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News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat has condemned in the strongest terms the attack on AMISOM personnel. He said: “We are united in grief with the families of the fallen soldiers, the people and Government of Burundi for the loss of the brave troops who made the ultimate sacrifice in service of, and support to a fellow African nation in combatting terrorism. We wish the injured a speedy and full recovery.” The Chairperson reaffirmed that the AU remained committed to working with the Government of Somalia for peace and security in the country. He called on the international community to provide appropriate support to Somalia and AMISOM to consolidate security gains in the country.

Ethiopia’s Foreign Minister Gedu Andargatchew, Chair of the IGAD Council of Ministers, was briefed by the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, the R-JMEC and the CTSAMVM, on the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement in South Sudan, on Tuesday last week (July 23). The meeting, two months after the Pre-Transitional Period was extended in May for six months, assessed the status and progress of the peace agreement. **(See article)**

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has called for early action and increased international support to avert famine in South Sudan and Somalia. In a statement on Wednesday (July 31) it said severe drought and ongoing violence in East Africa had put 8.7 million people in Somalia and South Sudan at risk of severe food insecurity. The failure of the long rains in Somalia and impact of the war in South Sudan had led to massive displacement, limited agriculture, increased food prices and inflation. According to the agency, 860,000 children in South Sudan and nearly 1 million in Somalia are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition this year.

The UNDP and the Government of Ethiopia organized a workshop in Addis Ababa this week to discuss a trilateral South-South cooperation project between China, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka to promote sustainable energy solutions and the applicability of biogas and solar photovoltaic technologies for communities in Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. **(See article)**

The two-week long Justified Accord 2019 military training exercise conducted by U.S. military, in partnership with the Ethiopia National Defense Force, ended on Wednesday (July 31). The training involved troops from Ethiopia and United States, Brazil, Burundi, Canada,

Djibouti, France, Germany, Italy, Kenya, Netherlands, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, United Kingdom. **(See article)**

Ethiopia

Ethiopia broke the World Record for planting trees with over 360 million trees planted on Monday this week (July 29). Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed led the country in taking an active role in the Green Legacy Initiative, calling on people to participate with the slogan: “Plant Your Print for a Green Legacy,” and the country overwhelmingly responded. **(See article)**

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy gave a press briefing on current issues to the media on Thursday (August 1) and answered questions. He emphasized that the government would scale up its efforts to ensure the rule of law, and extended his gratitude to the public for their active participation in planting trees under the Green Legacy Initiative.

Foreign Minister Gedu Andargachew visited Cairo at the end of last week. He met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and delivered a message from Prime Minister Dr. Abiy. During his visit, the Foreign Minister also met with Ambassador Dina Mufti and other members of the Ethiopian Embassy in Cairo and took the opportunity to plant trees in the Embassy compound.

Foreign Minister Gedu and Nicaragua Foreign Minister Denis Ronaldo Moncado discussed bilateral issues in Addis Ababa on Tuesday (July 30). The two ministers stressed the importance of promoting mutual interests and benefits in the spirit of South-South and Africa-South America cooperation. They expressed their wish to enhance relations of the two countries. Foreign Minister Moncado said Nicaragua wished to open an embassy in Addis Ababa.

The State Ministers of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Hirut Zemene, Dr. Aklilu Hailemichael and Dr. Markos Tekle gave a press briefing on Friday last week (July 26) on the Ministry’s annual performance during the last Ethiopian budget year. **(See article)**

State Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Sani Redi led a high-level Ethiopian delegation for a working visit to Israel last week. The visit aimed at enhancing bilateral economic ties between Ethiopia and Israel as well as promoting citizen diplomacy. The Ethiopian delegation included Mr. Jemal Beker, State Minister of Innovation and Technology, Dr. Frehiwot Woldehana, State Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy and Ambassador Dewano Kedir, Permanent Secretary for Economic Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Alemayehu Wondimagegn, Head of the Ethiopian Consulate in Gedaref in Sudan, has said concerted efforts and coordination were essential to resolve issues that arise in the border areas of Ethiopia and Sudan. He stressed priority was being given to ensure security in the border areas to sustain socio-economic cooperation between the countries.

