and Credit Cooperatives Day yesterday under the theme "One World through Cooperative Finance."

During the event, the Commission's Deputy Commissioner, Habteyes Diro said that the cooperatives' annual average lending capacity reached 2.7 billion Birr.

The commission has been carrying out various activities to provide technology-assisted services to address communities' challenges and ensure mutual benefit. Besides, it is making a significant contribution to the economic development of the country through providing financial services to the lower class of society, he mentioned.

Globally, some 82,758 saving and credit cooperative unions, which embraced over 4.9 million members in 98 countries at the international level have been engaging in various development activities. And Ethiopia has over 23,000 robust saving and credit cooperative unions that incorporate more than five million members, he stated.

"In Addis, there are persisting two finance saving and credit cooperative unions which have over 291,448 members. These unions have made 10 billion Birr," Habteyes added.

Habteyes further stated that the purpose of savings and credit cooperatives is to promote and expand the culture of saving and to facilitate members with adequate loans to do business and improve their life.

AASCCF's Chairperson, Mohammed Shemesu also said that cooperatives are prioritizing humanity in any situation.

According to him, the saving and credit cooperatives have been playing a pivotal role in addressing communities' socioeconomic challenges.

He further stated that cooperatives are engines of changes as they are addressing a number of constraints. For instance, they are playing a crucial role in combating climate change, fostering social development, ensuring financial equality and inclusion, and the likes.

Therefore, the federation will strengthen upcoming cooperation unions to become game changer in socioeconomic development, Mohammed said.

## Ethiopia forms partnership for Gambella Nat'l Park conservation

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ministry of Tourism (MoT) has emphasized the importance of a collaborative effort to sustain environmentally-friendly and sustainable development for Gambella National Park.

Tourism Minister Selamawit Kassa made the statement during the signing ceremony of a collaborative management partnership on Wednesday among the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Gambella National Park-the nation's largest national park-and African Parks.

The agreement aims to ensure sustainable wildlife conservation and create a conducive environment for joint efforts in ecological preservation.

The minister highlighted that the partnership is significant for advancing ecosystem development, wildlife and forest protection, and creating an enabling environment for future generations. She also acknowledged Ethiopia's ongoing efforts to combat climate change, promote tourism, and ensure food security under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

"The corridor development will soon be implemented to transform Gambella, generate jobs, and attract more tourists to the area," Selamawit said. She also noted the importance of the agreement for the Gambella communities and neighboring South Sudan.

She urged all stakeholders to intensify their efforts in bridging gaps and enhancing wildlife protection in Gambella National



Photo: Dagne Abera

Park and surrounding areas.

EWCA Director General, Kumara Wakjira, described the agreement as monumental and historic for ensuring wildlife conservation and creating a prosperous future for the next generation.

According to him, Gambella boasts an incredible population of wildlife, including over six million animals, some of which move across the border into South Sudan. However, he pointed out that the local community has not been reaping sufficient benefits from this potential.

"The agreement is vital in addressing gaps in wildlife management, conservation skills, and knowledge, particularly through African Parks' expertise," Kumara said. He added that the government is working closely with private sector partners, local communities, and other stakeholders to achieve sustainable development and conservation of wildlife and environmental protection.

Gambella State Chief Administrator, Alemitu Umod, also emphasized the state's vast natural potential, which has been

underutilized due to various challenges. She praised the partnership agreement as a golden opportunity for conserving the parks and benefiting the local community in a cooperative manner.

However, Alemitu acknowledged that conflicts in the area and the migration from South Sudan pose challenges to wildlife conservation. To address these issues, the Gambella State government is working closely with stakeholders on both sides.

African Parks CEO, Peter Fearnhead, remarked that the partnership is crucial for developing the state's ecology and ensuring a holistic and integrated management system. He assured African Parks' commitment to providing necessary support for Gambella National Park's development.

Fearnhead also commended Ethiopia's ongoing efforts in tourism development, wildlife conservation, and forestry initiatives. He noted that the agreement would play a pivotal role in ensuring the socioeconomic benefits for the residents on both sides of the border.



# News

## Ethiopians purchase 65,000 Euro bond to support Abbay Dam

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopian Diasporas in Rome have purchased a 65,000 Euro bond sold for the completion of the construction of country's mega hydropower project, Ethiopian Embassy in Rome announced.

The embassy stated that it has coordinated the sale of the bond to support the completion of the construction of the grand dam.

Recently, an Ethiopian living in Rome went to the embassy and purchased the bond prepared to support the project, the



information obtained from the official page of the embassy indicated.

The individual stated that Abbay Dam is

not only a development issue, but also a symbol of unity and sovereignty, so buying

bonds is an important task expected from

every citizen.

The embassy expressed appreciation to the individuals who have done the bond purchase. Including this, the Embassy announced that more than 80,000 euros have been collected from the Diaspora through bond sales and gifts for the completion of the grand dam in the last six months.

Currently, the total construction of Abbay Dam has attained 97.6%. Over 20 billion Birr have been collected since the commencement of the construction of the project. Of this, more than 311 million Birr have been collected in four months of this fiscal year alone, it was stated.

### Takeaways...

The president also laid out an ambitious vision for the future, including plans to bolster cross-border trade and collaborate with Ethiopia on addressing regional challenges such as climate change, security threats, and youth unemployment.

For many Somalilanders, the inauguration was not just a political event but a celebration of democracy and hope. "This is a victory for democracy and peace. Our ability to transfer power peacefully sets an example for all of Africa," remarked Ahmed Yusuf, a teacher in Hargeisa.

Fatima Abdi, a market vendor, shared similar sentiments: "Today proves that Somaliland stands strong in its commitment to democracy. We are showing the world who we are."

For Mohammed Ibrahim, a university student, the peaceful transfer of power signified a promising future. "The peaceful handover of power gives us hope for a united and prosperous future. This is not just about politics but about our identity as a nation," he said.

The inauguration of President Abdullahi marked a significant moment for the WADDANI Party, which secured the presidency for the first time in 14 years following a decisive victory in the November 2024 elections. The ceremony was attended by international delegations, regional leaders, and representatives from global organizations.

It is worth noting that opposition candidate Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi 'Cirro' of the Waddani Party defeated incumbent President Muse BihiAbdi of the Kulmiye Party in the November 2024 elections.

### Continental, regional block...

and Ethiopia. He strongly encourages them to implement, without delay, the relevant measures adopted."

He further congratulated President Tayyip Erdogan for his support to the two parties in their shared commitment to resolve their differences through consultation and dialogue, in the best interests of their countries and peoples.

Likewise, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Executive Secretary Workneh Gebeyehu (PhD) has commended the landmark Ankara Agreement reached between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Federal Republic of Somalia.

"This significant accord marks a substantial

step towards strengthening the long-standing social fabric between the two sisterly nations and demonstrates a commitment to resolving bilateral issues amicably."

The Executive Secretary also praised the leaders of both countries for their constructive engagement and spirit of cooperation. He emphasized the importance of such diplomatic efforts in addressing shared challenges and fostering stability and prosperity in the Horn of Africa (HoA).

Acknowledging President Erdoğan's dedication to diplomacy and regional collaboration as a crucial factor in realizing this important milestone, he reiterated IGAD's commitment to supporting its Member States in their pursuit of sustainable solutions through

dialogue, partnership, and mutual cooperation.

Similarly, the European Union welcomed the declaration agreed in Ankara between the two countries, stressing that the agreement reflects the importance of mutual respect and dialogue in de-escalating tensions in the HoA.

