



# ETHIO NEWS

## Politics

### DJIBOUTI PRESIDENT'S STATE VISIT TO ETHIOPIA



President Ismail Omar Guelleh with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn at the airport. Photo:mfa

In 16 March 2017 President of Djibouti, H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh, arrived in Addis for a three-day official visit. On arrival at Bole International Airport, President Ismail Omar Guelleh was greeted by Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn along with with Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu and other High Level Government Officials as well as Ambassadors of various African countries. The President addressed the Ethiopian Parliament on the same day. During his three days stay in Addis, President Guelleh held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Hailemariam on ways of furthering the ever-growing ties between the two countries.

### 30TH EXTRA-ORDINARY SUMMIT OF IGAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT



IGAD heads of state and government assembled. Photo:mfa

The IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and

Government held its 30th Extra-Ordinary Summit on 25 March 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya, to deliberate on the current situation in the Republic of South Sudan. H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia chaired the IGAD Assembly.

The Summit also deliberated on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and Sustainable Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia. The assembly was attended by H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti; H.E. Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya; H.E. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia; H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan; H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda and H.E. Hasabo Mohamed Abdul Rhaman, Vice-President of the Republic of the Sudan.

Following briefings by the President of the Republic of South Sudan and the Vice-President of the Republic of the Sudan, and subsequent discussions, the Summit expressed deep concern about the worsening humanitarian crisis in South Sudan and decided that all necessary measures must be taken to save lives and forestall the famine. The Summit decided that all humanitarian corridors should be immediately opened without any conditionality to allow safe access to affected populations across the country. In this regard, the Summit called for a confirmation of this action from the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) within a week. A donation by the President of the Republic of the Sudan, 10,000 tonnes of humanitarian supplies to the people of South Sudan, was welcomed. The Summit commended the commitment of the President of Republic of South Sudan to ensure that the humanitarian supplies reach the intended

beneficiaries while condemning the pro-The Summit called on all armed groups to renounce violence as a means of solving problems in South Sudan. It also called upon all factions to immediately stop the fighting. In response to this call, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan agreed to announce a unilateral ceasefire and grant amnesty to those that renounced violence. The Summit nonetheless urged both, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, to ensure that their territories are not used by any armed groups that threaten the security of both countries, as well as to implement the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS). All parties were encouraged in particular to focus on security sector reforms in order to build a republican army to guarantee the safety and security of South Sudan and its people. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan was further encouraged to work towards building an encompassing political process determined through a credible election, where all South Sudanese have an opportunity to determine their leaders and hold them to account. All IGAD Member States reaffirmed their continued and collective engagement in the search of lasting peace, security and stability of South Sudan and are committed to the revitalization of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. Furthermore, the Summit called upon all parties to fully cooperate with JMEC and not impede the movement of the Ceasefire Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM).



## A BRIEFING ON ETHIO-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS FOR YOUNG EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS



Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie with Egyptian diplomats.  
Photo: mfa

At a meeting coordinated by Dr. Heba El-Marasi, Director of Egypt's Institute of Diplomatic studies, Ethiopia's Ambassador to Egypt, Taye Atske-Selassie, gave a briefing to twenty five members of the graduating class of Egyptian diplomats on the major functions of diplomacy and the age-old relations between Ethiopia and Egypt. Drawing on his own experiences, Ambassador Taye said that the life of a diplomat might look exciting, satisfying and fulfilling but it also is rather daunting and at times difficult. Indeed, a diplomat may often be confronted with a stark choice between the rational thinking of the individual and the collective interest of the institution. However, the reality on which all political leaders can agree is that the function of a diplomat is to "control chaos and anarchy", or to put it more diplomatically, to manage the clash of interests and values. A diplomat's task, in fact, is to look ahead and work for the common good. Ambassador Taye emphasized, that there is more benefit in working through cooperation than concentrating on different interests that may encourage unnecessary divergences. He added that these things are often easier said than done, but as long as diplomats take the guidance of our leaders and work calmly, patiently and with perseverance, getting a satisfactory result is tenable.

Turning to Ethio-Egyptian relations, Ambassador Taye said that people often emphasized that Egypt and Ethiopia had no common borders. In terms of the physical map on a wall that might be true, but it was

otherwise highly misleading as Ethiopia and Egypt had so much in common to share and cherish together. "We are", he said, "one because we are tied forever together by the magnificent river Nile." In addition, both countries enjoy one of the longest bilateral relationships. Ethiopia and Egypt were founding members of the United Nations. Emperor Haile Selassie and President Gamal Abdel Nasser, along with other great African leaders, played major roles in founding the Organization of African Unity, precursor of the African Union, in a spirit of pan-Africanism. Even religion demonstrates a significant role in linking Egypt and Ethiopia. The Bible devotes 80 verses to Egypt and mentions Ethiopia 40 times; the Koran refers to Egypt 5 times and Ethiopia on 30 occasions.

Ambassador Taye noted that Ethiopia had started building the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) to satisfy its growing demand for electricity. It is not built to harm the interest of the lower riparian countries. Indeed the Dam has a lot to contribute to downstream countries, providing an increased and consistent flow of water, resolving the problem of siltation, significantly reducing evaporation and providing cheaper electricity both to downstream countries as well as to other neighboring countries. Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan, Ambassador Taye underlined, had signed the Declaration of Principles on GERD. This outlined the principle of cooperation based on common understanding, mutual benefit, good faith, win-win solutions and the principle of international law. It also outlined the principle of cooperation in understanding upstream and downstream water needs in all their various aspects. In sum, the purpose of GERD is for promotion of trans-boundary cooperation and regional integration through the generation of sustainable and reliable energy.