The Ethiopian Diaspora Agency has announced that the First Ethiopian Diaspora Day Festival since the establishment of the Ethiopian Diaspora Agency will be taking place in

Addis Ababa at the end of this month, August 27-29. **(See article)**

Eritrea

Ambassador Sophia Tesfamariam has been appointed as Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations in New York.

Kenya

The Pastoralist Parliamentary Group, representing pastoralist communities in northern Kenya have issued a famine alert, warning that many of their constituents might miss the forthcoming population census, due August 24-25. They said drought had forced many residents to migrate to neighbouring countries in search of pasture. They appealed for food and water for drought-stricken areas following failure of April-May long rains and called for more time for the census in the region. A National Drought Management Authority report says the numbers facing food shortage were likely to reach 2 million in July, up from 1.6 million in May. Among the areas affected areas are Turkana, Marsabit, Isiolo, Samburu, Wajir, Garissa, Tana River and Tigania West.

Somalia

President Mohamed Abdullahi officially renounced his United States citizenship on Thursday this week (August 1). A statement from his office noted he had lived in the United States for a long time and earned a wealth of knowledge and work experience. Although the provisional constitution of Somalia allows dual citizenship, the statement said legal experts as well as nationalities and citizenship authorities from Somalia and the US had been involved in the process that had been going on for some time.

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, James Swan, told a gathering of Somali youth in Mogadishu on Tuesday this week (July 30) at a two-day youth empowerment and engagement dialogue that the "prospects for lasting peace in Somalia will be improved if young people feel represented. If they participate in political life, and if they have a say in the national dialogue, they can ultimately show their stake and involvement in the country's future." UNSOM and UN agencies are encouraging active participation of youth and women in the constitutional review process launched last year to ensure that the final document reflects the views of all Somalis.

The UN Independent Expert for Human Rights in Somalia, Mr. Nyanduga, said at the end of last week after a visit to Somalia that the international community must continue to help Somalia strengthen its institutions and the justice and security sector ahead of the next elections. **(See article)**

President Mohamed Abdullahi has declared three days of mourning to honor the late Mayor of Mogadishu, Abdirahman Omar Osman (Engineer Yarisow), who died on Thursday (August 1) in Doha where he was being treated after being seriously injured in a suicide bombing attack at his office last week. The attack killed six of his colleagues and wounded nine of his staff. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. Ambassador Madeira and AMISOM extended their "deep-felt condolences to the bereaved family of the mayor, the population of Mogadishu and to the entire people of Somalia for the loss of such a great son."

A delegation from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) met with Foreign Minister, Mr. Ahmed Issa Awad, and reviewed ways to advance bilateral relations. The delegation also brought a message from OIC Secretary General Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed to President Mohamed Abdullahi emphasizing the OIC commitment to implement resolutions on Somalia issued by the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers and the Islamic Summit conference recently held in Makkah, and underlining the OIC's determination to support the efforts of the Government to achieve political stability and lasting peace and economic development. The delegation, which also met with the Ministers of Education and of Humanitarian affairs and Disaster Management, signed an agreement for an OIC Mission headquarters in Mogadishu.

The National Independent Electoral Commission temporarily registered four new political parties on Wednesday (July 31), Rajo, Talo Wadaag, Gurnad and Han iyo Hannaan Qaran. The chairperson of the Electoral Body, Halima Ismail Ibrahim, presided over the occasion attended by members of the electoral commission. This brings the number of temporarily registered political parties to 54. Halima Ismail Ibrahim called on the new political parties to execute their responsibilities in a professional manner, to become fully registered political parties and work towards the advancement of democracy in the country.

Sudan

The Joint African Mediation has called for the swift resumption of negotiations on the power transfer in Sudan on Wednesday (July 31). It said an additional delay in the discussions on the constitutional declaration could be very damaging. **(See article)**

Talks on the proposed constitutional declaration for the transitional period resumed on Thursday (August 1). Technical teams from the Military Council and the Forces for Freedom and Change continued their work during the week to finalize a draft ahead of the resumption of negotiations.