It also reiterated its support for the unity, the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia pursuant to principles enshrined in international law.

"We recognize the important role played by the Republic of Türkiye in achieving this agreement and stand ready to support further efforts by the parties involved, continuing our involvement in mediation efforts."

### Ethiopia, Somalia forge path...

and Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud issued a joint statement emphasizing the importance of cooperation and dialogue between their nations. Both leaders committed to moving forward together to achieve common prosperity while addressing Ethiopia's need for sea access.

The Premier thanked Türkiye for its dedication to peace efforts in the Horn of Africa, noting, "A venture like this must be met in the spirit of cooperation and not suspicion. I believe today's constructive discussions will pave the way for a new year marked by cooperation, friendship, and the willingness to work together rather than against each other."

Abiy highlighted that Ethiopia's growing youth population and economic demands necessitate access to the sea, which would unleash economic dynamism and generate positive spillover effects across the Horn of Africa.

"As neighbors, Ethiopia and Somalia share centuries of relations. We are not

just neighbors but brothers and sisters, bound by blood," he said. "Ethiopians and Somalis share a common history, language, and culture, strengthened by the sacrifices of thousands of Ethiopian soldiers who defended Somalia against terrorist threats."

Expressing gratitude for the year-long efforts to facilitate the discussions, PM Abiy stated, "Ours was never a case for third-party intervention; rather, it was meant to be a family dialogue." He reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to regional integration, emphasizing mutual development and shared growth as the foundation for stability in the Horn of Africa.

Similarly, Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud pledged to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by Ethiopian troops in safeguarding Somalia from terrorist attacks, particularly within the African Union peacekeeping missions.

"Ethiopian forces have shown their commitment to Somalia's security over many

years," President Mohamud said. "Ethiopia and Somalia have more commonalities than differences. Our shared history, culture, and values highlight how interconnected our people are. We must build on these commonalities for mutual benefit."

He underscored the region's need for collaboration, adding, "The Horn of Africa is a fertile but volatile region that requires Ethiopia and Somalia to work together to achieve peace and prosperity for our peoples and the region at large."

At a joint news conference, Turkish President Erdogan lauded the progress made during the peace talks. "We have taken the first step toward a new beginning based on peace and cooperation between Somalia and Ethiopia," he said.

Erdogan expressed satisfaction with hosting the delegations in Türkiye and highlighted the success of the Ankara Process, initiated eight months ago. "This achievement reflects the trust Ethiopia and Somalia have placed in Türkiye's mediation efforts," he remarked.

### Corruption reporting improves since digital...

corruption, enhance good governance, promote transparency, and accountability and resource management.

Recently, the commission has developed digital application system, which helps to control embezzlement and decrease the risk of corruption in the process of issuing permits, grants, or public procurement, he mentioned.

"Because of this system, reporting of

corruption is growing by three fold as citizens are exposing individuals suspected of corruption, which shows the proactive nature of the people and the efficiency of the new system," Mesfin said.

The Commission has been receiving reports of corrupt activities, he said, adding that the people can submit any signs of corruption incidents or suspicious person from any place in a secure way without wasting their

time, money and energy.

The Lead Executive Officer added that the system is instrumental to accurately identify individuals suspected of corruption, thereby opening charges.

Moreover, it has a paramount importance to receive the information free of human contact, which facilitates the investigation of the corruption act and even provides a more effective early warning system, he stated.

He indicated that the report can be submitted using cellphones, computers in a way to prevent, investigate and prosecute all forms of corruption in Ethiopia.

The digital reporting platform system that was developed in collaboration with Ethiopian Artificial Intelligence Institute, is a significant milestone in the fight against corruption in the country, according to Mesfin.



# Opinion

## Ethio-Czech ties reach new heights, setting example for others

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

The Czech Republic, formerly known as Bohemia, is a landlocked country in Central Europe. It is bounded by Austria to the south, Germany to the west, Poland to the northeast, and Slovakia to the southeast. The Czech Republic's hilly topography covers 78,871 square kilometers (30,452 square miles) and has a largely temperate continental and oceanic climate.

The Czech Republic is a developed country with a high-income social market economy and a unitary parliamentary system. It boasts a higher Human Development Index and is a member of the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, and several other regional and international organizations.

The Czech Republic is a vibrant country with a rich history, diversified culture, and robust economy. It plays a significant role in Central Europe and has strong diplomatic contacts with other countries globally.

The Czech Republic has also long-standing relations with Ethiopia. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic The oldest remarks about a "far-away" African Ethiopia (Empire of legendary King John) entered into the Czech conscience through the Holy Bible and also through the map by Cosmas Indikopleust, a monk from Sinai monastery native of Alexandria (around 535 AD) and later also through reports by Italian and Portuguese explorers and missionaries.

Currently they connect diplomatically, economically, and culturally. While the two countries are geographically separated and have distinct historical settings, they have built a partnership over time.

Politically, both nations have strengthened their bilateral ties through diplomatic relations. This covers conversations about a range of topics that both parties find interesting. Ethiopia and the Czech Republic work together in international fora, concentrating on world issues including environmental preservation, peace, development, and security.

However, Ethiopia and the Czech Republic, in terms of economics, have a small trade volume but Ethiopia sends raw materials and agricultural products, while the Czech Republic exports automobiles, machinery, and medications to Ethiopia. Czech investment in Ethiopia has been promoted, especially in industries including manufacturing, infrastructure, and agriculture. The Czech Republic has participated in development initiatives in Ethiopia, concentrating on infrastructure, health, and education.

The Ministry's website further indicates that within the framework of development cooperation (ODA), the Czech Republic has been active in Ethiopia to a greater extent since 2001. Since 2011, Ethiopia has been one of the priority countries for Czech development cooperation. The main Czech development



activities focused on education, water supply and, to a lesser extent, agriculture and social development. Currently, Czech development cooperation focuses on agriculture and rural development together with sustainable management of natural resources.

Additionally, the two nations are working to promote cultural understanding through various activities. This covers cultural activities and educational exchanges that highlight the traditions of each nation.

Taking their long-standing relationship into mind, the two countries have been seeking to strengthen their ties. There have been some recent advancements in this regard, particularly bilateral state visits. High-level visits by officials from both nations have occurred to strengthen bonds. The visit also

focuses on development and seeks to identify prospects for collaboration in development projects that benefit Ethiopian society.

Following the country's political transformation in mid-2018, bilateral relations have improved in all areas. The high-level official visits to Ethiopia and the Czech Republic, in particular, reflect the two countries' respective levels.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed paid a visit to Czech, while Czech Republic officials arrived in Ethiopia for official state visits. During the visits, both countries discussed ways to improve bilateral cooperation in tourism, agriculture, defense capacity building, and other critical sectors.

They also agreed on the necessity of increasing the two countries' political

and economic relations by holding frequent political discussions and joint business conferences with demonstrable outcomes. The Czech Republic reiterated its commitment to assisting Ethiopia in its efforts to improve climate resilience through a green legacy.

Marian Jurečka, the Czech Republic's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, visited Ethiopia for the third time this week. During the visits, he committed to strengthening Ethiopian-Czech relations by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together on development initiatives and long-term financing arrangements. He also expressed a strong desire to increase collaboration in tourism and wildlife conservation.

Along with his delegation, Deputy Prime Minister Jurečka also visited the Ethiopian Agricultural Works Corporation, the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, and the Abrehot Library. He commended the library's resources and programming while also donating a collection of books. He also emphasized the significance of the recently constructed Abrehot Library and Adwa Victory Memorial Museum in raising a bright and educated youth.

