



ETHIO NEWS

Politics

SUDANESE PRESIDENT'S STATE VISIT TO ETHIOPIA



Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn
Photo:mfa

President Omar Al-Bashir made a three-day official visit to Ethiopia on April 4-6, holding bilateral consultations with Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn and other senior Ethiopian government officials. Discussions covered a wide range of issues of common interest, aiming to expand economic ties and deepen the historic relations between the two neighbors. During the visit, the Prime Minister also accompanied President Omar Al-Bashir to the Hawassa Industrial Park, to the Kuraz Sugar Factory and to other projects in the Southern Regional State. President Al-Bashir told the media during his visit to the Hawassa Park that he observed Ethiopia's economic growth had brought tangible change in the life of the people. The reason for this success, he said, was the stability and peace for which Ethiopia was known in the region.

Both leaders underlined the need to further strengthen the already excellent and strong bilateral ties, the importance of enhancing economic and infrastructural integration, and cultural, trade and security partnerships as well as the way forward on how to cooperate in areas like the power sector and in establishing a 'Free Economic Zone' which the two countries will do "very soon."

EMIR OF QATAR'S STATE VISIT TO ETHIOPIA



Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn
Photo:mfa

The Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani made a state visit to Ethiopia on April 10-11, giving full expression to the need for expansion of in-depth and practical cooperation between Qatar and Ethiopia. The two-day state visit reviewed the status and growth of the bilateral relationship of the two countries, encompassing all fields of cooperation in the light of the new impetus and potential for the promotion of an agenda of sustainable development and maintenance of regional peace and stability. Both sides also underlined the importance of maintaining the momentum of frequent high-level visits to expand the substance of Ethio-Qatar ties, grounded on mutual trust and joint development.

The Emir, who was appreciative of Ethiopia's role in upholding peace and stability in the Horn of Africa within the IGAD platform, said the State of Qatar was ready to cooperate with Ethiopia in the fight against terrorist elements in the region. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani also noted Qatar's support for Ethiopia's developmental activities including infrastructural development. The Emir said his visit would help in their endeavors to continue exploring new avenues of cooperation and to create new mechanisms to deal with issues of common concern. He expressed the readiness of the State of Qatar to provide humanita-

rian assistance to drought victims in Ethiopia, and to support the efforts of the government of Ethiopia in education, health, infrastructure and energy. He also expressed readiness to finance the establishment of a specialized hospital for kidney treatment. Both sides agreed to strengthen economic cooperation and committed themselves to make joint efforts to enhance business-to-business ties, engaging both the public and private sectors. They encouraged the private sectors of both countries to increase cooperation; and the Emir gave instructions to establish a loan portfolio for small and medium projects with the aim of creating job opportunities for the youth.

PRIME MINISTER HAILEMARIAM'S STATE VISIT TO RWANDA



Prime Minister Hailemariam formally inaugurates the new embassy in Kigali.
Photo:mfa

President Kagame and First Lady Jeanette Kagame welcomed Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn and First Lady Roman Tesfaye to Rwanda on April 27 at the start of a three day state visit to Rwanda. On arrival at Kigali International Airport, the Prime Minister, accompanied by a high-level delegation of ministers and officials including State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Hirut Zemene, was given a red carpet welcome and inspected a guard of honor mounted by the Rwandan Defence Forces. After a state banquet hosted by president Kagame on Thursday, the



Prime Minister and President Kagame held bilateral talks on Friday to discuss ways to further strengthen and deepen relations between the two countries. The talks also focused on regional cooperation, trade and investment ties, and on ways the two nations could learn from each other's experience in peace and security.

Following the bilateral discussions a number of agreements which had been earmarked at the 2nd Joint Ministerial Commission meeting were signed. The Commission's meeting earlier in the week was held at the technical level involving experts from both countries. During the meeting, the two sides discussed cooperation in the fields of education, tourism and mutual legal assistance. The Permanent Secretary at Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Claude Nikobisanzwe, said "During the meeting new areas of partnerships were agreed notably in: education, tourism, mutual legal assistance and a framework to monitor implementation of these areas was also put in place". He said: "Cooperation between Rwanda and Ethiopia remains strong and significant results have been achieved in the areas of defense, aviation and Capacity building among others, which continues to benefit the people of our two countries".

