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**Africa and the African Union**

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development will be opened on Monday (July 13) in Addis Ababa, with some 5,000 participants including Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, relevant institutional stakeholders, business sector entities and civil society representatives expected to attend the four day meeting. **(See article)**

**Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, answering questions from members of the House of Peoples' Representatives on the budget on Monday this week (July 6) also addressed questions raised by members of parliament on matters of national and regional concern, including the election, human trafficking and relations with Eritrea. **(See article)**

The House of Peoples' Representatives approved a record 223.3 billion Birr (around US\$11 billion) for the 2015/16 budget year on Tuesday (July 7). This is a nearly 20% rise over the previous year to cope with increasing expenditure on the country's developmental goals.

The Second Ethio-Uganda Joint Ministerial Commission, co-chaired by Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom and Uganda's Defense Minister Dr. Crispus Kiyonga, was held over the weekend (July 4-5). **(See article)**

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros met with Mr. Santosh Kumar Gangwar, the Indian Minister of State for Textiles on Wednesday, (July 8). Discussions covered the long-standing bilateral cooperation between the two countries as well as investment links. Mr. Gangwar delivered a letter of invitation to Dr. Tedros to participate in the next India- Africa Forum (IAFS-III) to be held later this year in New Delhi.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos met with welcomed members of European Council on Tourism and Trade (ECTT) on Tuesday (July 9).

The Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Republic of South Africa and the Non Resident Ambassador of Ethiopia to the Republic of Madagascar, Ambassador Mulugetta Kelin, presented his Letter of Credence to President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar on Wednesday (July 8).

Ethiopia has been given the World Best Tourist Destination award for 2015 by the European Council on Tourism and Trade for its excellent record of promoting social-friendly tourism and of ecological and poverty reduction strategies based on tourism. **(See article)**

Lake Tana has been registered as a World Heritage Site as the Lake Tana biosphere reserve. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> Ethiopian site to be added to UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere reserves, totaling 651 sites. At a press conference on Sunday, the Minister of Science and Technology, Demitu Hanbissa, said the Lake had been registered for its rich biodiversity and fulfillment of development and logistics support services.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has recorded a rising flow of South Sudanese refugees into Ethiopia including large numbers of unaccompanied children. Refugees are continuing to arrive in Gambella Regional State a daily average rate of over 200, and the total number of new arrivals from South Sudan since the outbreak of the conflict has now reached 211,214. A sixth camp site for the refugees is being set up in Gambella regional state.

## **Djibouti**

President Ismail Omar Guelleh has been awarded an Honorary Degree “Doctor Honoris Causa Haramaya University” by Ethiopia’s Haramaya University in recognition of his efforts to strengthen the Ethio-Djibouti all-round relations. The honorary degree was awarded on July 4 at a ceremony at the University by Prime Minister Hailemariam.

Six tons of Turkey-donated medical equipment and supplies, along with six fully-equipped ambulances, have been donated to the Health Ministry in Djibouti. This is for refugees arriving in Djibouti from Yemen.

## **Eritrea**

The UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution to extend the mandates of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Eritrea and of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights in Eritrea without a vote on Thursday last week (July 2). The resolution asks the investigators to look into "systematic, widespread and gross violations of human rights in Eritrea with a view to ensuring full accountability including where these violations may amount to crimes against humanity.”

Ambassador Tesfamicael Gerahtu, denying details of the UN Human Rights Council’s Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights in Eritrea, said the number of “migrants” leaving Eritrea each month was insignificant; there was an international "conspiracy" to tarnish Eritrea with the whole ideological apparatus of the Western countries mobilized against Eritrea;” and

human trafficking networks were established in the major cities of the West to encourage Eritreans to leave.

## **Kenya**

President Kenyatta broke the ground on Thursday last week (July 2) to start the construction of the largest wind power project in Africa to Lake Turkana in northwestern Kenya. The project is expected to cost around US\$700 million and to provide 310mw, representing 14% of Kenya's current installed capacity. The project will employ 1,700 people in the region.