For the past forty years, the Ethiopian Agricultural Works Corporation has been providing farmers with access to agrochemicals, improved seeds, soil fertilizers, cattle medications, and agricultural equipment. He commended the Ethiopian Agricultural Works Corporation's efforts and said his country was prepared to assist them. He also praised the Ethiopian government's development efforts and demonstrated the European nation's dedication to working together to provide agricultural technology and advance animal development.

He also stated that his team included business leaders. Hence, the visit was intended to strengthen commercial connections between Ethiopia and the Czech Republic. He underscored Ethiopia's significant role in Africa, noting that it is strategically important to the Czech Republic, as evidenced by the resolve to strengthen bilateral relations. The Minister emphasized the need for strengthening bilateral relations in areas such as the economy, industry, commerce, investment, water and energy, agriculture, and defense industry collaboration.

In general, Ethiopian-Czech diplomatic relations are characterized by a desire to broaden collaboration in all fields. Their relationships reach new heights and serve as an example for others. While the relationship requires additional development, there is room for growth and collaboration in political, economic, cultural, and educational areas.

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



# Editorial

## Ethiopia and Somalia: Affirming commitment to cooperation, regional stability

On Wednesday, Ethiopia and Somalia poured cold water on the relentless efforts of third parties seeking a destabilized Horn. In a peace declaration brokered by Türkiye, the neighboring nations agreed to ease tensions. This development accentuated Ethiopia's unwavering commitment to resolve differences through negotiations and sent a clear message that the country's quest for a direct sea outlet is irreversible and based on a win-win approach with far-reaching regional dividends.

The agreement inked by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Somalia President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud also foils the smear campaign by some external parties that have been trying to sow discord between the two nations. It sends a clear message to friends and foes that Ethiopia's pursuit of direct access to the sea is righteous and that peaceful negotiation is the sole means to redress any concern related to the matter.

Since tensions started to flare up on wrong perceptions, Ethiopia has called for an open and transparent dialogue with Mogadishu to address any concern while acknowledging the country's legitimate economic and security interests. With the signing of the deal, Ethiopia has lived up to its words continuing on its symbolic and exemplary gesture towards amicable ties with neighboring nations.

Above all, the deal also corroborated Ethiopia's just cause to have direct access to the sea outlet. And, according to some reports, both nations agreed to work closely together on commercial arrangements and bilateral agreements that would ensure Ethiopia's "reliable, safe and sustainable access" to the sea outlet.

Speaking at a press conference following the agreement, Ethiopia's Abiy said, "We have addressed the misunderstandings that have occurred over the past year.

"Ethiopia's desire for secure access to the sea is a peaceful venture and will benefit our neighbors; it is a venture that must be seen in the spirit of cooperation, not suspicion."

He added that the "constructive talks would allow the two nations to enter the New Year in a spirit of cooperation, friendship and the willingness to work together instead of against each other."

Hassan Sheikh Mohamud commented on the agreement, saying it had "put a halt to their differences" and that his nation was "ready to work with the Ethiopian leadership and the Ethiopian people".

In fact, the deal also testifies to Ethiopia's good faith and years of amicable gestures towards Somalia. Ethiopia has contributed troops to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), demonstrating its commitment to Somalia's security. The country with its peacekeeping missions and gigantic diplomatic clouts stands as a pivotal players in a region marked by both challenges and opportunities.

The deal further opens the door for collaborations to work on common grounds and address regional threats. Among the most pressing threats faced by the nations and the region is the insurgency of Al-Shabaab, an extremist group that has destabilized Somalia for over a decade and continues to pose a significant risk to Ethiopia and the broader region.

Strengthening ties between Ethiopia and Somalia is not only essential for addressing this common enemy but also for fostering long-term peace and prosperity in the Horn of Africa.

In short, it has become clear that with the Ankara-mediated peace deal, Ethiopia has walked its talks in resolving any disputes peacefully. The declaration also secures Ethiopia's right to sea outlets while debunking baseless claims of invasion against Somalia.



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The Ethiopian Herald

# Opinion

## Ethiopia's unwavering commitment to ameliorate regional, global peacekeeping efforts

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is widely acknowledged that Ethiopia's peacekeeping troops have been playing a paramount role in ensuring peace and tranquility in the Horn of Africa region and beyond. As the country has been working around the clock to eradicate terrorist groups stationed in the Horn of Africa (HoA), Ethiopia has set in motion attaining the desired goal in the face of some challenges.

Notwithstanding the fact that Ethiopia has been moving forward in restoring peace and tranquility in every corner of the Horn of Africa making the most of its heroic forces, some groups have been bending over backwards to throw a wet blanket on its positive strides. However, the country has continued turning its back on its evil deeds, which have been going behind closed curtains.

It is a well-known fact that the Horn of Africa is an epic center of terrorism, human trafficking, illicit arms, smuggling, and more of the same.

It is no secret that Ethiopia has been working at all hours of the day and night with the intention of ensuring peace and tranquility in every corner of the Horn of Africa. As the country has been fighting with terrorist groups endeavoring to move the region into uncharted territory and back into a corner, Ethiopia has continued driving them out of the region.

On the basis thereof, the region has been breathing a sigh of relief despite some defies that need concerted efforts.

It is obvious that Ethiopia has been always fighting to annihilate terrorist groups once and for all from the left, right, and center of Somalia and the Horn region and achieve sustainable peace. As far as this, the country has continued making extraordinary efforts to make the region suitable for the inhabitants of the region.

Ethiopia's continuous endeavors to build sustainable peace in Somalia placing emphasis on the commonality of interests and principles have continued achieving the anticipated objective. There is no denying the fact that by attaching great significance to cooperation and mutual assistance, the two nations can sustain building a solid foundation for everlasting peace in the region.

Following the conclusion of the Continental Peace Conference organized in Addis Ababa, State Minister of Peace, Keyredin Tezera (PhD) recently said that Ethiopia's firm stance on regional, continental, and global peace is steadfast.

"Ethiopia has deployed more than 142,000 peacekeeping troops to eleven countries since the Korean War," Keyredin said adding the country's consistency to contribute its role towards international peace is testified.

In addition to deploying peacekeeping troops to different countries, Ethiopia organized a continental peace conference aimed at finding solutions for existing problems and sharing experiences, according to the State Minister.

The continental conference that aims to build Peaceful and Prosperous Africa was attended

by participants gathered from 22 different African countries, he mentioned.

He stressed that Ethiopia's new initiative shows the country's commitment to continue its contributions towards regional, continental, and international peace.

The Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) has always prevented quite a lot of external belligerences and sustained the unity as well as the sovereignty of the Horn of Africa. What is more, Ethiopia's army is always ready to safeguard the nation's well-being towards development and affluence.

Ethiopia's peacekeeping troops have been playing a paramount role in safeguarding the Horn of Africa. As upholding peace remains Ethiopian peacekeeping troops' top priority, they will sustain as a key peace force nationally, regionally, and globally.

It is worth mentioning that the peace and stability of the region are still in danger in view of the fact that the growing radical networks, illegal arms trafficking, and augmented militarization. It is important to highlight that millions of people in the Horn of Africa will suffer significantly if the existing circumstances in the region continue.

With the intention of creating a peaceful region, nations in the Horn of Africa should join hands and stand in unison in terms of security-related issues.

