



# ETHIO NEWS

## Politics

### ETHIOPIAN STATE VISIT TO DJIBOUTI



PM Abiy Ahmed arriving in Djibouti

Photo: mfa

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed arrived in Djibouti on April 28 for an official two day visit.

The delegation led by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ishmael Omar Guelleh, included senior officials, religious leaders, members of the diplomatic community in Djibouti was warmly welcomed.

On their second day the delegation led by the Prime Minister discussed bilateral and regional affairs with President Ismael Omar Guelleh.

Additionally the Prime Minister held a speech at the parliament and visited various institutions, including the Djibouti port. Dr. Abiy strongly emphasized the intimate relationship between both countries. The two leaders have agreed to elevate the existing strong cooperation between both countries to the highest level.

### ETHIOPIAN STATE VISIT TO POLAND



President Duda and President Mulatu with their spouses

Photo: mfa

President Mulatu Teshome paid a state visit to Poland on April 23 2018. During his visit,

the President conferred with President Andrzej Duda of Poland on various bilateral issues.

President Andrzej Duda himself had paid an official visit to Ethiopia in May 2017 and the officials of the two countries had signed various bilateral agreements that will help to boost their comprehensive relations.

President Mulatu Teshome is going to pay official visit to Poland upon the invitation of the President of Poland.

### PRIME MINISTER ABIY'S DOMESTIC TRIPS

A few days after being sworn in as Premier, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed made his first working trip outside the capital, Addis Ababa, travelling to Jijiga in the Somali Regional State in the east and then to Ambo in the Oromia Regional State in the west.

On April 11 Dr. Abiy travelled to Eastern Ethiopia, the Somali Regional State. The Premier arrived in Jijiga, the capital of the Somali region, to hold public discussions in a bid to invigorate the Government's activities to ensure lasting peace in the area and to solve any problems once and for all. In his opening remarks, the Prime Minister underlined that the conflict "was regrettable, contrary to the Ethiopian culture and a shameful spot in our history." He added that both sides were losers in any conflict and noted that Ethiopians have longstanding traditional mechanisms of resolving problems.

Speaking on the occasion, the Somali Regional State President Abdi Mohamed said the conflict was shameful and it was regrettable that it was not prevented in time. He also expressed the readiness of the regional government to restore peace and tranquility between the two brotherly peoples. President Abdi also noted that the visit of the Prime Minister to the region just after his appointment showed his readiness to resolve the problem in the region and his commitment to the unity of the country.

On the second leg of his first visit as Premier to various parts of the country, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy also made an official working visit to Ambo town, west of capital Addis Ababa on April 11.

Dr. Abiy was met by thousands of cheering locals, some of whom held his portrait aloft, speeches of welcome, and spear-wielding Oromo horsemen in colorful capes and baboon-skin headdresses when he arrived in Ambo on Wednesday. There was expectation that his visit would be instrumental in finding viable solutions to the public demands and concerns over various areas of socio-economic development of the town and the country at large. After blessings from traditional leaders and a moment of

silence in memory of those who died in the recent disturbances, Prime Minister emphasized: "We are now on the path of change and love," adding, "You have expressed your grievances and have made demands. We give you our unwavering commitment to resolving them." He went on: "But for us to succeed, we also need your unwavering support." He said: "I urge you all to promote our unity in diversity by supporting each other, so that we can realize our strategic dream." Dr. Abiy noted "The people of Ambo have always stood up for change; now it is time for the people to direct their attention towards peace and development." He also highlighted the importance of resolving differences through dialogue. The Premier also pledged the utmost efforts by the government to ensure benefits for all Ethiopians, including women, and urged scholars to conduct problem-solving researches.

### NEW MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED



New cabinet members and old cabinet members with new positions being sworn in

Photo: mfa

In order to strengthen the ongoing reforms that he has launched in the country, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed named a new cabinet this week as well as some other appointments to head federal offices. The appointments were approved by the House of Peoples' Representatives on April 19. Addressing the members of parliament, the Prime Minister underlined that the reshuffle signified the government's desire to "solve people's complaints" and to combat corruption. Prime Minister Abiy stressed, "This is a red line that has to be enforced," adding, "What the public is fed up of is graft and maladministration. This will not be tolerated." The appointments were chosen taking into consideration educational background, political and leadership skills.

The Prime Minister made sixteen changes to the cabinet, moving six ministers and bringing in ten new faces. He named new ministers for defense, industry, energy, trade, mining, health, and revenue and appointed a new attorney general. Among the Minis-



ters who retained their jobs included Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu and Finance Minister Abraham Tekeste, both appointed in late 2016.