Kenya has reiterated its determination to build a barrier along the 700 km border with Somalia following the terrorist attack at Mandera that left 14 people dead earlier this week. Interior Principal Secretary, Monica Juma, said on Thursday (July 9) that the Government was determined to secure its border with Somalia and prevent Al-Shabaab militants crossing into the country.

## **Somalia**

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud details his view of Somalia's current political situation, the possibility of national elections in 2016, the state of the economy and the progress that the country has been making in security. **(See article)**

India's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vijay Kumar Singh, on a visit to Mogadishu at the beginning of the week, met with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Foreign Minister, Abdislam Hadliye. Mr. Singh carried an invitation to President Mohamud to attend the Indian-African co-operation summit in October in New Delhi.

Former Interior Minister, Abdikarim Hussein Guleed, an ally of President Mohamud, was elected to the presidency of the new Somali state of Galmudug on Saturday by the 89 person Galmudug Assembly. **(See article)**

A conference to organize a regional state for the two regions of Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle is set to start after the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan. The Secretary General to the Hiiraan regional administration announced on Wednesday (July 8) that the conference would start in Belet Weyne.

Somalia's Federal Parliament unanimously approved the newly formed Independent Electoral and Federal Boundaries Commissions on Monday (July 5). They will be responsible respectively for the registration of voters and the conduct of free and fair elections and for deciding any problems over boundaries between the federal states. The elections are due to be held later next year as a central element in implementation of Vision 2016.

AMISOM has denied reports it has vacated key towns and location in Lower Shebelle and other regions following attacks by Al-Shabaab. The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Maman Sidikou said AMISOM was currently re-adjusting and re-organizing troop deployments in order to

revitalize an already effective strategy that has enabled the recovery, consolidation, expansion and control of over eighty percent of South Central Somalia by the government.”

The Japanese government has extended its Maritime Self-Defense Force's anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia for another year. Japan has been involved in the anti-piracy mission since 2009 and in May a Japanese commander assumed command of the multinational mission for the first time.

The commander of the EU's Operation Atalanta counter-piracy mission off Somalia, Major General Martin Smith, said on Wednesday (July 8) that EUNAVFOR-Atalanta has been a “successful operation, and said there had been no pirate attacks in the last six months.

## **South Sudan**

South Sudan officially celebrated the fourth anniversary of the country's independence on Thursday (July 9). The UN Security Council expressed its “profound disappointment” with South Sudan's leaders, and statements from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, the US, the UK and the EU echoed this, recalling the high hopes of 2011, strongly criticizing the continued violence and the failures of South Sudan leaders who “show so little regard for the welfare of their population.”

The UN Security Council issued a press statement on the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of South Sudan on Thursday (July 9), expressing its “profound disappointment” with President Salva Kiir, former Vice-President Riek Machar and other leaders “who have put their personal ambitions ahead of the good of their country and their people.” The US, the UK and the EU also criticized the continuing violence and the failure of South Sudan leaders to end the conflict.

President Salva Kiir commended the National Assembly on Tuesday (July 7) for extending his term of office for three more years. He promised to bring the war to an end, blamed the rebels for violating the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and criticized some of the IGAD proposals for a draft peace agreement.

The United Nations Refugee Agency in Geneva said on Tuesday that a total of 730,000 South Sudanese had fled to neighboring countries as refugees since the outbreak of civil war in December 2013. The Agency commended Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya and Uganda for receiving and accepting to host the refugees, of whom over 250,000 were now in Ethiopia.

A statement from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Refugee Agency, UNHCR, the World Food Program, OCHA and the World Health Organization in Geneva on Tuesday (July 7) said there was a real danger of a widespread cholera outbreak with 700 cases reported from Juba and from Bor. They appealed for funds for an emergency cholera response for the next six months.

Fighting continues as both sides regularly continue to violate the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement which both have signed. The South Sudan army reoccupied Malakal, capital of Upper Nile State again after the SPLM-in-Opposition forces withdrew from the town on Monday

(July 6). The opposition claimed to have taken control of the main oil production site at Tharjath in Unity State on Saturday (July 4).