As Ethiopia's peacekeeping troops have been giving their all to secure lasting peace, the region has set in motion moving forward in the right direction. On the heels of the commitment and hard work of Ethiopia's peacekeeping troops, most nations in the Horn of Africa have set in motion establishing durable peace.

In good truth, by working in close collaboration with various nations, Ethiopia's peacekeeping troops have been attaining the desired goal. No matter what doomsayers enunciate on the topic of Ethiopia's peacekeeping troops, they have sustained ensuring peace and tranquility in the region. No earthly power can stop them.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Ambassador Dina Mufti, recently highlighted Ethiopia's longstanding commitment to the regional peace and stability.

Ethiopia's foreign policy prioritizes peace and collaboration with neighboring countries, a principle reflected in its continued support for Somalia's stability. Ethiopia views Somalia's peace as essential to its own, stating, "Somalia's peace is Ethiopia's peace too. Peace is a collective endeavor." He also mentioned Ethiopia's ongoing involvement in peacekeeping missions across Africa, including in Congo, Liberia, Burundi, Rwanda, and Somalia, reaffirming the nation's commitment to global and continental stability.

The country continues to play a vital role in peacekeeping, particularly in Somalia, where its involvement remains strong. Ethiopia's commitment to maintaining regional peace underscores its broader goal of fostering stability and economic cooperation in the HoA.

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



# Business & Economy

## Nurturing cooperatives to contribute for macro-economic development

BY NAOL GIRMA

Cooperatives have a good potential to contribute to the recently introduced macro-economic reform and improving the welfare of communities. The Addis Ababa Cooperatives Commission recently organised a consultative forum between cooperatives and unions, which aimed at enhancing market linkage between producers and traders. In this case cooperatives are said to be the right prototypes to realize the link and insure the planned macro-economic reform and national development.

“When the Country was facing scarcity of products and exceeding price of commodities and service, cooperatives have shown great commitment in delivering quality products with fair price” said Lilti Giday, Commissioner of the Addis Ababa Cooperatives Commission.

She noted that they have been playing crucial role in assisting the government with its heavy burdens of controlling rising illegal price limits and inflation.

Cooperatives are crucial in creating comfortable and sustainable working conditions as well as enabling situations for both high and low income communities to thrive and grow together, according to her.

She also noted that during the struggle to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, against the inflation, manmade scarcity of products and the rising price of basic commodities cooperatives were playing crucial role.

Habteyes Diro Deputy Commissioner of the Addis Ababa Cooperatives Commission presented a document which highlights cooperatives contribution to market linkage between producers and trade unions. He indicated that the City administration and the commission have paid special attention for cooperatives and trade unions are major sectors to alleviate the economic inflation and also improve the wellbeing of communities by providing quality products with fair price.

On his presentation he noted that the City administration and the commission planned to strengthen the capacity of cooperatives, trade unions and enhance the market system. He said creating awareness about the necessity of maintaining healthy or fair market link between producers and trade unions that the producers have to get fair price for their products or commodities, shortening unnecessary market lines between producers and traders, have been priority targets of the Administration and the Commission.

Among the achievements through the cooperatives, the usual supply from ordinary private seller has been reduced by twelve per cent because of the cooperatives interaction with cooperative unions. The deputy Commissioner has presented different practices of several cooperatives



*Habteyes Diro, Deputy Commissioner of the Addis Ababa Cooperatives Commission*

from different states in the Country.

The market transaction through cooperatives and consumers on industrial and agricultural products, during the past fiscal year, was 3.9 billion Birr. The government allocated over one billion Birr revolving fund to address the financial shortcomings of cooperatives and their plans that would serve the public's economic crisis. According to Habteyes, during the past fiscal year the Addis Ababa Cooperatives Commission worked with the producers, industry owners, and farmers with integrity. Following the reform, tasks were also led by educated and skilled human resource. There was also a better performance in assisting the cooperatives financially and technically, he noted. He also said officers of the Commission have exerted maximum effort with their follow up and assistance, financial supply duties and cooperation.

While describing terms and conditions that apply between cooperatives and trade unions that have gained market linkage, he emphasised that both firms in the deal must respect the rules and regulations they have signed. In addition, producers need to consider trust with their buyers in order to create market linkage. He also stressed that engagement of the heads of the City cooperatives must be high.

“With its overall interaction the impact of cooperatives is expected to be sustainable economic growth, mutual benefit, abundant product supply and bold economic contribution”, he noted.

Meanwhile, it was highlighted by the Addis

Ababa Cooperatives Commission that cooperatives must provide quality services for the public by implementing modern operational systems.

It was indicated that a great deal of experience was taken from the cooperatives' recent official visit to The Netherlands. The cooperatives were engaged in manufacturing, service delivery and supply of products for years. Thus, the commission stressed in order to play crucial role both in the economy and market, the cooperatives must develop a modern operating system and financial administration systems. It was also indicated that the City administration is implementing improved and enabling systems for cooperatives to realize the aforementioned issues of concern.

However, Habteyes said that in the past fiscal year there was improved quality of products, better integrity between producers and trade unions, particularly in Oromia state, producers were supporting trade unions in terms building stores, payments were intact, even more trade disagreements were solved through dialogues.

Even though there were several achievements made through the trade linkage, there were also challenges which the commission has identified as major issues of concern to be solved in the future. For instance depositing purchased product in stores where they were bought and complaining when rust happens. Fluctuation of price in Selale, Lome Adama, Melka Awash and Yerer of Oromia State was also mentioned as one of the challenges that the sector is facing.

In this case, allocating the necessary finance or budget after the linkage was made, creating market link between producers and consumers on the right time, solving disagreements between producers and consumers, are set to be priority directions presented by the Deputy Commissioner. He also noted that, the Addis Ababa Trade Bureau and Ministry of Trade and Regional Integrity have to support importers and suppliers to supply commodities for trade unions with fair price. The Addis Ababa Industry Bureau is also expected to identify industries and create market linkage with trade unions in the City. Various stakeholders including the Mayor's office have their own shares to boost the crucial role of cooperatives in the Nation's macro-economic reform as well as improving the farewell of the communities.

The City Administration still prioritizes supporting cooperatives financially and technically for they are believed to be major tools to alleviate economic inflation and gear up economic growth by securing supply of quality products with fair price, maintaining healthy or stable market conditions between producers and consumers etc. With integrated efforts from all stake holding sectors both from government and private, cooperatives are expected to solve overall economic problems throughout the Country.

**creating awareness about the necessity of maintaining healthy or fair market link between producers and trade unions that the producers have to get fair price for their products or commodities, shortening unnecessary market lines between producers and traders, have been priority targets of the Administration and the Commission**



# Art & Culture

## Reflection on "Beyond Hatred" from the Collection "Pursuit of Your Smile"

BY WAKUMAN KUDAMA

Four months ago, during one of my habitual visits to a bookstore, a book cover caught my eye. It featured a photograph of our CEO, Mesafint Tefera, which immediately initiated my curiosity and compelled me to pick it up. To my delight, I discovered that our CEO had authored this book, "ፈገግህን ፍላጎት" (*Pursuit of Your Smile*). My enthusiasm was tempered only slightly by the fact that fiction ranks very low in my reading preference. Yet, my curiosity won, and I delved into the book, a collection of ten short stories. Its format succinct and captivating made it an enjoyable read.

