



# ETHIO NEWS

## DISCUSSIONS ON THE RESULTS AND CHALLENGES OF THE NATIONAL REFORM KICK OFF



After being in office for almost a year, PM Abiy's reforms are evaluated

Photo: mfa

The last 12 months are unique in the history of Ethiopia as it opened wider the door for dialogue marking the beginning of a new juncture in entertaining different political orientations. The release of thousands of prisoners, widening the political space by inviting exiled parties and removing rebel groups from the terrorists list and the peace with Eritrea are among the results of the political reform.

The discussion under the theme "Addis Weg" (The New Discourse), organized by the Office of the Prime Minister, was held in Addis Ababa. It was aimed at promoting the culture of solving differences through dialogue and developing the culture of discourse and reason. The discussion was deliberated on the results and challenges of the reform that the country experienced since the beginning of April 2018. In its last session held on March 23, panelists drawn from the government, members of opposition parties, representatives of civic organizations and activists presented their views and ideas about the successes and challenges of the ongoing political reform. The panelists agreed that the sweeping reforms have created opportunity for the country to start entertaining diversity in political orientation. However, the panelists argued that the reform needs to be institutionalized in order to properly utilize the opportunity.

Speaking on the opening of the session, H. E. President Sahilework Zewde emphasized the need to promote reason rather than emotion. The President said building a society that believed in solving differences through dialogue and reason is crucial in order to sustain the reform and elevate the country

to a better position. The President, who said that hatred has never brought peace and modernization, urged the need to build a society that feels responsibility.

During culmination of the discussion that lasted two days H.E. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on his part said that the Ethiopian government is preparing a law that will help to minimize the damage that fake news and hate speech disseminating in social media are creating. The Premier said the fake news and hate speech that has been spreading widely in the social media forced the government to consider the need for law enforcement. According to the PM, the government has been communicating with face book and other companies on how to control fake news and hate speech.

He urged activists and media practitioners to be more responsible while providing information for the public. The Prime Minister said that his government does not consider shutting down of the social media, but it believes that managing its usage is important to minimize the damage.

## DIPLOMATIC MARATHON IN THE HORN



PM Abiy and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki arriving in Juba

Photo: mfa

PM Abiy has been undertaking a highly active diplomatic initiative during the first week of March to implement his intention to advance regional peace, security and economic integration in the Horn of Africa. He also hosted Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta for a three-day state visit. PM Abiy held tripartite summits with President Kenyatta and Eritrean President Isaias in Asmara; and with South Sudan's President Salva Kiir and President Isaias in Juba March 4. Then Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi for a one-day visit on March 5. The Prime Minister and President Abdullahi flew to Nairobi for talks with President Kenyatta afterwards.

Through the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, President Uhuru Kenyatta and President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed met on March 6 to discuss extensively on the source of the two countries dispute. As an outcome of the discussions, both parties agreed to work together towards peace and to take measures in addressing particular issues that escalated the tensions.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta made a three-day state visit to Ethiopia on March 1-3, setting off a flurry of diplomatic activity between Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. President Kenyatta was accompanied by a substantial delegation of a hundred people including government officials as well as Kenyan corporate and business leaders. On arrival, he was welcome by PM Abiy, at Bole International Airport. The two leaders held talks on a range of bilateral and regional issues. They also opened the Ethio-Kenya Trade and Investment Forum at the new Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa - a forum aiming to strengthen trade and economic ties between the two countries which attracted several hundred business leaders, investors and officials from both countries.

Following his visit to Ethiopia, President Kenyatta flew to Asmara, where he and PM Abiy were accorded a warm welcome on arrival by President Isaias Afwerki and senior government officials accompanied by a guard of honor at Asmara International Airport on March 3. The three leaders held a tripartite summit on "timely regional issues". President Isaias also held separate talks on bilateral issues with both Prime Minister Abiy and President Kenyatta. President Kenyatta then returned to Nairobi.