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### ***The Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa***

With the Third International Conference on Financing for Development being opened on Monday (July 13) in Addis Ababa, world leaders have been calling for global action and support to make the Addis Agenda Accord a big success. This week, United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, stressing the great significance of the Conference noted “Addis Ababa can be a starting point for a new era of global partnership.” The Secretary-General said “this year, we can make history by adapting an ambitious sustainable development agenda and a universal climate agreement.” However, the Secretary-General cautioned that without the right financing and policies, “we cannot achieve our ambitions,” adding “that’s why the International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa is so crucial.” Emphasizing the practical need of investing for people and for the planet, the Secretary-General said “I count on world leaders to come to Addis Ababa and make the conference a success.”

Expressing Ethiopia’s honor in hosting the four day International Conference on Financing for Development, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, noted that the Addis Ababa Conference, together with the September UN Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, would mark a new era in international development cooperation. The Addis Ababa Conference will bring together high-level political representatives, including Heads of State and Government, and Ministers of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, as well as relevant institutional stakeholders, business sector entities and civil society representatives. The Prime Minister said history has afforded us the opportunity to be able to say that fifteen years from now, we will no more need to talk of extreme poverty and hunger. He extended his call to all Member States of the United Nations to be represented at the highest possible level at the Conference on Financing for Development. The Prime Minister said “let us all become part of the history of an important journey towards ensuring the future that we all want.” He, therefore, called upon all stakeholders to join hands “in the spirit of forging a genuine partnership to make the conference a success.”

In fact, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa represents a unique forum for recasting development financing within a multi-lateral framework and offers the possibility of producing an ambitious and transformational agenda for the new global Sustainable Development Goals. The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Christine Lagarde also stressed the need for collective responsibility in this regard not only to make sure that 2015 is a successful year but also to make sure that it will be transformative and thus improve our future. To such end, Ms. Lagarde noted “the IMF will be engaged; the IMF will be committed.” Expressing the IMF’s commitment to the Addis Ababa Conference, Ms. Lagarde further confirmed that the IMF will provide the special expertise in terms of offering country-specific policy advice with the aim to provide the best technical assistance, capacity building and financing. “We will think outside the box; we will work with others and I will personally be in Addis Ababa,” she added.

Similarly, the President of the World Bank Group, Jim Yong Kim, emphasizing the critical need for development financing, noted that the global experience in the financing of the Millennium Development Goals for the past fifteen years has helped millions of people earn their way out of extreme poverty. Just as the Millennium Development Goals have guided the international community's efforts during that period, the World Bank President said, so "the new global Sustainable Development Goals will guide our development activities until 2030, [and their] targets have the potential to help hundreds and millions of people to do the same." To make this a reality, the President said "we must turn billions of dollars in financing into trillions of dollars for future development spending." At the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Bank President said, the international community will develop an important strategy to fund these efforts. This will require identifying new and innovative ways to leverage development financing and drive private investment to emerging countries, sorting out opportunities to boost financing from domestic resources and sharing plans to make use of these resources for the delivery of more effective development outcomes. "If we seize this moment," the President said, "we can end extreme poverty and we can accomplish the greatest achievement in human history."

The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Carlos Lopez noted the success of the UN General Assembly meeting on Sustainable Development Goals in New York in September as well as the COP meeting in Paris in December to provide new possibilities for an agreement on climate change, both depend on the success of the Addis Ababa Conference. According to Mr. Lopez, the most important issues to be dealt with for Africa include: defining the role of technology as Africa needs technology to industrialize; having more targets and specifics on illicit financial flows; and clear cut but complementary pledges for development aid and climate financing. He said, "Africa wants to get a good deal in Addis Ababa that will allow for the Sustainable Development Goals to be not just universal in their approach and in their coverage, but also attentive to Africa's positions and interests that have been spelt out in the Africa Common Position."

Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), described the event a big opportunity for working out ways in which the new global agenda for Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals can be financed. At UNDP, Ms. Clark disclosed, "we are advertising for countries to have access to the funding they need to improve the lives of all the people in the planet." She added that "if the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing goes well, then the prospect of world leaders agreeing on transformational Sustainable Development Goals later this year is good and so are the chances of achieving these goals." So, Ms. Clark emphasized: "let's work together to make the meeting in Addis Ababa a very big success."

As the final preparations for this milestone event in the history of finance for development are carried out, the Conference Secretary-General, Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for economic and social affairs, emphasized the need for the formulation of a holistic financing framework for sustainable development, one which, he said, should be commensurate in ambition and scope with the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the new global Sustainable Development Goals. Stressing there were "a number of proposals and ideas on the table that are truly transformative," Mr. Hongbo emphasized that these thriving sets of proposals and ideas

should be designed to meet the high hopes and aspirations of all involved. He underlined the need to ensure an ambitious and meaningful Conference outcome for the future of all people and of the planet. Mr. Hongbo urged all stakeholders and participants “to keep in mind that the Addis Ababa Conference presents a historic opportunity - one that we cannot afford to miss.”

As part of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, but ahead of its official opening, the Civil Society Organization Forum will convene in Addis Ababa, on Saturday and Sunday (July 11-12). The CSO Forum is being held with the objective of informing participating CSOs on the status of the official processes and to coordinate civil society participation in the International Conference on Financing for Development. It will also develop a collective CSO Forum Declaration for the Conference Roundtables as well as planning and organizing future areas of CSO engagement in Financing for Development.

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa will be critical in providing the basis for the success of the UN Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda in September, as well as for the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris (COP 21) at the end of the year. As world leaders gather in Addis Ababa, this event offers the international community with a unique opportunity to launch global actions, aimed at eradicating poverty within a generation, avoiding climate catastrophe, building a more equitable global economic order, and making sure that no country and no person is left behind.

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### ***Prime Minister Hailemariam addresses the House of Representatives***

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn responded to questions from members of the House of Representatives on the budget on Monday this week. The Prime Minister also briefed MPs on other current issues and addressed questions raised by members of parliament on matters of national and regional concern, including the election, human trafficking and relations with Eritrea.

The Prime Minister elaborated on the draft budget for 2008 E.C (2015-2016). With the budget as a record 223.3 billion Birr (around US\$11billion), he said the budget deficit was less than three percent. He said the Government does not expect any major increase in inflation as a result of the deficit and emphasized that it would not print money to fill the gap. The draft budget allocates 22.6% to recurrent expenses, 37.4% to capital expenses, 34.7% for subsidies to the regional states and 5.4% to achieve sustainable development goals.

Addressing questions about the rising costs of the newly transferred condominiums, he said there has been a gradual rise in the price of houses since the building program commenced more than a decade ago. This year’s transfers had also registered price rises. This had been mainly due to increasing labor and construction costs, but, he said, the increases had not been extraordinary or exceptional. He pointed out the Government was subsidizing the program to the extent of some 7.5 billion Birr. This amounted to half of the total cost of the houses transferred to people this year.

The Prime Minister said that concerted efforts were underway to address the problem of public transportation in Addis Ababa and he underlined the need to coordinate activities between stakeholders and the implementation of a system of proper inspection to help resolve the existing problems in the city. He said the Government had provided favorable conditions for the private sector to import some 500 buses duty free and these would be on the streets to provide an effective city bus service shortly. The Addis Ababa City Light Rail Project had fallen behind schedule because there has been a problem with the purchase of the 450 kw power supply cables. This has now been resolved and the railway should be operational soon.