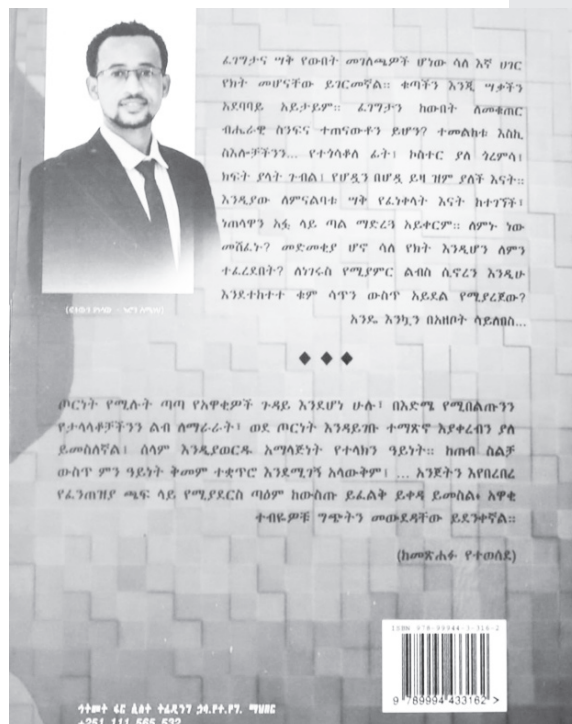
What stood out to me most were the elegance of the language, the realism, authenticity, and the relevance of the narratives to real-world scenarios. These qualities made the book an impressive work. However, rather than reflecting on the book as a whole or all its stories, I wanted to focus specifically on the first story, "ከጥላቻ ወዲያ" (*Beyond Hatred*), as it resonated deeply with me due to a personal connection to a similar incident in my own extended family.

The story of *Beyond Hatred* remained vivid in my mind even months after reading it. This is largely because it parallels a real-life event that occurred within my relative's family last year. For 25 years, this family had been childless due to medical challenges faced the wife, who is my relative. Unexpectedly, the husband revealed that he had fathered three children with another woman. This revelation shocked the family and led the wife to request a divorce. Resolving the situation took over three months, and remarkably, the marriage did not end in divorce.

In *Beyond Hatred*, the narrative unfolds as a tragedy. Aklog and Helen, married for four years, had been unable to conceive a child despite enjoying a loving relationship. However, unbeknownst to Helen, Aklog had fathered a child a year earlier with her close friend, Yodit. Helen, through her determined investigation, eventually discovered the truth. This revelation shattered her emotionally and psychologically, leaving her feeling that her world—and her marriage—had been irreparably destroyed.

In response to her pain, Helen devised a meticulously calculated plan to exact revenge on Aklog. Her strategic action, executed with precision and secrecy, ultimately resulted in his demise, bringing the story to a tragic conclusion.

The story addresses a timeless issue in human relationships: the impact of infertility on marital stability. Since the dawn of history, the inability to conceive has strained marriages, often leading to conflicts, betrayals, and emotional scars, as seen in both Aklog and Helen's story and the real-life incident in my extended family.



the vows and principles that form the foundation of marriage. His decision to engage in an extramarital affair and father a child in secret was not only a betrayal to Helen but also an attack on the sanctity of their union. What compounded the gravity of his action was that the affair involved Helen's friend, Yodit, which amplified the emotional damage.

This betrayal not only undermined the trust Helen had in him but also revealed a lack of respect for their shared commitment. By acting in secrecy, Aklog behaved as though he could circumvent the ethical obligations of marriage, akin to stealing trust like a thief.

Aklog's folly was further underscored by his misguided belief that his action could remain hidden. In an age of advanced communication and technology, secrets are increasingly difficult to keep, particularly when one's spouse is as resourceful and skilled as Helen, a computer science graduate employed at Ethio Telecom. His failure to recognize this reality demonstrated not only poor judgment but also a lack of foresight.

Helen, despite her own emotional challenges, had displayed remarkable maturity and selflessness by proposing a solution to their marital issue. She had urged Aklog to divorce her and pursue a life with another woman who could give him children. Aklog's response at the time had been prudent and reassuring, as he vowed to stay with her. However, despite his comforting words, Aklog's action betrayed his promise. Instead of taking the opportunity to address their challenges openly, he chose deceit, which led Helen to lament.

Aklog's decision to cheat on his marriage ultimately cost him his life. His action not only devastated Helen but also eroded the trust and foundation of their relationship. This tragic outcome serves as a cautionary tale for husbands: betraying one's spouse is not only a violation of trust but also a destructive act with far-reaching consequences.

Husbands must take their roles as protectors, providers, and leaders within the family seriously. A wise and civilized man does not resort to deceit or infidelity; instead, he seeks constructive solutions to marital challenges. Upholding honesty and trust is paramount to fostering a stable and fulfilling marriage.

The story of *Beyond Hatred* serves as a powerful reminder that cheating on one's partner is not only a personal failure but also a breach of the moral and emotional obligations inherent in marriage. By learning from Aklog's mistakes, husbands can strive to preserve the integrity of their relationships and avoid the tragic consequences depicted in the story.

- 2. Women should use their wisdom to build, not to destroy

**The primary purpose of marriage is not limited to having children, engaging in physical intimacy, or sharing resources; it is about building a partnership based on mutual love, trust, and respect. When this purpose is forgotten, abuse becomes inevitable**

Reflecting on the themes in *Beyond Hatred*, I explore four key lessons derived from the story, emphasizing their broader implications for life and relationships.

- 1. Husbands should learn from Aklog's mistake

Aklog's action was a direct violation of



# Science & Technology

## Incorporating modern technology for effective law enforcement

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Recently, participants of the Continental Conference on Peace and Prosperity organized by Ethiopia's Ministry of Peace (MoP) had the opportunity to visit the headquarters of the Ethiopian Federal Police Commission, specifically the Federal Police Forensic Investigation and Research Center of Excellence.

During the tour, the Ethiopian Federal Police (EFP) revealed that it is focusing on introducing modern technological advancements to strengthen its law enforcement activities following the 2018 Security Sector Reform (SSR) as part of the reforms being undertaken by the institution.

SSR was initiated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to reform the nation's security sectors, defense force, police institution, and the intelligence sector to build modern, strong, and professional security sectors.

Following the implementation of SSR, EFP is working to equip the police institution with modern and advanced technologies to enhance its effectiveness in crime prevention and investigation.

EFP showcased to the visitors the technologies being used for its law enforcement activities, from in-house developed applications, CCTV cameras, nationwide information gathering systems to modern applications developed for different functions, and other modern technological equipment.

In addition to integrating technological advancements for law enforcement, EFP's emphasis on cyber security in implementing these technologies was an enlightening experience for the visitors.

During the coffee break, I had a brief conversation with a Tanzanian visitor who was surprised by the technologies he observed at the federal police headquarters. "I am surprised to see such sophisticated technologies implemented in developing countries," he said, adding, "Where did you get these technologies?"

The Ethiopian Police institution has a long history of providing police service in the country, with over 100 years of institutional service. Ethiopia's Police institution, established during the Menelik-II era, has served the country for over a century in preventing and investigating crimes, modernized following technological advancements.

Welcoming the visitors at the headquarters, Deputy Commissioner General of the FDRE Police Force, Melaku Fanta, stated that even before establishing the police institution during Emperor Menelik-II's era, the Ethiopian community had the experience of patrolling its area and exposing criminals based on community values and rules with appropriate punishments. This indicates that



Deputy Commissioner General Melaku Fenta, the head of the Crime Prevention Department at the Federal Police of Ethiopia

law enforcement activities in Ethiopia have existed for a long period of time, despite the modern police institution being established during the Emperor Menelik-II era.