On March 4 PM Abiy and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki flew from Asmara to Juba where they were received by President Salva Kiir. The Office of the Prime Minister said their talks covered regional peace, economic ties and infrastructure development, as well as ways to develop joint capacities and work together in an integrated manner. The visit was said to come within the "framework of the regional efforts to consolidate economic and political integration of the East African region.

A joint statement after the visit said the three leaders had held extensive discussions on a broad range of issues. They emphasized the need to continue working together to consolidate peace in South Sudan "in all ways possible". They also sought to coordinate their positions on both regional and global issues. Their discussions focused on the need to advance the cause of regional integration. They agreed "to task their Foreign Ministers and other relevant government agencies in the three countries to work out common projects that will facilitate the attainment of the goal of Regional Economic integration and



shared prosperity.” These shared projects would accelerate the commitment to regional economic integration.

Following his short visit to Juba, PM Abiy returned to Addis Ababa to meet Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi who arrived for an official visit on March 5 for talks on aspects of bilateral and regional issues. The Prime Minister’s Office said that the visit was part of PM Abiy’s initiatives for regional peace and security and economic integration. President Abdullahi was met at Bole airport by PM Abiy and other senior officials including Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu.

After their talks in Addis Ababa, PM Abiy and President Abdullahi flew to Nairobi. PM Abiy, who had previously held long consultations with each leader to encourage them to hold their first face to face discussions for a long time, chaired a meeting between President Kenyatta and President Abdullahi on March 6.

Following the discussion, the two parties agreed to work together towards peace and to take measures to address any particular issues that had escalated tension.

Overall, the Prime Minister’s approach has paved the way for the creation of a positive momentum throughout the Horn of Africa, laying the groundwork for increased regional economic integration and the promotion of regional peace and security.

## CELEBRATION OF ADWA VICTORY



President Sahle-Work during her speech

Photo: mfa

Ethiopia commemorated the 123rd anniversary of the victory of the Battle of Adwa over Italy on March 2 under the theme: “Adwa is the Emblem of Our Unity”. It was celebrated colorfully all across the country and most notably, in Addis Ababa at Menelik II Square and in the town of Adwa, where President Sahle-Work Zewde attended the commemoration.

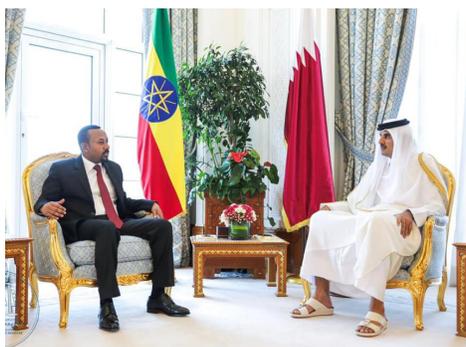
President Sahle-Work underlined that the victory of Adwa was a reminder that despite differences Ethiopians stand together, united, when it comes to defending their country and safeguarding their national interest. It offered lessons for today. The President said the victory of Adwa could be a lesson and an inspiration for today’s generation, further calling on all Ethiopians to stand united today to achieve more successes and hand on

a stable and prosperous nation to the next generation. PM Abiy, in a statement, similarly called for today’s generation to repeat the victory of Adwa by overcoming current challenges and barriers.

The Battle of Adwa was of huge significance for Ethiopia and for Africa. It meant that the age of continental invasion by the then European colonial powers could not be completed. Ethiopia remained independent, a sovereign and un-colonized African country, an example and a model for the rest of the continent. It was a turning point not just for Ethiopia but for Africa and for the African peoples in the Diaspora. It provided an inspiration for African countries in the subsequent struggles for independence; it was not mere chance that African countries chose Ethiopia to be the permanent host of the African Union.

Today, the spirit of Adwa can still provide a springboard for the African Union’s “Pan-Africanism for the African Renaissance”, for the emergence of a new Africa, an Africa free to decide its own destiny. Adwa certainly belongs to Africa; but it also provides the basis for the youth of Ethiopia to develop their own winning spirit, a spirit drawn from the example of the courage and determination shown by their grandfathers.