During his visit, Prime Minister Hailemariam also formally inaugurated the newly opened Ethiopian Embassy in Kigali.

FOREIGN MINISTER DR. WORKNEH MEETS HIS EGYPTIAN COUNTERPART SHOUKRY IN CAIRO



Minister Workneh Gebeyehu and Minister Sameh Shoukry
Photo:mfa

"Ethiopia is determined to expand bilateral relations with Egypt", Foreign Minister Dr.

Workneh Gebeyehu emphasized on April 19 during a joint press conference with his Egyptian counterpart, Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry. Dr. Workneh held talks with Mr. Shoukry and met earlier with President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi. The President, who described the Ethio-Egyptian relationship as an important one that should be further improved, noted that Egypt does not interfere in or conspire against domestic affairs of other nations.

At the joint press conference, Dr. Workneh thanked the people and the government of Egypt for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to his delegation and took the opportunity to express deepest sympathies of the government and the people of Ethiopia to the people of Egypt over the loss of innocent lives following the recent terror attacks on Egyptian Coptic churches. He said Ethiopia and Egypt are two nations with a long history and unique civilization, adding that the two countries are bound together through the longest river Nile. Noting that the relationship between the two countries has been improving over the last three years, Dr. Workneh emphasized on the need to hold regular consultations and exchanges of visits

He said he came to deliver a message to Egyptians that his country was not seeking to cause suffering to the Egyptian people. "We will not harm the Egyptian people", he said, "but they should also help us in making use of our natural resources," in reference to the Grand Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD). Dr Workneh described both nations as connected "throughout history and the Nile River," adding "I am here today to assure the Egyptian people that we must work together to accomplish our goals." Dr. Workneh told his Egyptian counterpart that his visit conveyed the message of fraternity, solidarity and cooperation, one based on mutual trust and interest between the peoples of Ethiopia and Egypt. Underlining that the people and the Government of Ethiopia are committed to further deepen the historical ties, Dr. Workneh noted Ethiopia wouldn't harm the interest of Egypt.

Dr. Workneh said that he discussed bilateral relations with the Egyptian president and foreign minister "honestly," and Mr.

Shoukry said their discussions were characterized by a "keenness [to boost] the relationship, with further dialogue on the necessity of maintaining it." Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry described the talks as "transparent and honest," which he said was vital for Egypt and Ethiopia to promote the best interests of the peoples of both nations. He called for further dialogue on the necessity of maintaining the relationship. He expressed Egypt's desire to further strengthen its ties with Ethiopia in investment, trade other sectors of engagement. The Egyptian foreign minister noted that officials from Egypt and Ethiopia would now be meeting and holding talks every two months to work on improving relations. He also noted that President El-Sisi expected that Prime Minister Hailemariam would soon come to Cairo for a meeting of the two countries' Joint High-Level Committee meeting.

Security

6TH TANA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON SECURITY IN AFRICA IN BAHIR DAR



Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn holds the opening speech for the 6th Tana Forum
Photo:mfa

The 6th Tana High-level Forum on Security in Africa was held on April 22-23 in Bahir Dar, the capital of the Amhara Regional State Government, under the theme: "Natural Resource Governance in Africa". Every year, it brings together African leaders and stakeholders to engage and explore African-led security solutions. Opening the forum, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn underlined that as Africa was endowed with a wide range of natural resources and their management mattered, this theme, 'Natural Resource Governance in Africa' is particularly fitting.



Natural resource management and governance was important because mismanagement so easily resulted in conflict and contention. The Prime Minister said proper governance of natural resources would help Africa to maximize the developmental benefits that should accrue from exploiting the continent's rich natural resources. Calling for specific national policies to ally with effective and proper management, he said natural resource governance should be governed by the right orientation, developmental orientation, for it to bear the required results, make it sustainable, and allow it to serve as the necessary source of economic transformation and 'leapfrogging'. He called on African leaders, statesmen and policy makers to focus on transforming the political economy of the African continent as the basis for a long-lasting solution to African economic and political economic problems. In the pursuit of transforming the continent's agrarian economies to emerging industrial economies, the Prime Minister underlined the need to attach full weight to agriculture, and particularly to small holding farming. At the same time, encouraging leaders to work towards economic leapfrogging, Prime Minister Hailemariam noted the importance of transforming Africa's economy from rent-seeking political ventures to effective developmental political economy.