According to the Deputy Commissioner General, despite the long history of the police institution in Ethiopia, it was affiliated with the political system until the recent security sector reform (SSR) was implemented following the 2018 national reform.

The Security Sector Reform (SSR) helped the Ethiopian Federal Police to build a modern, professional, politically-independent police institution and to introduce modern technological advancements for its law enforcement activities.

Accordingly, Melaku said that the SSR is achieving its goal in building a professional and capable police institution where the Ethiopian Federal Police set a target to become among the top five police institutions in Africa by 2030, especially in incorporating the latest technologies for effective law enforcement activities.

Following SSR, EFP has been working to build a technologically equipped, strong, and modern police institution and currently, according to the Deputy Commissioner General, EPF is realizing its vision of building a technologically-equipped robust police institution. Currently, according to Melaku, EFP becomes a strong security institution incorporating well-trained human resources and modern technological capacities, next to the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) in Ethiopia. Thanks to the SSR, EFP becomes a capable institution in accomplishing law enforcement missions effectively.

"Thanks to SSR, policing investigation

has shifted from manual to digital systems, and EFP owns a modern forensic and DNA laboratory to investigate sophisticated crimes," the Deputy Commissioner General stated.

In addition to introducing and implementing modern technological advancements, EFP gives due attention to developing technology-friendly trained human resources thanks to the Ethiopian Police University. The university is providing well-trained human resources helping the institution to manage and develop modern, sophisticated, and emerging technologies for its law enforcement activities.

In addition to the role in developing police in crime prevention and investigation, the implemented technologies helped the institution to develop participation of the people in crime prevention and investigation.

EFP developed applications to gather crime-related suggestions or applications from all corners of the country to the headquarters. The integrated system helped the Commissioner General to follow the cases and evaluate the responded and non-responded cases easily.

Similarly, EFP is building Smart Community Police Stations in Addis Ababa, thanks to the reform. These all-rounded reforms helped the institution to perform its activities effectively and professionally. These reforms enhanced the implementation capacity of EFP and as a result of this modernization, Addis Ababa is busy hosting a lot of regional, continental, and international forums peacefully and successfully.

According to Melaku, these technological advancements are also crucial in controlling

cross-border crimes. Especially, the forensic and DNA service center is set to provide regional services.

Approached by The Ethiopian Herald during the courtesy visit, Liberia's Minister of Internal Affairs, Francis Sakila Nyumalin, commended Ethiopian Federal Police's technological advancements for law enforcement. Francis noted that Ethiopia's achievements in technological advancements are a testament to Africa's potential to match global standards, adding, "Ethiopia is proving that what is done in the West is also possible in Africa. This provides hope for the entire continent."

For her part, South Africa's Minister of Defense and Military Veterans, Angelina Motshekga, during the visit also commended EFP for integrating advanced technologies and ICT in law enforcement, stating, "You have done a remarkable job integrating ICT into policing, training young people, and utilizing modern technological infrastructure. This is truly impressive."

For his part, Ethiopian Police University President, Deputy Commissioner General Mesfin Abebe told EPA during the event that EFP introduces modern technologies to develop its institutional capability. Especially, the recently inaugurated forensic center is set to combat not only national crimes but also to provide services for the countries of the region.

The Ethiopian Forensic Investigation and Research Center of Excellence was inaugurated on 16 November 2024 by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), and Ethiopia owns a DNA laboratory since last year. These technologies developed the capability of the police institution in preventing and investigating sophisticated crimes.

According to Mesfin, the Forensic Investigation Center has the capacity to provide probing services beyond Ethiopia. The forensic center, equipped with modern technologies and laboratories, is designed to investigate organized and complicated crimes. According to him, the center is crucial to fighting crimes in the region and boosting cross-national police collaborations in fighting organized crimes.

EFP's current institutional capability is a testimony to the effectiveness of SSR in establishing a foundation for building institutions suited to the nation's needs. SSR helped EFP and other security institutions to own the latest technological advancements and build strong and modern institutions.

The modern technologies incorporated in the policing sector enhance the efficiency of the police services. EFP is on building a robust police institution that can effectively respond to the challenges of modern policing, including in fighting technology-based crimes.



# Society

## Enhancing inclusion, benefits for PWDs

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed every year on December 3rd to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. The day is an important platform dedicated to promoting the rights and well-being of individuals with disabilities worldwide, raise awareness regarding the ongoing challenges faced by people with disabilities, emphasize the importance of inclusivity in all aspects of society and enhance their participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

This year's IDPD was observed with the theme "Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future," focusing on the need to increase the participation and benefits of people with disabilities in society.

In Ethiopia, the day was observed with various events in Hawassa City, Sidama State, with various events, including a panel discussion and blood donation. The program, held under the same theme, featured prominent figures including Sidama State President Desta Ledamo, Women and Social Affairs Minister Ergoge Tesfaye (PhD), representatives from the Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities, heads of labor and social affairs bureaus from all states, and other invited stakeholders.

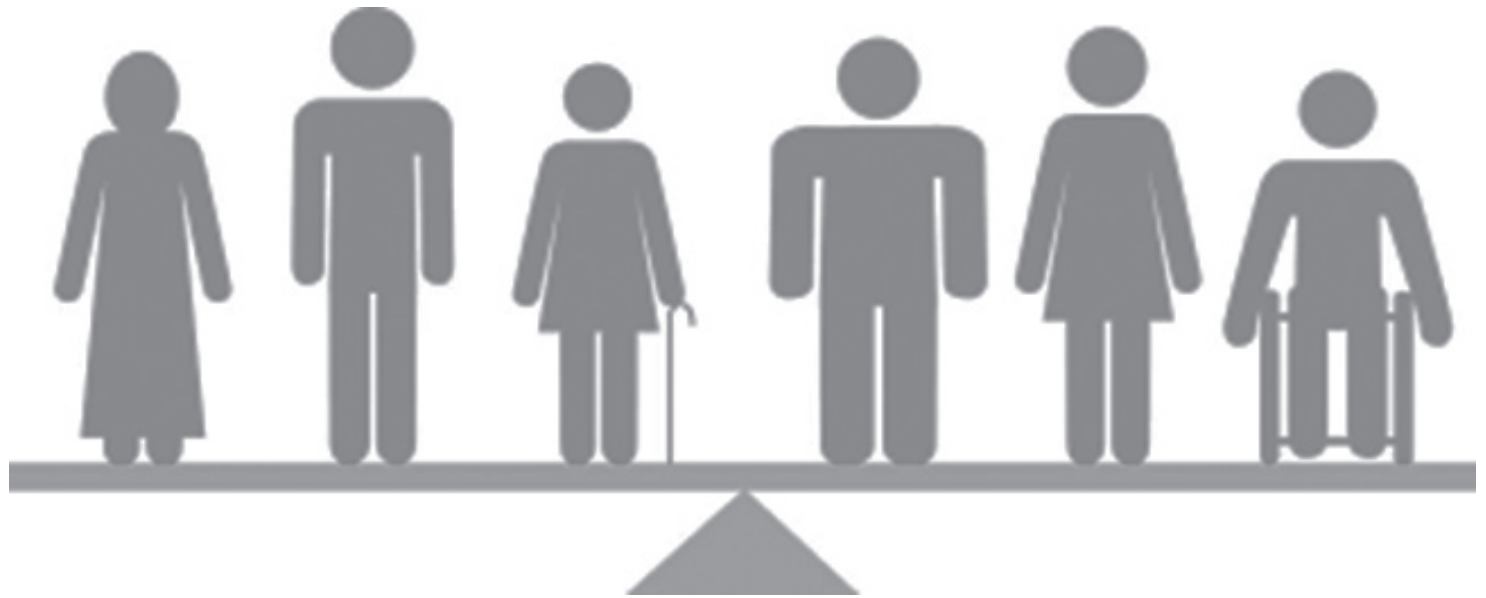
As highlighted during the event, despite the significant efforts made to enhance the participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life and notable progress, they continue to face discrimination and isolation. Despite the country's progress, people with disabilities continue to face barriers in range of areas such as education, employment, accessing information, healthcare services, development programs, transport and in other similar public platforms. To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to further strengthen inclusive and participatory initiatives now than before.