The Transitional Military Council has announced a decree changing the name of the National Intelligence Security Services to the General Intelligence Service (GIS). GIS Director-General Lt-Gen Abu Bakr Demblab said that the reform comes in the context of restructuring the agency to become more professional and participate in the protection of the country and the maintenance of national security. The decree amended several articles of the National Security Act of 2010 and the GIS is reportedly no longer authorized to arrest people or carry out search operations.

Ethiopia breaks the world record for tree-planting

Ethiopia convincingly broke the World Record for planting trees on Monday this week (July 29), planting more than 360 million trees during the day, well over the original target of 200 million in a single day. The previous record for planting trees in a single day was held by India, where over 50 million trees were planted in 2016.

A few days earlier, on Friday last week, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy had called on Ethiopians in all walks of life to take active roles in Green Legacy Initiative which is aimed at countering

the effects of deforestation and climate change. It has the target of planting 4 billion trees all over Ethiopia during the current rainy season – July to September. The Prime Minister called on people to participate with the slogan: “Plant Your Print for a Green Legacy.” People responded. July 29, with over 350 million trees planted, proved the Prime Minister’s call had been well received by Ethiopians all across the country.

Prime Minister Abiy himself travelled to Arbaminch in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region, where he planted seedlings with other senior government officials and community elders as well as residents of the city. The leadership and the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia joined the nation-wide campaign for greener Ethiopia, planting trees in Lome Woreda, near Mojo town, Oromia Regional State, south of Addis Ababa. Ethiopia’s missions abroad participated in the national project, actively taking initiatives to encourage the international media to highlight Ethiopia’s efforts.

Prime Minister Abiy’s nation-wide Green Legacy Initiative also received the support of various international organizations and development partners in response to its contributions to tackle climate change. Members of the diplomatic community in Addis Ababa and a number of regional and international organizations and their staff, including the United Nations and the African Union, joined the national campaign on Monday.

The Green Legacy Initiative received wide international media coverages. The BBC’s headlined its story: “Ethiopia ‘breaks’ tree-planting record to tackle climate change,” and added that “Mr. Abiy launched the tree-planting exercise as part of his Green Legacy Initiative, which is taking place in 1,000 sites across the country.” The Guardian newspaper quoted Dr. Dan Ridley-Ellis, the head of the Centre for Wood Science and Technology at Edinburgh’s Napier University, who said, said: “Trees not only help mitigate climate change by absorbing the carbon dioxide in the air, but they also have huge benefits in combating desertification and land degradation, particularly in arid countries. They provide food, shelter, fuel, fodder, medicine, materials and protection of the water supply... This truly impressive feat is not just the simple planting of trees, but part of a huge and complicated challenge to take account of the short- and long-term needs of both the trees and the people. The forester’s mantra ‘the right tree in the right place’ increasingly needs to consider the effects of climate change, as well as the ecological, social, cultural and economic dimension.”

CNN reported that the burst of tree planting was part of “a wider reforestation campaign Named “Green Legacy,” spearheaded by the country’s Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Millions of Ethiopians across the country were invited to take part in the challenge.” The Chinese news agency Xinhua featured an interview with Zhang Zhenhai, General Manager of the CREC-CCECC Joint Venture, a contractor of the Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway, who emphasized that China had its own green economy strategy encompassing tree planting initiatives and commended Ethiopia for starting its initiative. He said, “As a Chinese company in Ethiopia we thought we should contribute from our side for this nice country. We’re working together with Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway to achieve this tree planting program.”

In a statement issued on Wednesday (July 30), Prime Minister Abiy expressed his immense gratitude to the people of Ethiopia for having heeded the call to plant their Green Legacy initiative and break the World Record for planting the highest number of trees in a single historic day. He underlined the fact that Ethiopians, albeit in many difficult circumstances, have an “unflinching spirit of unity and oneness when it comes to issues that matter most to

the motherland.”

Ministry of Foreign Affairs briefs the media on its annual performance

State Ministers of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Hirut Zemene, Dr. Aklilu Hailemichael and Dr. Markos Tekle gave a press briefing on Friday last week (July 26) on the Ministry’s annual performance during the last Ethiopian budget year.

