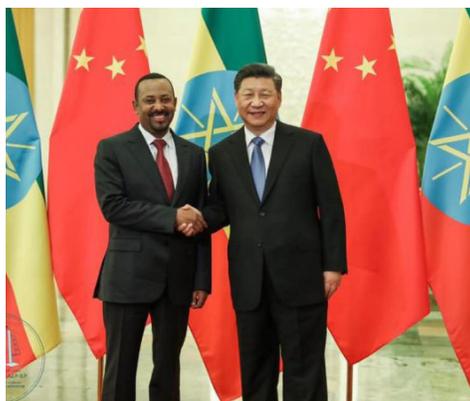




ETHIO NEWS

PRIME MINISTER PM ABIY VISITS CHINA FOR THE BELT AND ROAD FORUM



PM. Abiy Ahmed meets Chinese President Xi Jinping

Photo: mfa

PM Abiy Ahmed arrived in China on April 23 to attend the second Belt and Road Initiative Forum being held from April 25-27 in Beijing. Launched six years ago, the Belt and Road Initiative aims to strengthen infrastructure, trade, and investment links between China and some 65 other countries. Ethiopia was among the first group of African countries to sign cooperation agreements concerning building Belt and Road Projects and it also plays a role as a bridge and a link for jointly advancing the initiative in Africa.

This year's Forum is being held under the theme "Belt and Road Cooperation: Shaping a Brighter Shared Future," and representatives from over 100 countries, including 37 heads of state and leaders of government are attending. The Forum includes plenary sessions as well as a leaders' round-table, high-level meetings, thematic forums, CEO conference and other side events. Among the side-events are 12 sub-forums focusing on practical cooperation as well as a specific business community conference.

In his remarks during the High-Level Meeting at the Belt and Road Forum on April 26, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed highlighted the role the Addis Ababa – Djibouti railway is playing in facilitating trade between the two countries; testament to the connectivity principle of the Belt and Road Initiative. Sharing the investment-led economic policy and reforms being undertaken in Ethiopia, he encouraged more investors to participate in the newly opened up sectors.

In advance of the Belt and Road Initiative Forum, PM Abiy met China's President Xi Jinping for bilateral talks on April 24. Pres-

ident Jinping praised the Prime Minister's leadership and the reforms he has been carrying out over the past year. He said China held Ethiopia's development in high regard. President Jinping said both countries should continue to promote mutual understanding and trust as well as mutually-beneficial cooperation. They should strengthen cooperation in industry and trade, climate change and other regional affairs under the Belt and Road Initiative. President Jinping also emphasized the Chinese government attached high importance to the beautifying Sheger river project in Addis Ababa and was considering assistance for its support.

The Prime Minister emphasized Ethiopia's commitment to deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with China. This had enabled important moves like restructuring the debt of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway, an early development of the Belt and Road Initiative. He said Ethiopia wanted to promote the BRI on the basis of the principle of shared growth, and firmly supported the building of a community with shared future between China and Africa. He said China always respected African countries and did not try to impose its own will on them. Dr. Abiy noted that 2020 marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Ethiopia and Ethiopia hoped this would provide an opportunity to extend and expand ties. During their discussion, the Prime Minister also expressed his concern over the arrest of the young female engineer Nazrawit Abera, facing drug trafficking charges and a death sentence if found guilty.

PM Abiy and his delegation also met with Prime Minister Li Keqiang to discuss further strengthening of Ethio-China relations. Prime Minister Keqiang confirmed that China would continue to support Ethiopia's efforts in promoting the wellbeing of its citizens and its economy. The two Prime Ministers presided over the signing of five agreements that underlined the deepening of relations. The agreements included an agreement to finance the development of a plaza and 12km of the 'Beautifying Sheger' river bank project in Addis Ababa; the provision of grants for technical cooperation and of grants for food aid; the five-year Belt and Road Initiative cooperation plan; and a Memorandum of Understanding to operationalize cooperation under Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

Following a meeting with the State Grid Corporation of China, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy also oversaw the signing of a USD 1.8 billion investment agreement to cover provision of energy transmission and distribution lines. This project will supply power for up to 16 industrial parks; the Addis Ababa to Djibouti 2nd railway line, and for different cities in the

country. It will facilitate uninterrupted power supplies and also provide for the creation of jobs. Dr. Abiy later met with the China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation (Sinosure). They guaranteed their full cooperation to enable materialization of the investment in energy by the State Grid Corporation. The Prime Minister also met with the leadership of the China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC). The Corporation, which is involved in the Ethiopia-Djibouti railway, has expressed interest in investing in agro-industry parks development, oil and gas development and the Beautifying Sheger river project.

The Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia said in advance of the Forum that cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative was the new driving force in Ethiopia-China relations. He said the two countries had comprehensive strategic partnership and cooperation on the BRI would further elevate this partnership and help broaden their cooperation in trade, investment, tourism and other areas. The Ambassador said China was fully convinced that under the leadership of Dr. Abiy and against the backdrop of the profound reform efforts in Ethiopia, the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Ethiopia would continue to be at the forefront of China-Africa relations and play a model role in the framework of the Belt and Road cooperation.

The Forum is expected to produce a full range of deliverables, including governmental cooperation agreements and initiatives as well as concrete cooperation projects involving participation of relevant business sectors. It is also expected that participants will build on successful practices and develop a multi-tiered cooperation framework with increased higher quality results. Expectations include improved bilateral cooperation mechanisms to strengthen links between the BRI and development policies, plans and initiatives of participating parties; enhancing trilateral cooperation and cooperation among participating countries in third markets; and expanded multilateral cooperation, and enhanced cooperation with multilateral economic and financial institution to explore multi-party cooperation.

The BRI is well aligned to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and at the regional level connects with regional development plans and cooperation initiatives such as the Agenda 2063 of the African Union. For Ethiopia, it links to the Growth and Transformation Plan II which aims to spur economic structural transformation and sustain accelerated growth towards the realization of the vision of becoming a middle-income country by 2025. It has strengthened cooperation through development of major transport links such as the Addis Ababa-Dji-



bouti Railway. Cooperation on transnational economic corridors is being intensified; construction of infrastructure projects on railway, port, motorway and pipeline construction as well as economic and trade cooperation parks is proceeding smoothly. In addition, China and other participating countries have set up platforms for multilateral cooperation on port, shipping, finance, taxation, energy, culture, think tank, the media and other areas and launched initiatives on a green Silk Road and a clean Silk Road.

GEDU ANDARGACHEW APPOINTED AS NEW MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



Minister of Foreign Affairs Gedu Andargachew

Photo: mfa

On April 18 the House of People's Representatives appointed Mr. Gedu Andargachew as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. The House also appointed H.E. Mr. Lemma Megersa as the Minister of Defense and H.E. Engineer Aisha Mohammed as Minister of Urban Development and Construction.

Foreign Minister Gedu Andargachew met and held discussions with state ministers, director-generals, ambassadors and heads of various departments as well as directors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. The Minister officially assumed office on April 22 2019. Following the appointment of H.E. Gedu Andargachew as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the foreign ministers of several countries have sent congratulatory messages.

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE ARRIVES IN BERLIN



Mulu Solomon, ambassador designate for the Ethiopian Embassy in Berlin

Photo: emb

H.E. Mrs. Mulu Solomon, ambassador-designate of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Federal Republic of Germany arrived in Berlin on April 23, 2019. The ambassador designate was welcomed by the deputy head of mission Mrs. Mulu Worku, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Dileita Aden, ambassador of the Republic of Djibouti and Deputy Dean of the Group of African ambassadors and also Dean of the group of ambassadors of the IGAD members states, H.E. Andreas Zimmer, head of Protocol for Diplomatic Missions and Consular Representations of the German Federal Foreign Office as well as members of the Ethiopian embassy in Berlin.

A DELEGATION FROM GERMANY IN ADDIS ABABA



Söder's delegation

Photo: mfa

Markus Söder, Minister-President of the German Free State of Bavaria led a delegation to Ethiopia. The delegation, which arrived on April 14, was made up of representatives from sixty companies, and the focus of its visit was economic cooperation as well as issues of climate change and migration. It met with President Sahle-Work Zewde, government officials and representatives of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations.

At a meeting with President Sahle-Work Zewde, the Minister-President emphasized that Bavaria was very keen to strengthen its relations with Ethiopia and open up new business avenues. He noted that Bavaria had opened an Africa Office in Addis Ababa to foster stronger business ties and develop cooperation between Ethiopia and Bavaria. Welcoming the delegation at the National Palace, President Sahle-Work said the relations of Ethiopia and Germany showed excellent momentum and the visit of the Bavarian officials and business people was a sign that the relationship was going in the right direction. She said: "I am very happy to see such a high-level delegation, and is a great pleasure receiving you. There is a lot where we can work together." The German football club Bayern Munich has opened a Football Academy in Addis Ababa, and Minister-President Markus Söder handed over a Bayern Munich's Jersey with "Sahle-Work 1" on the back to President Sahle-Work. At a meeting with officials on April 15, the delegation signed five Memoranda of Understanding covering various issues including the establishment of a Center for Technology Excellence aiming to enable the Ethiopian youth to develop work capacities in their area of operation with the objective of job creation.