Speaking on the occasion, Women and Social Affairs State Minister Huria Ali said that stakeholders should show their commitment by devising a system and creating inclusive environments that addresses the problem of Persons with Disabilities and benefitting them in a sustainable way.

She stressed that the theme of this year's celebration focuses on enhancing the participation and benefits of people with disabilities. This includes efforts to provide practical solutions that align with the theme and empower individuals with disabilities to play active roles in society.

This year's festival, themed "Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future," will focus on increasing the participation and benefits of people with disabilities, she said adding that activities would be carried out to provide practical solutions that align with the theme, to enhancing the involvement and empowerment of disabled individuals.

Therefore, stakeholders at all levels



should demonstrate their commitment by establishing an inclusive environment that enhances the involvement of people with disabilities and benefits them in a sustainable way.

"It is our responsibility to increase the leadership role of people with disabilities; and we will work on this," said the State Minister.

Mentioning that the Ministry has been carrying out various activities to ensure that the rights and benefits of disabled citizens are respected, she said the observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities has a constructive role in promoting the legal reforms and changing the society's attitudes.

She called for the involvement of policymakers to ensure that legislation aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), fostering a society where everyone, regardless of ability, can participate equally in social, political, and economic life.

"It is important to give a practical response to the issues affecting the disabled."

According to her, marking the day is beneficial to create an inclusive society in which the dignity, rights and safety of people with disabilities are protected and they participate and benefit equally in political, social and economic fields.

Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities Director General Abayneh Gujo, on his part said that the celebration of the festival helps raise the voices of disabled people and their rights are protected. He also underscored the need to support the leaderships and provide the appropriate resources to fulfill their roles and help them succeed in their efforts.

Head of the Women, Youth and Social Affairs Office of Sidama State Emebet Esayas also said, "The issue of disabled people is not an issue solely left to themselves and their families, but of society as a whole. So everyone should stand by their side."

She also stated that the due attention given to disabled people by the State to ensure their equal participation and benefit them. "A number of activities are being implemented

**stakeholders should show their commitment by devising a system and creating inclusive environments that addresses the problem of Persons with Disabilities and benefitting them in a sustainable way**

in the State to increase their participations and benefits," she reiterated.

At the event, organized by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ethiopian Federation of Disabled Persons' Associations, Sidama State Women, Youth and Social Affairs Bureau, in addition to panel discussion, activities such as exhibition, blood donation were carried out.

Meanwhile, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) was also marked in Seqota Town, Wag Hemra Zone, Amhara State under the theme, "Let us ensure inclusive and sustainable development."

During the panel discussion, the importance of working together to ensure the social and economic benefits of people with the disabilities was highlighted.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Administrator of the Zone, Hailu Girmay said that the administration would work focusing on ensuring that job opportunities and other social benefits are inclusive of people with disabilities. "Job opportunities and other economic and social benefits

that are created by the administration will be more inclusive to benefit this segment of the society. It is necessary to work together to ensure the social and economic benefits of disabled people in the Zone," he emphasized.

Head of the Women, Children and Social Affairs Department Head at the Wag Hemra Administration, Teberh Tadesse also said that the Day of Persons with Disabilities was observed in schools with various programs. The Department is working closely with stakeholders targeting to address disability issues across sectors. As a result, many people with disabilities have benefitted from these endeavors.

President of the Federation of Disabled Persons at the Administration Kiros Chekol on his part said that celebrating the Day of Disabled Persons holds greater significance to promote the significance of inclusive practices and correct misconceptions about disabilities.

Recalling that the country has adopted international laws and convention related to disability rights, the President reflected on the growing attention being paid to the needs of disabled people. He also called on executives at all levels to work diligently to ensure that development activities carried out in the country involve disabled people.

At the event, officials of the administration, religious leaders and disabled people participated.

Meanwhile, the Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities also stated that significant strides have been made in enhancing the accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities over the past five years.

This was revealed by the Director General of the Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities Abayneh Gujo, in connection with IDPD.

According to him, over the years numerous development initiatives, including corridor development projects, have created a more conducive environment for disabled individuals. These initiatives have improved educational opportunities, facilitated better access to essential services, and empowered people with disabilities to actively participate in the nation's development.



# Dishta-Gina festival of...

heritages including Dishta Gina embrace significant contributions for mutual development, peace, and togetherness. Therefore, residents of the State should work hand in hand to expedite the State's development and ensure sustainable peace through countering all odds.

"We should strive more to realize the national socio-economic development endeavors through promoting strong work habits and strengthening mutual cooperation," he said.

On his part, Ari Zone Chief Administrator Abraham Atta said that the *Dishta Gina* Festival has immense value; beyond a transition to a New Year.

"The *Dishta Gina* Festival is a festival of arbitration, reconciliation, and peace where ill-treatments end peacefully. The festival is also a core value where members of the community utilize this opportunity to forget revenge and grudge and transit from the old to the New Year. Thus, the cultural assets of the *Dishta Gina* Festival will have a significant role in the national peace and reconciliation building process."

So far, the zone has been striving to inherit this wonderful New Year festival of the Ari nation to future generations without losing its values and to be registered in the prestigious list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In doing so, intellectuals are required to fulfill their part in promoting this cultural festival to get recognition by UNESCO, he added.

While speaking at the event organized here in Addis Ababa, in relation to the *Dishta-Gina* festival, under the theme "Culture for Peace, Brotherhood, and Development," Culture and Sports Minister Shewit Shanka said that *Dishta-Gina* festival embodies important



values and activities vital for fostering peace and unity. "Such public festivals are essential and deserve our support," she stated.

The Minister also highlighted the potential of cultural festivals to attract both local and international tourism, contributing to the growth of the tourism sector.

She advocated for the proper documentation, preservation, and promotion of the *Dishta-Gina* festival to ensure it is passed down through generations, expressing her commitment to collaborate with the community for the country's development and peace.

President of Jinka University and a member of the Ari community Prof. Gebre Yintiso also said that the festival serves to bridge gaps among people. "The *Dishta-Gina* festival marks the New Year for the Ari Community in the Ari Zone of South Ethiopia. It is a celebration of peace and togetherness, emphasizing the need for peaceful resolution of differences," he articulated.

The festival also included a communal meal shared with low-income members of the community, showcasing traditional dishes that reflect the heritage of the Ari people in an

exhibition.

According to the tradition of the Ari nation, *Dishta Gina* is mainly performed by the fathers where they give blessings for the New Year to bring peace, love, and harmony. They also said that it is the festival of change of era that they celebrate by saying goodbye to the old year and looking forward to welcoming the new one.