In addition to the ministerial changes, the Prime Minister also appointed nine officials to head various federal offices.

## UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA



Zeid bin Ra'ad Zeid Al Hussein and Minister Workneh

Photo: mfa

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid bin Ra'ad Zeid Al Hussein who made a three-day official visit to Ethiopia from April 22-25 noted that Ethiopia has been on the right path towards ensuring human rights. He came at the invitation of the Government and during his visit he met with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed; the Speaker of House of People's Representatives, Ms. Muferehat Kamil; Foreign Minister, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu; the Commissioner of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, Dr Addisu Gebre-Egziabher, and other government officials and stakeholders to discuss the human rights situation in Ethiopia. High Commissioner Zeid last visited Ethiopia in May 2017, when he met the then Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn and other high-ranking Ethiopian officials and civil society members to discuss the human rights situation in the country. On that occasion he also visited the UN Human Rights East Africa Regional Office based in Addis Ababa. The Government earlier this year invited the Commissioner for a follow-up visit. In a statement at the end of his visit the Commissioner said: "Inviting a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights once already shows that a Government is willing to openly discuss the human rights challenges in the country. Inviting me twice demonstrates real sincerity." He said in all his meetings, in the

Oromia region and in Addis Ababa, he heard clear expressions of optimism and hope that the new Government would deliver on the heartening and inspiring speeches Dr. Abiy had made.

During his stay in Ethiopia, the High Commissioner held talks with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed on April 25. They discussed on the human rights situation in Ethiopia and exchanged views on the recent reform agenda. After considerations on ways to work together on human rights protection and human rights institution-building, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed underlined Ethiopia's commitment to work with the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

Prince Zeid Al Hussien noted that during his visit to various parts of the country, he has been able to witness a new chapter unfolding in the development of human rights and democracy in Ethiopia. The High Commissioner said he was "deeply impressed" by the renewed interest, hope and commitment that all Ethiopians have demonstrated. This renewed feeling of the People, he added, would give further impetus to Government's ongoing efforts to bring about social justice in the country.

## 7TH TANA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON SECURITY



PM Abiy Ahmed at the High-Level Forum

Photo: mfa

The 7th Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa was held in Bahir Dar city from April 21-22. The Forum, which brought together more than 250 participants including incumbent and former African leaders, representatives of stakeholder groups, and peace and security experts from around the continent, was held under the theme: "Ownership of Africa's Peace and Security Provision: Financing and Reforming the African Union." Those attending included Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Foreign Minister, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, former Premier, Hailemariam Desalegn, President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan; former Nigerian President and Tana Forum Board Chairperson, Olusegun Obasanjo; former Ghanaian President, John Dramani Mahama; former South African President, Kgalema Motlanthe; and former Senegalese Premier, Aminata Touré. The theme of the Forum reflected the urgent need to discuss, debate and establish a thorough understanding of the principle of

ownership by the AU in delivering its mandate, particularly for peace and security. The Forum explored innovative proposals on the practical realities of implementing the AU's new reform agenda and considered possible implementation problems and how to overcome them, as well as how to secure effective compliance by AU Member States. It also considered what more needed to be done to ensure that AU Member States own their security agenda and effectively address the continent's peace and security challenges. Currently, much of the budget to address these issues come from external funding. In fact, much of the AU's budget comes from international donors, with 30 out of the member states failing to pay their contributions, either partially or completely. In 2017 alone, 73% of the AU's \$782 million budget came from international partners, with member states contributing \$212 million, or a total of 27%. To increase self-reliance and support peace operations, the AU has suggested a 0.2% import levy on eligible goods, which officials hope, will raise up to \$400 million by 2020.

In a keynote address, Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, noted that "the only viable responses to the challenges we are facing will be endogenous". Following the adoption of proposed reforms by the AU Assembly in January 2017, Mahamat created the Institutional Reforms Unit within his own office in September 2017 to oversee the implementation of the reforms plan between 2017 and 2018. In an update to Forum participants on the current status of the reform plan, he said: "\$41.6 million has been paid into the Peace Fund, with the target, for the current year, of mobilizing \$65 million. This is the highest level of contribution ever made to the Peace Fund since it was established in 1993". He said; "Experience has shown too often the futility of solutions that ignore the contexts in which they are supposed to be implemented". He also spoke of the role of the AU partners: "Their role must not be belittled or neglected. Independence means constructive engagement with different stakeholders interested in Africa on an equal footing."