In conclusion, Ambassador Taye's message to the young diplomats was that "our relationship is not a coincidence, but a destiny we should cherish. The best chapters in our relationship are not only deter-

mined by meetings and speeches; they also grow from the trust and love of our peoples." The Egyptian diplomats travelled to Ethiopia at the end of the month to exchange experiences with young Ethiopian diplomats at a similar level. They were the third such group of diplomatic trainees from Egypt to visit Ethiopia.

## Diaspora

### ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY IN GERMANY DISCUSSED THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THEIR COUNTRY



The open discussion in Frankfurt was well attended.

On March 25 and 26, the Ethiopian embassy in Berlin and the Consulate General in Frankfurt jointly held discussions with Ethiopian religious leaders, community representatives and members of the diaspora community residing in different parts of Germany on current developments in Ethiopia.

Ambassador Kuma Demeksa, who chaired the discussion, welcomed the participants and thanked them for their willingness and determination to participate on the discussion in the middle of confusion created by some extremist members of the Diaspora on different social media platforms.

The Ambassador in his briefing highlighted the major accomplishments of the government in Ethiopia and equivocally pinpointed the major failures of the government since the introduction of a democratic constitutional order in the country. The constitution that recognizes the socio-cultural and linguistic diversity in the country and



protects the human and political rights of the citizens is the corner stone for the building of a united and prosperous Ethiopia. Apart from this, the Ambassador recognized the government's failure in addressing some of the concerns of the citizens that are mainly related to failure to benefit from the growing economy and frustration from maladministration at different levels of the government.

The participants of the meeting appreciated the initiative taken to arrange such important discussion forum for the diaspora, as it helped to understand the situation from government representatives. Furthermore, the participants raised several questions related to widening of the political space in the country, border conflicts between regional states and the corruption problem in the country.

The ambassador replied to the questions raised by the participants accordingly and he further emphasized the government's determination to tackle the challenges faced. He called on religious leaders, community representatives and members of the diaspora to put aside political differences and actively participate in the democratization and development process of the country.

## Security

### ETHIOPIA LIFTS PARTS OF STATE OF EMERGENCY

Prime Minister Hailemariam announced that the State of Emergency declared on October 9 last year has since largely met its objective. A directive has been prepared to allow a move away from the implementation of the provisions of the State of Emergency back to the regular process of law enforcement. He said, a preliminary assessment by the Command Post of the State of Emergency indicated that normalcy had returned to the country. The Command Post has subsequently lifted some restrictions, specifically the curfew that imposed limits of movement around infrastructure, investments, commercial

farms, factories and related institutions from 6pm to 6am local time. The Command Post also lifted detention and searches without court order as well as the curfew imposed to control and restrict messages transmitted through radio, television, writings, images, photography, theater and film. These changes are in effect as of March 16.

## Tourism

### ETHIOPIA ON THE ITB 2017 IN BERLIN



*Dr. Hirut Woldemariam speaks at the ETO/ET press conference.*

From March 8-12 the ITB, one of the world's largest trade exhibitions for the tourism industry, took place in Berlin. Ethiopia was represented by Minister of Culture and Tourism, Dr. Hirut Woldemariam, Solomon Tadesse of the Ethiopian Tourism Organization and 22 different Ethiopian tour operators.

"Ethiopia is experiencing a transformation from a relatively poor country into a prosperous and economically powerful nation – in part thanks to tourism", explained Dr. Woldemariam during the same conference. The varied natural landscape, the rich history and the archeological treasures of Ethiopia are a few of the major reasons, why the country views itself as a prime destination for travelers. She concluded: "If you would like to follow the steps of mankind's ancestors, you need to visit Ethiopia!", referencing Ethiopia's image as the cradle of mankind, the Land of Origins.

## Culture

### MINISTER FOR CULTURE VISITS GERMAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM



*Dr. Hirut Woldemariam enjoying a personal tour through the museum.*

During her visit to Berlin, Minister for Culture and Tourism Dr. Hirut Woldemariam met with Ulrike Kretschmar, director of the German Historical museum (DHM). Although Addis Abeba already has a national museum, a new building concept is being developed, to adequately represent the rich history and culture of Ethiopia's more than 85 ethnic groups. Dr. Woldemariam also confirmed that a dedicated Adwa War Museum is in the planning stage as well. The visit at the DHM supplied valuable input for these new Ethiopian museum projects. The DHM with its 8000m<sup>2</sup> of total exhibition space (the largest single exhibition concept covering more than 1200m<sup>2</sup>) served as an important model for a successful and tried museum concept. By targeting all age groups and offering many different ways to audiovisually convey and teach all aspects of German history to its patrons, the DHM is not unlike what Dr. Woldemariam envisions for Ethiopia. The Minister also used the occasion to suggest bilateral agreements for the exchange of museologists between both nations, as the highly specialized field still requires the training of skilled personnel, a task which can best be approached with experienced outside assistance.