The Program Head for the African Conflict Prevention Program at the Institute for Strategic Studies, Dr. Mehari Taddele Maru, summed up the key message of the discussions as the necessity to deliver on promises and implement policies. This, of course, was the responsibility of African states. It was clear governance needed an institutional framework, collaborative platforms and financial capability. Self-serving elites and a rent-seeking political economy could turn natural resources into a curse by restricting the developmental benefits of natural resource management and governance. Primary responsibility for good governance resided in the state. Failure meant a leadership deficit, and a need for frank and open dialogue and the freedom to be critical while being respectful and civil.

Other speakers included former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, co-author of "Making Africa Work: A hand Book for

Economic Success," with Greg Mills, the Director of South Africa's Brenthurst Foundation, who described Ethiopia as one of the few African countries doing things in the right direction. He called on other countries to follow suit. He also encouraged Ethiopia to offer technical support to fellow African nations. Dr. Obiageli Ezekwesili, senior advisor, Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative, Nigeria, said that Ethiopia's policy stability, clarity, continuity and political commitment was the secret to Ethiopia's economic success, particularly in attracting foreign direct investment. With highly-admired policy autonomy, Ethiopia attested the importance of proper management of resources in Africa through prudent policies. Salil Shetty, Secretary-General, Amnesty International, UK welcomed the way Ethiopia linked security with human security, and welcomed Prime Minister Hailemariam's clear message about the strong link between natural resource management and human resource management.

Tourism

“MUCH MORE THAN ‘LAND OF ORIGINS’ ”

The 59th meeting of the UN World Tourism Commission for Africa and the High-level Meeting on Chinese Outbound Tourism to Africa were held in Addis Ababa on April 18-21. Attending were 37 African Ministers of Tourism and high level delegations from World Tourism Commission member states, as well as representatives of the tourism and media industries and Dr. Taleb D. Rifai, Secretary General of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). During their visit, conference delegates visited the city of Gondar in the Amhara Regional State, the capital of Ethiopia during the mid-17th to 19th centuries, the residence of the Emperor Fasilidas (1632-1659) and his successors. They visited the palaces and castles in Gondar, as well as Debre Berhan Selassie church with its notable 17th century paintings and planted trees as a demonstration of commitment to environmental protection and climate change resilience.

The palace complex in Gondar itself includes the Castles of the Emperors Fasilidas, Iyasu I and Dawit, the Library and Chancel-

lery of Yohannis I, and the Banqueting Hall of Bakaffa as well as other buildings. Gondar is also home to famous monasteries and churches including Debre Berhane Selassie, the Bath of Fasilidas and other remains in the immediate area, among them the 18th century Palace of the Empress Mentuab and the church at Qusqam; and a little further away, the Castle of Guzara and the House of the Catholic Patriarch, dating to the early 17th century.

In an interview Dr. Rifai, Secretary General of the UNWTO, said he was impressed by the enormous variety of tourist destinations that characterized Ethiopia, and particularly, the different styles of the castles he had seen in Gondar. Ethiopia, he said, with its various different tangible and intangible heritage sites and its historic and cultural tourist destinations, was much more than merely the "the land of origins". He said in Gondar there were the same kinds of stone and building techniques, but "the styles are completely different. That is what really fascinates me." Dr. Rifai said: "I know you can come up with the tag line 'the land of origins', but Ethiopia is by far more than this. It is a land that can accommodate its essence and souls that are beyond the world's description." He added: "The branding exercise has not yet been finished."

Describing Ethiopia as not only the land of origin and diversity, but also a land of unity, where all aspects of life were unified under one umbrella, the Secretary-General said: "I think this visit completes my dictionary and my vocabulary on the cultural aspects of Ethiopia. The beauty of it is in the diversity within a unity. There is a remarkable spirit that unifies the whole place." It was his third visit to Ethiopia, and Dr. Rifai said he was impressed with the commitment and political will that the Government was devoting to the effect of ensuring proper utilization of the country's tourism potential. He said, "The most important and impressive development I saw is the maturity of the political will and the belief in tourism today." He noted that Ethiopia had invested largely in infrastructure development, and this, coupled with the thriving hotel service industry, had the potential to generate more than ten times the current tourist numbers.