Opening the forum, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed thanked the Tana Forum Secretariat and Institute of Peace and Security Studies of Addis Ababa University "for bringing us together" to such an important platform. He said Tana Forum has evolved into a highly successful informal and premier platform to address African pressing peace and security challenges. The Prime Minister added that the Forum, under the patronage of the African Union, was now a key venue to generate great ideas and African solutions to the challenges that the continent was currently facing. This year's Meles Zenawi lecture was on the former Egyptian president, Gamal Nasser. Ms. Samia Nkrumah, the daughter of the late first Pime Minister and President of Ghana and a key advocate of Pan-Africanism, Kwame Nkrumah, presented a paper



on the legacy of former Egyptian president, Gamal Nasser. In her presentation, Ms. Nkrumah touched upon Nasser's contribution to Pan-Africanism, the fostering of greater ties between Egypt and North Africa and the rest of the continent as well as establishing strong Arab-African solidarity. Former South African president Motlanthe said the efforts to end apartheid in South Africa was partly a product of Pan-African activism and that this success should be complemented by inspiring today's youth to work together for Afro-Arab unity and the unity of the whole African continent. He called for a free- visa system across the continent to strengthen Afro-Arab unity and in general African unity. He added: "The Arab-Africa leaders' summit which started during Nasser's time and was continued by the late Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi need to be revived if Afro-Arab unity is to become a reality."

The High-Level Forum concluded on April 22 following panel discussions and lectures focusing on this year's theme: "Ownership of Africa's Peace and Security Provision: Financing and Reforming the African Union." At the closing ceremony, speaking on behalf of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Hirut Zemene thanked the organizers and all other stakeholders, including the host, the Amhara Regional state, the Outgoing Chairperson of the Board of Tana Forum and former Nigerian President Obasanjo for his leadership and guidance, and Michelle Ndiaye, Head of the Tana Forum Secretariat, Director, Africa Peace and Security Programme Institute for Peace and Security Studies. Mrs. Hirut particularly commended Ms. Ndiaye for her "down-to-earth-leadership" and thanked her and her team for the "fantastic collaboration and organization."

The State Minister also took the opportunity to recognize the "dedicated services that the outstanding youth made to the forum," in terms of organization, facilitation and ensuring active involvement in the event. Recapping the keynote remarks of Prime Minister Dr. Abiy, Mrs. Hirut underlined that this year's theme: "Ownership of Africa's Peace and Security Provision: Financing and Reforming the African Union" was both timely and necessary. She also emphasized the need to strike a balance between how much money an individual member state contributes and on how this would address the life of the people as well as help establish connections between the African citizenry and the African Union.

Mrs. Hirut also reminded her listeners of yet another key African event, the 1st International Conference of the Adwa Pan-African University, being held April 24-25. She noted the Adwa Pan-African University was "a major hub and center of excellence for Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance."

## FORMER PM HAILEMARIAM DESALEGN HONORED



Former PM Hailemariam Desalegn and his wife Roman Tesfaye

Photo: mfa

Ethiopia's Former Premier, Hailemariam Dessalegn was acknowledged for the successes he brought forth in the tenure of his Premiership, at a ceremony organized by Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed.

Ministers, Regional presidents, Ambassadors of different embassies and Representatives of international organizations, Higher government officials, Religious leaders and other invited guests have attended the ceremony held at the National Palace on April 24.

On the occasion, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy thanked Hailemariam for enabling peaceful transition of power, which he said, marked a new remarkable development in the country's history.

On the event, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn was awarded medal for his outstanding service in the highest government office. He also got the country's highest Diploma of Honor for his dedicated service. Former First lady, Roman Tesfaye also got medal and diploma for her tangible contributions in the social sector.

## Infrastructure

### 7TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE

Ethiopia celebrated the 7th anniversary of the commencement of the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on April 2. The celebration was held at Guba, in Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, where the dam is being constructed. Speaking at the event, attended by high-level government officials, artists and invited guests, Engineer Azeb Asnake, Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Electric Power, said GERD's power generating capacity has now reached 6,450 MW following the design upgrading underway twice, which upon completion will be the largest in Africa. She added that upon completion of the projects at Genale Dawa, Koisha, Alutho Geothermal, Korbeti and Tulu Moye and Rapi Waste to Energy Project, the country will be able to produce some 10,000 megawatts of electric power.

## Culture

### ETHIOPIA ON BERLIN'S DELICANTO FESTIVAL



Beautiful weather, coffee and Ethiopian food drew many interested visitors to the Ethiopian booth at the FEZ Berlin

Photo: emb

Ethiopia was represented on Berlin's Delicanto festival for cultural and culinary exchange from April 21-22. The festival is regularly organized by MP Johannes Selle and saw the participation of more than 30 different countries.

