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The 26th Ordinary Session of Heads of State and Government Concludes



The 26th Ordinary Session of Heads of State and Government wrapped up on January 31, 2016 with the adoption of key decisions and declarations. These includes Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn's Proposal for the African Union to hold a retreat to encourage countries interested in committing more financial contribution, the Reports of the High Level Committee on the Post 2015 Agenda, the High Level Committee on Climate Change CAHOSSC, and the Report on Africa's position on reform of UN Security Council with a proposal to hold summit level session next June. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia presented the Report of the High Level Committee on the Post 2015 Agenda, noting that Africa was the only region that came up with a common position , which helped in influencing the adoption of such a global agenda. Sirleaf said, "We were able in particular to include peace & security as indispensable condition for achieving development." "The successful inclusion of

Africa's priorities in SDGs showed when we are united our voices are heard better," she added. During the occasion, Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn told the meeting that Africa had shown effective leadership in the Third Conference on Financing for Development, in the adoption of Post-2015 Agenda and during the COP21 climate deal.

The Prime Minister further noted that the key lesson drawn out of the negotiation in SDGs is that when Africans organize and stand in unity, the continent would better be positioned to ensure that its interests are well taken. Egyptian President, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi also presented the Report of the High Level Committee on Climate Change (CAHOSSC), wherein he noted that the adoption of African initiatives in adaptation and renewable energy remained to be the key achievements in store by CAHOSSC. Touching upon the commitment of developed countries, the president also mentioned that the G-20 and G-7 countries are keen to support Africa's renewable energy initiative to the tune of 10 billion dollar by 2020. Current Chairman of the African Union, and Chadian President, Idriss Déby, at the Closing Ceremony of the 26th Ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government said, "We will ensure that the AU becomes more effective and efficient." On the nature of peace and security in the African continent, particularly on the situation in countries like Burundi and South Sudan, the Chairman said, "We can no

longer tolerate that thousands of Africans die because of political struggles."

The 26th AU Summit Endorses Ethiopia's Candidature for a non-Permanent Member of UN Security Council

The 26th Ordinary Session of the African Heads of State and Government endorses Ethiopia's candidature for a non-permanent member of UN Security Council on January 31, 2016. It was in 2015 that the Government of Ethiopia announced the country's bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2017–18 terms. The announcement flagged Ethiopia's renewed commitment to middle power diplomacy and ambition to actively prosecute its regional and global policy agenda.

AU Endorses Candidature of Dr Tedros Adhanom for the Post of the Director General of the WHO

The 26th Ordinary Session of the African Heads of State and Government unanimously endorsed the Executive Council's decision on the candidature of Dr Tedros Adhanom for the election of the post of Director General WHO scheduled for May 2017 on January 31. The election of the post of the Director General WHO, scheduled May 2017 will be held on the 70th session of the WHO Assembly.

Prime Minister Hailemariam at the World Economic Forum in Davos



The 46th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting was held from January 20-23 under the theme: "Mastering the Fourth Industrial Revolution". It categorized this as a fusion of technologies, blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres, and building on the Third Industrial Revolution, the digital revolution using electronics and information technology to automate production that has been gathering strength since the middle of the last century. The First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanize production; while the Second used electric power to create mass production.

The Forum recognized that the world stands on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another. Responses must be integrated and comprehensive, involving all stakeholders of the global polity, from public and private sectors to academia and civil society. It covered the multitude of critical current challenges facing the world, including security, climate change and the "new normal" global growth and commodity prices, all of which need to be addressed. The Ethiopian Delegation led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn also took part in many debates and discussions covering

such areas as Global Trade and Investment, Future Global Financing, the Internet, Gender Equality, Inclusive Growth, as well as considering how a Fourth Industrial Revolution would impact on Africa, a continent which is home to nine of the world's fifteen fastest growing economies.

All the discussants were in agreement that the prospect of a Fourth Industrial Revolution was exciting. It had the potential to raise income levels and improve the quality of life for populations around the world, particularly in Africa. Technology has made possible new products and services that increase the efficiency and pleasure of personal lives; technological innovation can and does lead to increases in efficiency and productivity. It will continue to do so. Transportation and communication costs will drop, logistics and global supply chains will become more effective, and the cost of trade will diminish, all of which will open new markets and drive inclusive economic growth. It is enticing prospect, that will also require determination, commitment and resources.