## ETHIOPIAN STATE VISIT TO QATAR AND THE UAE



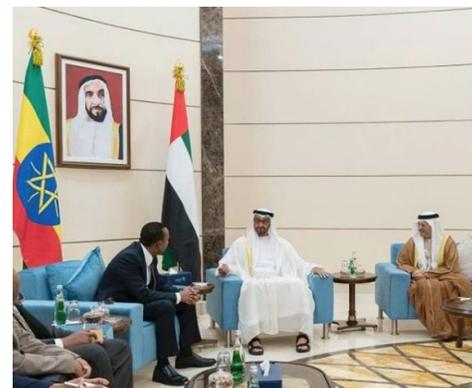
PM Abiy during high level talks in Qatar

Photo: mfa

PM Abiy arrived in Doha on March 19 morning at the head of a delegation that included State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Hirut Zemene. He was received by Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti, Qatar’s Minister of Communications before holding talks with Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani. The two leaders discussed bilateral relations and ways of enhancing and developing the ties in the fields of economy, investment, tourism and infrastructure. They also exchanged views on regional and international developments. The Prime Minister also met Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of Qatar. After their talks, Sheikh Abdullah said in a tweet: “We discussed the strengthening of our re-

lations and views on many issues.” Prime Minister Abiy also visited the Qatar Museum. It was his first visit to Qatar since he took office; Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani visited Ethiopia in April 2017.

Both sides have indicated their strong desire to develop and expand relations in all areas of mutual interest. Ethiopia is keen to encourage and attract Qatari investments and open the way for businessmen from different sectors to promote joint projects that can promote and stimulate the Ethiopian economy. This would also create positive opportunities for Qatari investors to activate foreign projects with good economic and social returns. An Ethiopian Investment Forum, organized by the Ethiopian Embassy in Doha, was held in January this year to review investment opportunities in Ethiopia and discuss economic and trade cooperation between the private sectors of both countries. Ethiopia presented investment opportunities to Qatari businessmen in agriculture, manufacturing, services, medicines, building materials and other areas at the Forum.



PM Abiy during high level talks in the UAE

Photo: mfa

Following his visit to Qatar, Prime Minister PM Abiy made an official visit to the United Arab Emirates, arriving in Abu Dhabi to meet with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces the following day. The two leaders reviewed their friendly relations and opportunities to enhance cooperation between their two countries, especially in development, economy, and investment. They exchanged views on recent regional and international events as well as on a number of issues of common concern. PM Abiy stressed Ethiopia’s interest in strengthening and diversifying relations with the UAE, an investment, economic, trade and tourism hub, to support the aspirations of both countries to achieve development and prosperity for their peoples. Meanwhile, a 75-member commercial delegation from the UAE, led by Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Saleh, UAE’s Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Economy for Foreign Trade Affairs, visited Ethiopia. They met with ministers and officials, and attended the second



Ethiopian-UAE Business Forum, and the inauguration of the UAE pavilion at the International Trade Exhibition taking place in Addis Ababa on March 21-22. Mr. Al Saleh said that the visit aimed to develop the economic, commercial and investment cooperation between Ethiopia and the UAE. He said bilateral economic ties were strong and had witnessed considerable growth. The UAE, he said, prioritized its overall commercial and investment cooperation with Ethiopia, and the visit should create new opportunities for the UAE's private sector to cooperate with the private sector in Ethiopia, explore new commercial opportunities, present the UAE's business environment, and facilitate the work of businessmen. The trade volume amounted to over 618 million US dollars in 2017 and has increased significantly since then.

## FRENCH STATE VISIT TO ETHIOPIA



French President Macron speaking in Addis next to PM Abiy  
Photo: mfa

The President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, visited Ethiopia on March 12-13. He was accompanied by a delegation consisting of the Minister for Europe and Foreign Minister, Jean-Yves le Drian, Secretary of State for Trade, Martine Pinville, as well as a number of business leaders. President Macron arrived in Ethiopia at the city of Lalibela where he was officially received by PM Abiy on March 12. The visit follows an official visit by PM Abiy to Paris in October last year. President Macron toured the UNESCO World Heritage Center of the Rock-Hewn Churches. Last year, after PM Abiy requested French support for the preservation and protection of the churches of Lalibela, President Macron pledged a Franco-Ethiopian agreement for a new system to protect the churches.