State Minister Mrs. Hirut spoke on the successful diplomatic activities and initiatives that had been conducted to enhance collaboration with neighboring African and Middle East countries. She particularly highlighted the frequent exchange of visits, both at Heads of State and at ministerial levels. These, she said, had been instrumental in further bolstering existing diplomatic relations with Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan. Mrs. Hirut noted that “Relations with neighboring countries are given high priority in the foreign relations policy of the country with a view to speeding up economic cooperation and strengthening people-to-people relations.” She stressed that the diplomatic breakthrough in Ethio-Eritrea relations had been among the major accomplishments of the year.

State Minister Dr. Aklilu Hailemikael said activities related to economic diplomacy and consular services had been remarkably successful and shown significant improvement, compared to previous years. He pointed out that a total of 168 business forums had been held during the year, 1,150 foreign companies had visited the country and 225 had obtained licenses for investment. Support was also provided to local and foreign investors to form joint venture investments. He underlined that citizen-centered diplomacy was an area that had been given due emphasis in this year’s diplomatic activities by Ethiopian embassies around the world and by the Ministry’s headquarters. Dr. Aklilu noted that some 27,704 Ethiopian prisoners had been released and repatriated from abroad. The Ministry had also facilitated the repatriation of 112,615 citizens who had no residence permits in cooperation with other organizations.

State Minister Dr. Markos Tekle explained that the political, economic and social sectors reform that Ethiopia is undergoing had garnered political, diplomatic and financial and technical support from partners in Europe, America, Asia and Australia. The ministry, he noted, had facilitated the inflow of financial resources from these countries, with many international agreements signed. He noted the drastic steps taken to revise repressive laws, widening the political space, improvements in human rights and the introduction of press freedom. These were some of the factors that had contributed to increased support from partners. Others included the exchanges of high-level bilateral visits with China, France, Italy, Ireland, US and Germany. These were instrumental to support the country’s domestic reform efforts.

Joint African Mediation calls for swift resumption of Sudan talks

The Joint African Mediation has called for the swift resumption of negotiations on the power transfer in Sudan on Wednesday (July 31). It said an additional delay in the discussions on the constitutional declaration could be very damaging. The mediators, African Union Envoy, Mohamed El Hacem Lebbat, and Ethiopia's Ambassador Mahmoud Dirir, held a news conference in Khartoum. They said: "The slowdown in the signing of the constitutional declaration by both the Transitional Military Council (TMC) and the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) may cause great damage to the country, the region and Africa." The completion of talks between the TMC and the FFC on the constitutional declaration was "the most urgent matter," and "We call on everyone to recognize this urgency and necessity that serves Sudan."

The joint technical committee of the TMC and the FFC has completed two-thirds of the constitutional declaration, and the talks will resume once the committee has concluded its deliberations. AU Envoy Lebbat said: "If the constitutional declaration is passed quickly, it will open the door for the formation of a civilian government headed by a figure chosen by the FFC, and the formation of a Sovereign Council with a majority of civilians." The signing of the declaration would also "pave the way for the formation of an independent commission to investigate the bloody attack on the pro-democracy sit-in on June 3 and other acts of violence. This would also contribute to improving the economic situation in the country."

The "Constitutional Declaration" will define the duties and responsibilities of the proposed Sovereign Council during the three-year transitional period. Its provisions will also include basic paragraphs to achieve peace and address the issue of marginalization.

Implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement in South Sudan

It is two months since IGAD's Council of Ministers endorsed the request of the Parties to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) to extend the Pre-Transitional Period for six months as from May 12. IGAD then directed that all steps necessary should be taken to expedite the implementation of the pending tasks within this extended non-renewable timeline.

With two months now elapsed, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Gedu Andargachew, Chair of the IGAD Council of Ministers met and held discussions on Tuesday last week (July 23) with a delegation composed of the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, Dr. Ismail Wais; the Interim Chair of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (R-JMEC), Lt. General Augustino Njoroge; and the Chair of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism CTSAMVM, Major-General Desta Abiche Ageno, and their teams. The delegation provided extensive briefings to the Minister, as Chair of the IGAD Council of Ministers, on the status of implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement in South Sudan.