The Prime Minister described the sole owner and winner of the recent election had been the Ethiopian people. The fact that 96% of registered voters' had turned out to cast their votes was an extraordinary result by any standards. He said "we aren't concerned with what others say: it is the people of Ethiopia who endorse the election." He said the landslide victory of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front was not a coincidence; rather it showed that people appreciated that the peace and development that the country was enjoying today was the fruit of EPRDF policies. It also demonstrated the increasing ability of the public to discern between the alternatives on offer - peace and order as opposed to the possibility of anarchy; principled, and successful, policies rather than distorted ambition; success rather than a lack of possibilities. These were all reasons why the people voted for the EPRDF rather than the opposition.

The Prime Minister also underlined the Government encouragement for the Ethiopian Diaspora to take an active role in development activities in the country. He said their participation was increasing appreciably but there was still a lot of untapped potential. He pointed out that the Government is holding consultations with the Diaspora to enrich the Second Growth and Transformation Plan which is now in the process of being finalized.

The Prime Minister detailed what the Government is doing to curb human trafficking and said it was working closely with Interpol and with neighboring countries to tackle this scourge and to dismantle trafficking networks in the region. They would also be expanding their efforts elsewhere. He stressed that as human trafficking is a crosscutting issue, it was essential that dealing with it required the concerted effort of parents, religious leaders and the community at large.

The Prime Minister also spoke of foreign policy, underlining that peace, development and mutual respect for its neighbors were the firm and unwavering bases of Ethiopia's foreign policy. He said the Government was working tirelessly to strengthen links with neighbors through economic integration. As a result it has excellent relations with Kenya, with Djibouti, and with the Sudan. There was one exception to this. Relations with Eritrea had shown no improvement despite Ethiopia's repeated efforts to open a dialogue. Eritrea had continued its destructive and destabilizing role in Ethiopia and the region. So far, the Prime Minister said, Ethiopia had countered Eritrea's subversive activities with a measured response. He stressed, however, that if the regime in Asmara continued to engage in its destabilizing behavior, the Government might be forced to take appropriate action as required.

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### *The Second Ethio-Uganda Joint Ministerial Commission meeting*

The Second Ethio-Uganda Joint Ministerial Commission, co-chaired by Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom and Uganda's Defense Minister Dr. Crispus Kiyonga, concluded last weekend (July 4-5) with the signing of three Memoranda of Understanding covering education, agriculture, and tourism and cultural heritage. The Joint Ministerial Commission session for ministers and state ministers was preceded by a meeting of senior officials. The agreements, particularly those on cultural heritage and education, are a concrete reflection of the fact that both countries are keen to forge a foundation of public opinion informed by African wisdom, history and civilization. Their people-centered friendship can be expected to drive the two countries forward to make progress in agriculture, tourism and other areas of cooperation. These are areas in which both peoples can bring their own advantages into full play to build on the government-to-government, party-to-party and people-to-people ties and to enter into a new period of African creativity, innovation and renaissance.

Dr Tedros, opening the Joint Ministerial Commission meeting, noted the exemplary cooperation of two friendly countries featuring peaceful co-existence and both playing a constructive role to help the parties reach lasting peace and stability in South Sudan and Somalia. He said Ethiopia welcomed Uganda's important role in Somalia; and he underlined Ethiopia's interest in helping the South Sudanese parties reach a negotiated political settlement to end the crisis in South Sudan. Dr. Tedros noted that shared commonalities bound the interests and destinies of Ethiopia and Uganda close together, and he added that both countries had great potential in the areas of trade, investment and tourism. He stressed that implementation of signed agreements would help keep the strategic partnership of the two countries moving at a strong pace. This, he said, needed to be utilized by both sides for the benefit of their two peoples. Dr Tedros emphasized that cooperation on trade and investment would give Ethio-Uganda ties an unprecedented breadth and depth; the Joint Ministerial Commission meeting should aim to explore new and practical avenues of cooperation. He spoke of the need to improve infrastructure links to explore business opportunities and said Ethiopia is keen to make a breakthrough with Uganda in joint regional infrastructure development. Dr Tedros noted that completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam would bring significant benefit to Ethiopia, the region and also to Uganda. In this context, Ethiopia appreciated Uganda's clear stand and shared vision on equitable utilization of the waters of the Nile.