*Dishta Gina* is a traditional New Year celebration that contains humanistic ideas such as empathy, mutual aid, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Thus, it has great benefits in terms of strengthening social cohesion and other cultural values of the community.

The social values of the festival include giving thanks, helping each other, expressing love, bringing peace, strengthening solidarity, and maintaining cleanliness and beauty in society. The festival is annually celebrated with great zeal as it is done to welcome the new era with peace and hope by getting rid of the fragments and hates of the past.

Currently, various activities are being carried out as the observance and preservation of the festival is of great importance for the strengthening of peace and development. Wide promotion of the festival is one of the tasks being undertaken by pertinent stakeholders. *Dishta Gina* festival is celebrated in various traditional ceremonies in the Ari zone including Jinka town, South Ari, North Ari, Woba Ari, and Baka Dawla Ari Woredas from November to December.

What is more, pertinent stakeholders are expected to contribute their part in the efforts of promoting such festivals that promote togetherness and peace in the country. The community and cultural and tourism experts should also contribute their part to protect and promote this festival.

The Cultural Policy of Ethiopia published in 2016 by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism also indicated that the cultural identity, diversity, and manifestation of a country's nations, nationalities, and peoples are significant resources for their members and the foundation for their social personality. In order to develop the cultural professions and enable them to contribute to national development, it is essential to establish the necessary supportive institutions and working procedures. To this end, developing the capacity of their human, material, and financial resources and creating the conditions that enable them to work in coordination with counterpart institutions is important.

Accordingly, it is necessary to protect these against destruction and to develop and strengthen them for sustainable development. Just as it had created the civilization of the past, culture is expected to serve today's development efforts and shape tomorrow's generation.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), cultural festivals such as *Dishta-Gina* play a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of a given community by attracting both local and international tourists and stimulating local economies. They also serve as a platform for promoting cultural diversity and heritage.

In sum, Ethiopia is among the leading countries with diversified cultural assets and has more than 80 nations, nationalities, and people that have colorful cultural festivals. The festivals being celebrated by respective nationalities enable well inherited to the future generations. Thus, more attention should be given to such festivals and intangible cultural assets to develop tourism.

## Reflection on "Beyond Hatred" from the...

Helen's calculated revenge on her husband, Aklog, illustrates the destructive potential of unchecked emotions. Although Aklog's betrayal was undeniably hurtful and morally wrong, Helen's response far exceeded the bounds of ethical behavior. Her systematic, deceptive strategies culminated in an act that not only destroyed her husband but also eroded her own moral integrity.

Helen's action stands as a cautionary tale. Rather than channeling her intelligence and resourcefulness toward vengeance, she could have used her wisdom to guide her husband toward abandoning his illicit relationship. Throughout history, women have often been acknowledged for their profound wisdom and ability to influence their partners positively. This universal truth underscores the idea that women, with their innate strength and intuition, have the power to correct and support their spouses in overcoming flaws or temptations.

As the adage goes, "A woman is a multiplier." She has the remarkable ability to transform what she is given—groceries into meals, a house into a home, and even disappointment into chaos. Aklog betrayed Helen by cheating on her, but she amplified that betrayal into destruction, ultimately leading to his demise. This reflection serves as a reminder of the immense responsibility that comes with such power:

wisdom should be wielded to nurture and uplift rather than to harm and destroy.

Love, at its core, seeks to heal and build, not to harm. Despite professing love for her husband, Helen's action defied this fundamental principle. Revenge, no matter how justified it may seem, should never be invited in such intimate relationship.

### 3. The sanctity of marriage must be upheld

Marriage is an institution of profound significance, rooted in mutual commitment, trust, and unity. In its essence, marriage transcends modern societal interpretations that often prioritize superficial measures of success, such as the presence of children or material wealth.

The story of *Beyond Hatred* underscores the importance of recognizing marriage as an honorable and sacred union. When the sanctity of marriage is undermined—whether through betrayal, neglect, or a lack of commitment—the quality of life within the relationship deteriorates. Helen and Aklog's tragedy highlights how losing sight of the deeper purpose of marriage can lead to destructive consequences.

The primary purpose of marriage is not limited to having children, engaging in physical intimacy, or sharing resources; it is about building a partnership based

on mutual love, trust, and respect. When this purpose is forgotten, abuse becomes inevitable. Recognizing marriage as an institution deserving of honor is crucial to preserving its integrity and fostering healthy, fulfilling relationships.

### 4. Forgiveness is a necessary virtue

At the heart of Helen and Aklog's story lies the absence of forgiveness a virtue that could have transformed their narrative from one of tragedy to one of redemption. Helen's inability to forgive Aklog ultimately led to the destruction of their marriage and her own peace of mind.

Forgiveness is essential in any relationship, particularly in marriage. Human beings are inherently fallible, and mistakes are an inevitable part of life. By forgiving one another, partners can move beyond grievances, heal emotional wounds, and strengthen their bond. In Helen's case, extending forgiveness to Aklog might have allowed them to rebuild their marriage and regain the harmony they once shared.

Notably, Aklog's continued communication with Helen, even amidst her deceptive schemes, indicates that he still loved and trusted her. Despite his wrongdoing, he viewed her as his partner and continuously sought her companionship. Helen's failure to recognize this and her decision to act

on vengeance rather than compassion deprived them both of the opportunity to restore their relationship.

Moreover, Helen's action likely left her with lasting emotional consequences. While she succeeded in her plan to destroy Aklog, she also destroyed a part of herself in the process. It is unlikely that she will find peace or happiness in future relationships, as the guilt of her actions will linger as a heavy burden on her conscience. True healing for both Helen and Aklog would have been possible only through forgiveness, which Helen tragically failed to extend.

The story of *Beyond Hatred* offers valuable lessons on the complexities of marriage, the destructive nature of revenge, and the redemptive potential of forgiveness. Women, like Helen, possess immense wisdom and strength that can be used to nurture and heal rather than harm. Marriage, as an institution, demands respect, commitment, and a recognition of its sanctity. And above all, forgiveness is a powerful force that can transform even the most painful betrayals into opportunities for growth and renewal. As readers, we are reminded that while mistakes are an inherent part of human relationships, it is through love, wisdom, and forgiveness that true healing and harmony can be achieved.





# This is *Ethiopia*

## *Dishta-Gina* festival of New Year

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia, home to 75 nations, nationalities and peoples, is adorned with numerous cultural festivals that are celebrated throughout the year. All the nations, nationalities and peoples have their own cultural values they mark them warmly and colorfully. One of the notable festivals is the Dishta-Gina festival, which is celebrated by the Ari community, in the southern part of the country.

Recently, the Ari community celebrated their New Year celebration, Dishta-Gina festival, in Jinka Town of South Ethiopia State. The festival, which preaches peace, love, and unity among human beings and promotes togetherness, is celebrated every year from mid-November to the beginning of December.

The New Year festival marks a bright transition from the old year and seeks to bring new achievements to the Ari community.

On the occasion, South Ethiopia State Chief Tilahun Kebede expressed his best wishes to the people of the Ari nation.

He said that the people should promote



their asset of togetherness and contribute to the State's durable peace and development, adding that, the festival promotes togetherness and unity among brothers and sisters where the festival itself is a festival of

love and unity.

Moreover, this festival is a New Year festival that enhances the value of sharing and loving others. The holiday also ignites hard work among the Ari community beyond preaching

togetherness, love, and helping each other, he said.

In addition, the State's intangible cultural

*See Dishta-Gina ... page 15*