The meeting with the delegation afforded an opportunity to assess where things stand in implementation of the IGAD decision. The briefing by the delegation highlighted the state of peace and security in the country, the implementation of the security arrangements, the technical and other support required by the security related institutions, the reconstitution of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Commission, the activities of CTSAMVM, the work of the Independent Boundaries Commission, the issue of non-signatory groups and the mobilization of resources.

The remaining four months will be very critical. It was emphasized that unless every possible effort is made to accelerate implementation, the peace agreement will be under serious risk. Minister Gedu underlined that the signatories to the peace agreement have the primary responsibility for implementation. It was imperative for them to work with a proper sense of urgency and commitment to ensure that the pending tasks were completed in a timely manner. The Minister took note of the relevant recommendations by the delegation in this regard. IGAD has made a commitment to review progress regularly, and IGAD policy organs are expected to meet soon to consider the situation in South Sudan.

Ethiopia, China, Sri Lanka cooperate in renewable energy technologies

Ethiopia and Sri Lanka are partnering with China in a trilateral South-South cooperation agenda focusing on sustainable and renewable energy technologies within the global commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The three-year project, to be launched later this year, will promote sustainable energy solutions demonstrating the applicability of biogas and solar photovoltaic technologies for communities in Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. Financing for the three-year project will come from China's Ministry of Commerce which will provide US\$2 million, divided between Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. The project will get co-financing from Ethiopia's Ministry of Water, Irrigation, and Energy, and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) - Ethiopia.

On Wednesday this week, UNDP and the Government of Ethiopia organized a workshop for stakeholders in Addis Ababa. The UNDP Representative for Ethiopia, Mr. Turhan Saleh, who commended China for its support, noted it was currently the leading country in the production of renewable energy technologies. He said: "As we support Ethiopia to improve access to renewable energy mix, we help the country to promote a climate resilient green economy and foster inclusive growth that is strongly gender sensitive as women and children bear the brunt of a country's energy challenge."

A statement from Ethiopia's State Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Dr. Frehiwot Woldehana emphasized the significance of this trilateral example of South-South cooperation and underlined its importance for Ethiopia's vision to close the energy gap by 2025 by providing access to clean renewable energy to its citizens.

Mr. Harsha Wickramasinghe, Deputy Director-General of Sri Lanka's Sustainable Energy Authority, told the workshop that close technical cooperation between countries could be the key to acquire sustainable energy technologies for developing countries, adding, it would speed up the dissipation of technologies vital for the global energy transition. He said: "This project could be a good start for similar actions all over the developing world."

Madam Liu Yu, Minister Counsellor for Economic and Commercial Affairs at the Chinese Embassy in Ethiopia, emphasized China's continued strong support for international cooperation and underlined the growing Ethiopia-China partnership in multilateral cooperation platforms. This she said would help Ethiopia to benefit from technical and financial support in renewable energy technologies, essential for achieving the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development. China was eager to share experiences to establish a more sustainable energy management system with development partners through south-south cooperation.

The workshop, which shared lessons from China's experience on renewable energy technologies, explored possible plans of action to deal with barriers to access energy solutions, and ways to tackle sustainability in terms of production and consumption. It also discussed methods to scale up market access opportunities. It also provided an opportunity for technical dialogues on building partnerships ahead of the Belt and Road Forum due 2021.

International community must help Somalia strengthen justice and security

UN Independent Expert, Bahame Tom Nyanduga, said at the end of last week that the international community must continue to help Somalia strengthen its institutions and the justice and security sector ahead of the next elections. Mr. Nyanduga was appointed by the UN Human Rights Council in 2014 with a mandate to support the Federal Government of Somalia with capacity development and technical assistance in the field of human rights. Following his recent visit, Mr. Nyanduga said Somalia had made considerable progress in the political, economic, social and human rights situation over the past six years, but there was much more to do. Mr. Nyanduga, presenting a statement at the end of his visit to Somalia said: "I urge the international community and Federal Government of Somalia to address the negative effects of climate change on the population, and ensure access to basic human rights such as water supply, health services, and education for all children, in particular girls."