IGAD Celebrates the 30th Anniversary of its Foundation

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) started the celebrations of its 30th anniversary holding several events in Djibouti City on January 16. One of these was a panel discussion, the first of a series, to take a thematic look at development in the Greater Horn of Africa for the past three decades and reflect on the region "we want thirty years from now". The panel included three former Executive Secretaries of IGAD, Dr. David Muduuli from Uganda (1991 to 1996), Dr. Tekeste Ghebray from Eritrea (1996 to 2000) and Dr. Attalla Bashir from Sudan (2000 to 2008), as well as the present Executive Secretary

since 2008, Ambassador Engineer Mahboub Maalim and Djibouti's Foreign Minister Mahamoud Ali Youssouf. The panelists shared their experiences and views around the main topic "The Prospects and Challenges of Peace, Security, Economic Development and Integration in the Region, as well as how best IGAD can position itself for Higher Impact." It was a platform for experience sharing, allowing the dissemination of information and inspiring a broad discussion of ways forward to address the many challenges the region faces.

Ethiopia has been committed to IGAD from the outset and it has played a significant and prominent role in the organization. Its forward-looking foreign and national security policies and the country's role in regional peace and security are concomitant with IGAD's objectives. Its role as Chair of IGAD have meant it has been deeply involved in the efforts in bringing conflict groups in South Sudan to the negotiating table and through CEWRAN (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism) it has also addressed some of the conflicts between cross-border pastoral border peoples. It has also joined hands with other states in the region to fight extremists in Somalia as well as playing a long-standing role in the efforts to re-establish an effective government in Somalia. It has also provided significant numbers of peace keeping troops for peace keeping missions. Ethiopia was actively involved when IGAD forces intervened during the 2006 Islamic Courts insurgency in Somalia and in the planned IGAD Peace and Support Mission in Somalia (IGASOM), a precursor to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Ethiopia has also worked hard and long to try to resolve tensions with Eritrea, despite Eritrea's continued and still active efforts to destabilize both Ethiopia and the

region. As Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, has said the situation over Eritrea “can only be resolved through dialogue, and only when Eritrea is ready for dialogue.”

Ethiopian, Algerian Female Scientists Awarded 2015 AU Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards



Two African female scientists from Ethiopia and Algeria were awarded the 2015 AU Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards for their valuable discoveries and findings that have contributed to the development agenda of the continent.

The prizes for the two female top African scientists, Professor Merzouk Hafida of Algeria and Professor Yalemtehay Mekonnen of Ethiopia, have been awarded for their scientific

achievements and valuable discoveries and findings, according to the African Union Commission.

The two female laureates received 20,000 USD each, a gold plate medal, a certificate and flowers from the representatives of the AU Commission.

Addressing the laureates on behalf of Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma during the closing of the 8th African Union Gender Pre-Summit, Commissioner Ikounga congratulated the two female scientists and expressed the wish for more women to be involved in the area of science.

The prestigious African Union Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards Programme was launched on 9th September 2008 with the objective to give out scientific awards to top African scientists, particularly women.

Prizes are awarded to top African scientists in Life and Earth Sciences, and Basic Science, Technology and Innovation at the national, regional and continental levels, it was learned.

Commissioner Ikounga stated that “the African Union Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards Programme is one of the holistic and deliberate measures taken by the Commission to maintain science and technology on top of Africa’s development, cooperation and political agenda”

Business and Economy

Dr. Tedros speaks at the ‘Doing Business in Ethiopia’ Forum (Feb 02, 2016)