From Lalibela, the two leaders flew back to Addis Ababa where they held talks on bilateral, regional and global matters. They reached a consensus to strengthen and deepen existing relations. They also presided over the signing of a defense cooperation agreement. This allows for strengthening cooperation on training, capacity building and strategic level exchanges between the two countries. At their joint press conference, President Macron said this "unprecedented defense

cooperation agreement provides a framework", adding that it also "opens the way for France to assist in establishing an Ethiopian naval component." PM Abiy spoke of plans to rebuild an Ethiopian navy last year, and in November, General Berhanu Jula, Deputy Chief of Staff for the Armed Forces, said Ethiopia was consulting with other countries regarding the naval reinstatement, capacity, and structure. The defense cooperation agreement also allows for air cooperation, joint operations and opportunities for training and equipment purchases.

During the visit, President Sahle-Work Zewde received President Emmanuel Macron at the National Palace and discussed bilateral and regional issues.

Ethiopia and France hold regular and structured political consultations and dialogue to strengthen and consolidate their long-standing bilateral relations. The dialogue covers areas related to domestic politics, and bilateral, sub regional, regional and global issues including migration and climate change. The 3rdEthio-France Political Consultation, held last month, on February 10, was chaired by Ambassador Dr. Markos Tekle, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic. Beyond their bilateral engagement, France and Ethiopia cooperate strategically in their commitment to sustain peace and security in Horn of Africa, notably in support of the peace efforts in Somalia.

## ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES CONTINUES TO BE THE NEW SPIRIT OF AFRICA



Tewolde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines  
Photo: ena

The Ethiopian Airlines Aircraft B-737-800MAX with Registration number ET- AVJ flying from Addis Ababa to Nairobi crashed and killed all crew members and passengers aboard on March 10, 2019. The tragedy that befell Ethiopia, Boeing and Ethiopian Airlines "will continue to be linked well into the future," Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Tewolde Gebremariam said on March 25. In his article entitled "Ethiopian Airlines, The New Spirit of Africa", Tewolde said "this tragedy

won't define us. As the largest aviation group on the continent of Africa, we represent The New Spirit of Africa and will continue to move forward. We are rated as a 4-star global airline with a high safety record and member of Star Alliance. That will not change."

The CEO stated that the investigation of the accident on ET 302 is well underway and the airline will make full and transparent cooperation to discover what went wrong. The CEO indicated that the Ethiopian will work with investigators in Ethiopia, in the U.S. and elsewhere to find out what went wrong with flight 302. "We resolve to work with Boeing and others to use this tragedy to make the skies safer for the world", said Tewolde. Immediately after the crash and owing to the similarity with the Lion Air Accident, the Ethiopian Airlines grounded its fleet of Max 8s. Within days, the plane had been grounded around the world. After such deadly incident and the subsequent measures taken by a number of countries Being begun its software fix for the grounded 737 MAX.



Among many others, the Deputy Chief of Protocol from the German Federal Foreign Office offered his condolences  
Photo: emb

It is to be noted that in connection with the mentioned Ethiopian aircraft crash the Ethiopian Embassy in Germany had opened a book of condolences. Hence, representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the diplomatic corps in Berlin, and members of the Ethiopian diasporas as well as representatives of various institutions from Germany came to the embassy and signed the condolence book.



## ETHIOPIAN PARLIAMENT RATIFIES AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH AfCFTA

The House of People's Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia ratified the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on March 21. The AfCFTA aims to create a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of business persons and investments, and pave the way for accelerating the establishment of the Continental Customs Union and expand intra African trade through better harmonization and coordination of trade liberalization and facilitation regimes and instruments. It will also expedite the regional and continental integration processes, as well as enhance competitiveness at the industry and enterprise level through exploiting opportunities for scale production, continental market access and better reallocation of resources.

## EMBASSY INTENSIFIES BUSINESS DIPLOMACY EFFORTS



The round table discussion at the Afrika-Verein in Berlin

Photo: emb

The Ethiopian embassy in Berlin has participated on different forums and exhibitions and made discussions aimed to promote investment, trade and tourism activities in Germany.