The Independent Expert noted that Somalia faced many challenges including the continuing conflict, inequality, discrimination and youth unemployment, as well as delivering economic, social and cultural rights, but pointed to progress in several areas including the recovery of territory by Somalia's security institutions, AMISOM troops and bilateral forces. He welcomed the establishment of Alternative Dispute Centres in several of Somalia's States, which were playing an increasingly key role in the settlement of local civil cases. Mr. Nyanduga also applauded Somalia's accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He also stressed the importance of respecting the right to freedom of expression and opinion of journalists.

He praised the increased number of women in Parliament and cabinet, saying it highlighted the importance of women participating in public affairs, in peace and reconciliation, and in decision-making on matters that affected them directly. He urged the Federal Parliament to include within the proposed electoral law specific mechanisms to ensure representation of women, minority clans and other vulnerable groups in Parliament, rather than leaving this task to the election commission.

He commended the people of Somalia for their resilience in the face of conflict, terrorist

bomb attacks, natural disasters, grave violations of human rights and other challenges, such as poverty and lack of basic necessities for their livelihoods, but expressed concern at the delay in the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission, and the lack of progress on a Sexual Offences Bill. He said: “I urge the Federal Government and Federal Parliament to address these challenges as a matter of priority to enhance protection of human rights in the country.”

National Diaspora week festival to be held in Addis Ababa August 27-29

The Government has given the mandate and responsibility of ensuring the engagement of the Ethiopian Diaspora in the protection of rights and benefits of Ethiopians living abroad to the Ethiopian Diaspora Agency (EDA). Since its establishment the Agency has been engaged in wide range of activities to ensure the expanded and improved Diaspora participation in a wide range of activities, in collaboration with various stakeholders. This has resulted in a numerous developments, with many in the Diaspora registering concrete results, participating in a whole series of actions in investment, trade and tourism, providing remittances, getting involved in the transfer of knowledge and technology into the country and image building.

Another element, clearly laid out in the Diaspora policy, is for a National Diaspora week to be celebrated in Ethiopia, to include a series of meetings and forums for significant numbers of members of the Diaspora coming home to celebrate cultural and religious holidays. The First Ethiopian Diaspora Day Festival since the establishment of the Ethiopian Diaspora Agency is now set to take place in Addis Ababa at the end of this month, August 27-29.

The Festival will include a Diaspora scholar’s Symposium and training, a B2B Networking and Business Forum that will enable Diaspora business owners to connect and engage with local investors. A business exhibition will be held for locally engaged Diaspora businesses to promote their services and products. This is the first of what will be an annual National Diaspora Week Festival and it will bring thousands of members of the Ethiopian Diaspora from all over the world to Addis Ababa.

Justified Accord 2019 Field Training exercise ends

The two- week Justified Accord 2019 Field Training exercise ended on Wednesday (July 31). Ethiopia was hosting the exercise for the second time, the first was in 2017. The exercise, a command headquarters and company-level field training exercise, was conducted by U.S. military, in partnership with the Ethiopian National Defense Force and other partner nations and international organizations. The training involved troops and officials from Ethiopia and United States, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Djibouti, France, Germany, Italy, Kenya, Netherlands, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, United Kingdom and from civil international organizations which also participated.

The Coordinator of the training and Deputy Commanding General of United States Army Africa and Southern European Task Force, Brigadier General Lapthe Flora said the exercise

would reinforce the commitment of AMISOM to tackle terrorism in Somalia. In his closing remarks, Brigadier General Flora said the training had helped the trainees to effectively discharge their duty of fighting against terrorism in Somalia. Justified Accord Training, he said, not only helped to improve the readiness of peacekeepers to fight terrorism under the umbrella of AMISOM, but also assisted them to fulfil AU and UN peacekeeping missions. He said the training also created a favourable environment for building professional friendships bringing individuals together in team work, and overcoming language barriers and cultural diversity. He urged the trainees to apply the knowledge they obtained in the training and replicate this in operational tactics in AMISOM and facilitate the exit of AMISOM from Somalia.

The head of Ethiopia's Peace Support Training Center, Brigadier General Habtamu Tilahu said the training would also help to overcome the current complicated security problems in Somalia, adding that the training the participants had would have an important role in enhancing the peace process in Somalia. Ethiopia has a long-standing commitment to peacekeeping missions and has been playing a major role in maintaining peace and security in East Africa and beyond.