Dr. Tedros Adhanom addressed a gathering at the “Doing Business in Ethiopia” Forum at the margins of the US-Africa Business Summit organized by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) launched at the UNCA Conference Center on February 2, 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Upon expressing his appreciation to CCA for staging such a platform and the Government of the United States of America for showing a continued commitment to strengthen the economic relations with Africa, Dr. Tedros noted that this was “a clear demonstration and recognition of the new circumstances that Africa has reoriented its priorities toward sustainable economic development”. Dr. Tedros said the US-Africa Business Summit and particularly, “the Doing Business in Ethiopia” Forum would further consolidate the long standing historic and multifaceted relations between Africa and the United States. Noting that Africa was registering good macroeconomic stability, improved governance and better business climate, the Minister said, “Africa currently offers ample opportunities for increased trade and investment links with the United States”. On Ethiopia in particular, Dr. Tedros said this trend has been constantly on the rise under which he mentioned that over 60 companies have made pre-

investment visits in 2014/15 alone and that major US companies are closely working in various investment areas. Emphasizing that the AGOA platform has contributed greatly to Africa’s impressive economic growth and that Ethiopia is making use of this market access better than before, the Minister noted the need to work hard to bridge the trade imbalance by injecting more investment ventures. Reflecting on the relations between Ethiopia and the United States, Dr. Tedros said the two countries have enjoyed warm government to government and people to people relations which have transcended the passage of time for more than centuries. He said the two countries share many issues of common concern at regional and global level. On the state of investing in Ethiopia and Doing Business with, the Minister stressed on the fact that Ethiopia in one of the fastest non-oil producing economies, a country committed to building a green-carbon economy by 2025, embarking on major infrastructure projects for regional integration, and tirelessly working to develop industrial zones, and said, “Ethiopia today has a new face it is a great place to invest and do business”. We also look forward to increasing trade and tourism between Ethiopia and USA; my government stands ready to facilitate your efforts,” the Minister added. Other speakers include Mr. Stephen Hayes, President and CEO of the Corporate Council on Africa who touching upon the historic relations between Ethiopia and the United States noted the enormous potentials and greater business interests between the two countries announced that the establishment of a Joint Working Group designed to facilitate and ease the prospect of investment and business dealings, Ms. Patricia M. Haslach, US Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Girma Biru, Ethiopian Ambassador to the US and Mr. Solomon Afework, President of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association. Following the Opening Session, a handful of key

presentations and series of Government to Business and Business to Business sessions were made.

Qatari Company to Invest in Ethiopia's Real Estate Sector



A Qatari company has expressed its interest to invest in Ethiopia's real estate sector.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalgen met a 10-member Qatari delegation led by the Chairman of Ezdan Holding Group, Sheikh Dr. Khalid bin Thani bin Abdullah Al Thani.

After the discussion, the representative of the delegation told reporters that the company would engage in the construction of mixed use buildings in Addis Ababa.

The representative further stated that the group has also plans to invest in Ethiopia's health sector.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalgen stated on his part that the construction of the intended mixed use projects would improve services in Addis Ababa.

The premier told the delegation that Ethiopia has given special attention to attracting Middle East investment and expressed his government's commitment to support the implementation of the projects.

Established in 1960, Ezdan Holding Group is one of the world's largest real estate companies with more than 8.5 billion USD assets.

American Companies Interested in Doing Business in Ethiopia



Some American companies which attended the 2nd US-Africa Business Summit underway in Addis Ababa have expressed their interest to do business in Ethiopia.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, A crow Bridge Vice President Paul Sullivan said Ethiopia has ample opportunities in the manufacturing sector that his company will exploit.

A crow Bridge has been working in the transportation and construction industries for more than 60 years with a full line modular steel bridging solutions for vehicle, rail, vessel, military, and pedestrian use.

It has been building bridges in over 80 countries, ranging from Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and the Middle East, it was indicated.

“We specialize in prefabricated modular steel bridging solutions for permanent, temporary and emergency use,” the vice president pointed out.

For more than half a century, A crow has supplied tens of thousands of bridges to urban and rural locations all over the world to help customers build strong and sustainable transportation infrastructure, according to the president.

According to Sullivan, his company has built 100 bridges in Ghana, revitalizing the country's critical feeder road system and connecting people and communities throughout the country in less than a year.

American Plastic Technologies CEO, Dr. R.K. Murukurthy stated on his part that there is enormous opportunity to do business in Ethiopia.

“As I understand from the foreign minister and the other presentations, Ethiopia has attractive destination for investors... I am willing to do my business in Ethiopia. Now I am searching Ethiopian partners,” he added.

His company manufactures packaging machines for form fill seal pouches, shrink wrapping machinery, and trimming machinery.