The announcement ceremony of the FC Bayern soccer school

Photo: mfa

In conjunction with Söder's delegation's visit German champion football club Bayern Munich has signed an agreement to open its first soccer school in Africa, locating it in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. FC Bayern Munich told VOA's Horn of Africa Service that it is inspired by the young football players and fans in Ethiopia, which is ranked 150th worldwide, according to the international soccer governing body, FIFA. "Two-thirds of the Ethiopian population is younger than 25 years. We will support the Ethiopian Football Federation (EFF) in terms of young development and coach's education programs," Holger Quest, team leader of media operations at FC Bayern Munich, told VOA.

Bavarian Prime Minister Markus Söder, other state officials and FC Bayern executive board members travelled to Addis Ababa to sign the agreement.

Söder told Ethiopian media the agreement would bring Bavarian expertise in football to



the sports-hungry nation of Ethiopia. "That is a good basis for a promising partnership," he said. The international FC Bayern Youth Cup tournament took place in Nigeria in 2018 and 2019. The success of the tournament led to the idea to give young athletes around the world a way to showcase their talents, and include those players from disadvantaged areas. FC Bayern Munich has developed many world-class players in their academy, including Thomas Mueller, Mats Hummels, and Toni Kroos Kolgers. "We want to share our knowledge to help football grow across all continents and nations," FC Bayern media head Quest said. Speaking to VOA Horn by telephone from Addis Ababa, EFF President Esayas Jira said Ethiopia would benefit from the coaching and training to be offered by FC Bayern. The soccer school would accept 30-40 young athletes ages of 8-10, with their training costs covered by Bayern Munich, Jira said. "The kids would have a chance to join Bayern Munich youth academy" once they successfully completed school training," he added. In the agreement, Bayern Munich said it would also finance the school training and education. FC Bayern coaches would lead youth coaches to train local players in Addis Ababa starting May 3, Jira told VOA.



Siemens CEO holding talks with Ethiopia's Innovation and Technology Minister Dr. Getahun Mekuria

Photo: EBC

The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Siemens AG, the largest industrial manufacturing company in Europe. The MoU was signed in Addis Ababa in the presence of Mr. Joe Kaeser, President and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens AG. The agreement paves way for the Ethiopian Government and Siemens to jointly deliver on the vision of creating an elaborate platform and to follow through possibilities for sustained partnership and funding models – focusing on stabilizing and expanding existing grid infrastructure.

The MoU further outlines to establish innovative mediums for partnership between multi-nationals, public institutions and other key stakeholders. According to Mr. Abebe Ababayehu, Commissioner of the Ethiopian Investment Commission, it further seeks to foster vocational training in engineering disciplines and strengthening small and medium sized local businesses.

In addition, Siemens, one of Germany's larg-

est manufacturing company, unveiled on its plans to open a SIMATIC Automation technology center in Ethiopia. The Company's CEO, Joe Kaeser, disclosed the plan during a meeting with Getahun Mekuria, Ethiopia's Innovation and Technology Minister, on April 4 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

US PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR, MS. IVANKA TRUMP VISITS ETHIOPIA

Ms. Ivanka Trump, White House Advisor to US President Donald Trump, was received by President Sahle-Work Zewde on April 15. Ms. Trump was on a two-day working visit to Ethiopia to discuss ongoing activities being undertaken to promote women empowerment and equality. President Trump launched the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP), a "whole-of-government" approach that aims to promote women's economic empowerment across the globe two months ago. President Sahle-Work said the initiative was a good beginning to empower women and will get global recognition as far as it centered and targeted women worldwide. She noted Ethiopia was moving on a new path to build up the capacity of women, particularly addressing gender-based challenges of female students at higher education institutions. It was also committed to work in partnership with non-governmental organizations to empower women.

Ms. Trump also met with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed to reaffirm U.S. support for Ethiopia's progress on reforms towards inclusive democracy, broad-based prosperity, and lasting stability. Ms. Trump welcomed the Prime Minister's proactive approach to increasing the number of women in leadership positions in the government and discussed ways Ethiopia and the United States could partner each other to advance their shared goal of increasing women's economic empowerment in Ethiopia and worldwide. Appreciating the transformational process in Ethiopia, Ms. Trump applauded the measures taken by Ethiopia to promote gender equality, citing the gender parity in the cabinet. She reiterated US support for the changes. She said: "Fundamentally we believe that investing in women is a smart development policy and it's smart business. It is also in our security interests because women when they are empowered they foster peace and stability and we have seen this play out time and time again."