To this end, Ethiopian Embassy in Berlin along with Ethiopian Tour Association, Tour operators and Ethiopian Airlines have participated in the 53rd Berlin International Tour and Travel (ITB) exhibition held in Berlin from March 6-9. Ethiopian exhibitors have used the occasion to show case their country's historical, cultural and natural attractions to visitors from Germany and around the world.

Similarly, the embassy has made a presentation under the title "opportunities in Ethiopia: An introduction to Industrial Park Development" at the Europe, Middle East and Africa Import and Export Trade Fair (EMEA) that took place from March 19-20 in Berlin. The

presentation highlighted the country's strategy of becoming Africa's hub in manufacturing in 2025 and the role of industrial parks in this regard. The exhibition has served as a way to promote Ethiopia's import and export products in these regions.

Furthermore, a round table discussion was held between Ethiopian and German Business companies in Berlin on March 21. The discussion was aimed at bringing together business communities of the two nations. The event was organized by "Afrika Verein Der Deutschen Wirtschaft" in collaboration with Ethiopian Embassy in Berlin. Thus, the embassy has briefed members of the German business community Ethiopia's political reform, economic opening up and privatization process of public owned enterprises. The embassy also informed the participants about the measures that have been taken by the Government to ease doing business in Ethiopia.

On the other hand, the embassy made fruitful discussions with the Honorary Consuls of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Bremen and Hamburg, Mr. Thomas Gerkmann and Mr. Heinrich Köhler respectively on the March 19 and 21. The embassy used the occasion to thank both Honorary Consuls for their commendable work in promoting trade, investment and enhancing Ethiopia's image as well as protecting the rights of Ethiopian diaspora in their respective regions. The Honorary Consuls on their part expressed their candid commitment to work with the embassy through exchange of updated information, organizing various events, and holding similar meetings to assess the progress in this regard.

## ETHIO-CZECH RELATIONS



Ethio-Czech consultations underway

Photo: mfa

Ethiopia and the Czech Republic held bilateral political consultation on March 21.

On the occasion, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Dr. Markos Tekle said, "Czech Republic is a historic partner of Ethiopia". He noted that the two countries should further maximize their huge potentials for enhanced cooperation.

Dr. Markos also briefed the Czech Republic delegation on the comprehensive reforms well underway in Ethiopia and the country's

efforts in regional integration as well as the promotion of peace and security in the Horn of Africa. The State Minister called on the Government of the Czech Republic to support the ongoing reforms in Ethiopia, particularly in areas including institutional capacity building.

While noting his government's commitment to consolidate the bilateral trade and investment ties, Dr. Markos further called on Czech Republic investors to invest in Ethiopia's industrial parks.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, H.E. Mr. Martin Tlapa, on his part said his country attaches greater importance to its relations with Ethiopia. He related that the Czech Republic companies are keen to invest in Ethiopia in the health and manufacturing sectors, and assured Dr. Markos of his government's support in such score.

The State Minister commended Ethiopia's key role in the maintenance of regional peace and security. He also hailed Ethiopia's progressive refugee policy.

## DANISH CROWN PRINCESS VISITS ETHIOPIA



Princess Mary Elizabeth of Denmark

Photo: mfa

Crown Princess Mary Elizabeth of Denmark came to Ethiopia for a multi-day visit on March 25. On March 26 she took a tour of the new Michu fertility clinic and appreciated the government's effort in decreasing maternal mortality rate by providing better care for women and family planning. The crown princess toured the center where state-of-the-art equipment are fitted to provide better health service to mothers. She praised the ongoing developments in the health sector of the country, especially family planning services and works on reducing mothers and children mortality.

Her visit to St. Paul's Hospital next to the clinic was aimed to assess the ongoing health service improvements in the country, according to Dr. Senait Fesseha. The delegation with the crown princess was reportedly excited by the services given at the clinic. They emphasized the importance of girls and women participation in the health care industry as well as political affairs of the country.