Its products include medical sanitary packaging devices, medical sterile packaging devices, blow molding machines, extrusion lines, blow film machines, bag making machinery, blow molds, wrapping and cartooning machines, bottle filling lines, medical sterile packaging plastics, and thermoforming molds.

Under the export-led industrial development strategy of Ethiopia, production of textile and garments, leather products and agro-processing are priority areas for investment in the manufacturing sector.

Tourism and Culture

Ethiopia is Aiming to Become One of Africa's Top Five Tourist Destinations

Ethiopia can be one of the five leading countries for tourist destinations in Africa, if it properly implements its Sustainable Tourism Master Plan by 2020, according to Dr. Ray Muntida, Advisor to the IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan. Currently tourism in Ethiopia generates about US\$2.9 billion dollars for the economy annually, close to a million jobs and about 4.5% of GDP. The Government has made it clear it wants to increase the number of tourists during the Second Growth and Transformation Plan (2015/16 – 2019/20) significantly. In August last year, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced

ambitious plans to triple foreign visitors to more than 2.5 million by 2020 to become Africa's top tourist destination by same year. Last financial year, 770,000 tourists visited Ethiopia.

The Ministry hopes to increase the number of tourists to one million and the revenue to well over US\$3billion by end of this Ethiopian budget year.

Among the moves taken over the last year or two to revitalize and expand the tourism sector's infrastructure development have been the 'Sustainable Tourism Development Project' and the creation of a Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP), as well as the setting up of the newly

established 'Ethiopian Tourism Organization (ETO), and then the creation of a high-level Tourism Transformation Council (TTC) chaired by Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn. These along with a number of other initiatives and actions make it clear the sector is breaking out of its past inaction and the Government is taking the tourism sector seriously as a means of generating revenue for the nation. It had the aim of encouraging the sector to become one of the frontline activities in working to eradicate poverty.

Both numbers and revenue for the first quarter of this budget year showed an increase over the previous year, according to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. With the infrastructure of the sector starting to transform itself this has helped to create a good impression for the outside world and international media outlets and tourism publications. A number of tourism guides have begun to list Ethiopia as a place to visit. Such widely acclaimed publications as Rough Guides and Lonely Planet rated Ethiopia last year as one of the most impressive tourist destinations. International organizations including the United Nations World Tourism Organization also has praised the country's efforts to upgrade the infrastructure and noted the untapped cultural and natural resources that are to be seen in Ethiopia.

Last week, Al Jazeera said in a piece entitled "Tourism and Natural Treasures to pull Ethiopia out of poverty" noted that "Key tourism factors such as easy and fast growing air access, personal safety and local hospitality, rapid economic growth and, above all, fascinating discoveries to be made, bode very well for rapid tourism growth". Much of this is already a reality in Ethiopia and there is a real focus developing on

infrastructure and tourist destinations development.

In these efforts, supporting factors for Ethiopia's tourism sector development, the greatest strength for tourism in Ethiopia. The country, it says, still has so many diverse cultures, landscapes and wildlife areas that can be developed for tourist itineraries. It notes the Simien and Bale Mountains national parks; the forests of the South; the Sof Omar Caves; the Danakil Desert location where Lucy was found, lending weight to Ethiopia's claim to be the cradle of humanity.

The report goes on to state that "the rich cultural and historical legacy of Ethiopia is not confined to the previous presented list, and new prominent landmarks such as the Sheik Hussein, religious, cultural and historical site; Melka Kunture, a Paleolithic site in the upper Awash Valley; the Gedeo Cultural and Natural Landscape; the Bale Mountains National Park; Sof Omar Cave, the longest cave in Ethiopia at 15.1 kilometers long and the longest system of caves in Africa, and sacred for Islam and for the local Oromo population were added." It also noted that to fully grasp the potential of Ethiopia's natural parks and reservations. We must look at the potential of Simien National Park garnering mountain peaks, deep valleys, and sharp precipices dropping about 1,500 m. It said all these regions and national parks were a model of achieving ecological and green tourism that should be recognized throughout the world. It referred to Ethiopia as a perfect center for safari and adventure tourism, offering large areas suitable for this special kind of tourism. It had the necessary infrastructure to welcome the adventure seeker, as well as providing safety and peace, making the country, one of the world's top adventure destinations.