Framed as a component of the US National Security Strategy, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP) builds around three core pillars. The first pillar, "women prospering in the workforce," advocates workforce development, vocational and skills to increase women's participation in the labor force. The second, "women succeeding as entrepreneurs," sup-

ports expanding access to capital, markets, and networks to help women create and expand small businesses. The third pillar, "women enabled in the economy," seeks to remove legal, regulatory and cultural barriers that inhibit women's equal participation in the economy. President Trump proposed the establishment of a \$50 million fund to be overseen by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support new projects in line with the W-GDP agenda. The initiative aims to reach 500 million women by 2025 and is seen as a positive step by the US administration to promote Women's Empowerment and Equality, aligning with what leading research suggests, that women's economic participation and empowerment matter greatly for economic growth and poverty reduction.

Ms. Trump and Overseas Private Investment Corporation Acting President and CEO, David Bohigian, on April 15 launched OPIC2X Africa at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Also present were Ethiopia's President Sahle-Work Zewde and Giovannie Biha, Deputy Executive Secretary of the ECA. OPIC2X, an initiative, of the W-GDP aims to directly invest \$350 million to help mobilize \$1 billion in capital to support women-owned, women-led, and women-supporting projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. OPIC's 2X Women's Initiative, launched last year, has already invested more than \$1 billion supporting women's economic empowerment.



Ivanka Trump partaking in an Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony

Photo: mfa

Accompanied by USAID Administrator Mark Green, Ms. Trump met with members of the Ethiopian Women's Coffee Association in Addis Ababa to discuss the opportunities and challenges that women entrepreneurs face in Ethiopia. Ms. Trump underlined United States' support for improving the opportunities for women to start and expand their businesses in Ethiopia; and at the conclusion of the meeting, she announced a W-GDP award to help the owner of Azalech Coffee Roasting, Grinding and Packaging expand her business. Ms. Trump also toured the facilities at Muya Ethiopia, a leading textile and handicrafts export company founded by Sara Abera, which started with the assistance of USAID, and announced a W-GDP award to expand the business.

During her visit, Ms. Trump visited the Holy



Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa and paid tribute to the 157 victims of the recent Ethiopian Airlines tragedy at a special church ceremony, laying a wreath to the dead.

IGAD ESTABLISHES A "TASKFORCE ON THE RED SEA AND THE GULF OF ADEN"



The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has set up a "Taskforce on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden" The decision was taken during the meeting of the IGAD Committee of Ambassadors held in Nairobi, Kenya on April 4. The aim is to build a common position and strategy to respond to the challenges and opportunities in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. And the inauguration of the Taskforce was a follow-up implementing a decision taken during the 46th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers held in Djibouti at the end of February.

Opening the session, Ambassador Abdulaziz Mohammed, Ethiopia's Ambassador to Djibouti and Chairperson of the IGAD Committee of Ambassadors, commended the IGAD Secretariat and particularly IGAD Executive Secretary Ambassador Mahboub Maalim for organizing what he described as a "very important and timely meeting" of the IGAD Committee of Ambassadors and experts drawn from different fields. Recalling the number of important milestones IGAD had achieved since its establishment several decades ago, Ambassador Abdulaziz noted the region was undergoing profound changes. He stressed that notable progresses had been made in the region in resolving differences and conflicts through dialogue, and emphasized that IGAD's roles and responsibilities were widening, expanding and strengthening in political, economic and social areas. So, the Ambassador underlined: "we are here today to discuss the establishment of an IGAD task force, with further duties and responsibilities."

Shedding light on some details of the rationale behind establishing the Task Force, the Ambassador mentioned the current security challenges in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. These have also been compounded by the continuing illegal exploitation of natural resources in these areas: illegal fishing,

illegal dumping of waste material and illegal trade in arms, as well as money laundering. All of these, he said, further hamper efforts to yield the full potential of regional integration. He stressed: "these issues require our sustained attention and greater regional cooperation in order to effectively transform our regional resources into vehicles of shared prosperity." The Task Force will also be used to promote credible and inclusive dialogue on the regional matters, covering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and help to formulate shared norms as well as common strategic goals for greater partnership in order to stand together and effectively promote common regional objectives.

The Executive Secretary of IGAD, Ambassador Mahboub noted IGAD would now devote manpower and financial resources towards programs aimed at boosting security in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. He said protecting these areas from natural and man-made threats was the key to boost economic growth, security and peace in the greater Horn of Africa region.

The establishment of the Task Force, in line with the decision of the 46th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers, will allow it to study, review and advise on the conclusions and recommendations of the Council. It will also provide for the opportunity to urgently chart a regional plan of action with clear timelines. Indeed, the meeting of the IGAD Committee of Ambassadors, in its two-day session, demonstrating that there were shared issues on which member states of the IGAD were able to see eye-to-eye in a changing world, also noted that the Task Force would coordinate its efforts with the African Union Commission in line with the decisions of the IGAD Council of Ministers.