Dr. Kiyonga, who noted that President Museveni had paid a successful visit to Ethiopia last year, said the Government of Uganda congratulated Ethiopia on its successful election, and he noted that Uganda's ruling party associated itself with the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front party in its victory. Dr. Kiyonga, emphasizing that Uganda deeply valued its relations with Ethiopia, said Ethiopia and Uganda cooperation had demonstrated strong and sound momentum in many areas. In addition to giving a big push to the economic partnership, he said both countries have played a key role in safeguarding regional peace and stability. They had co-operated in supporting the creation of the East African Standby Force with a view to create a harmonious and stable region. The Defense Minister affirmed Uganda's commitment to work in concert with Ethiopia to ensure peace and security in Somalia and South Sudan and bring lasting peace and stability to both countries.

The Joint Ministerial Commission meeting, covering issues related to the political, security, social and economic partnership of the two countries, has provided momentum to the coordination of their joint efforts to deepen their partnership at regional, continental and multilateral levels. The meeting which underlined both countries' desire for the peaceful conclusion of the war in South Sudan also demonstrated that both countries were in agreement to jointly extend support to Somalia within the framework of IGAD and AU. The meeting, admitting the challenges facing Africa including terrorism, extremism, human and drug trafficking, illegal migration, and conflict, reiterated the deep interest of the two countries to promote cooperation to provide new ways to deal with these threats and risks. In this context, they agreed to set up a technical committee to follow up implementation of the MoU signed in the field of education, and agreed the focus should be in mutual learning in technical and vocational education and training and higher education.

Ethiopia and Uganda, on the basis of their shared commonalities and their warm and long-standing relations, have broken new ground in safeguarding regional and African peace and stability. They have made vital contributions to the acceleration of regional cooperation projects within the IGAD and AU frameworks since the establishment of the Joint Ministerial Commission four years ago. Enjoying this high-level of mutual trust and with frequent high level contacts, the Joint Ministerial Commission meeting takes place every two years. This reviews progress and considers the challenges involved in deepening their partnership as well as looking at new prospects for expanding the relationship. The Ugandan delegation, following the conclusion of the Second Joint Ministerial Commission meeting, also paid a visit to look at the Adama Wind Farm and at the Eastern Industrial Zone.

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### ***The 39<sup>th</sup> Session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee in Germany***

A high level delegation led by the Minister of Water, Energy and Irrigation, Ato Alemayehu Tegenu and including the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos participated in the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting, held in Bonn, Germany (June 29-July 8).

The Committee adopted a decision at its 38<sup>th</sup> session criticizing Ethiopia over the Gibe III and Kuraz Sugar projects, suggesting these were negatively affecting the World Heritage site of Lake Turkana in Kenya, and that environmental impact assessments had not been taken into consideration. It had therefore called on Ethiopia to halt further developments. One of the main items on the agenda of this 39<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee was whether there had been a negative impact on the Heritage Site and if the subject matter should be included in the list of Heritage Sites in danger. Ethiopia attended the meeting to provide evidence for the Committee to demonstrate that its development efforts did not endanger the World Heritage sites nor did they compromise on any environmental issues.

Ethiopia noted that, in January 2015, it had invited Kenya and a delegation composed of Water, Environment and National Heritage representatives and officials, to visit the Gilgel Gibe III Dam project. At the end of its visit, the delegation had prepared a joint report with its Ethiopian

counterparts. The report was forwarded to the World Heritage Committee. It showed there was no adverse impact from either the Gilgel Gibe III Dam or the Kuraz Sugar projects on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake Turkana World Heritage site. This report was placed among the official documents of the current session.

Secondly, Ethiopia had also invited a World Heritage Committee –International Union for Conservation of Nature (WHC-IUCN) joint mission to visit the projects and see the facts on the ground for themselves. The mission visited the sites in June this year. Its observations were similar to that of the Kenyan delegation, but their report suggested that further developments regarding Kuraz Sugar Project and Gilgel Gibe III as well as planned projects including Gibe IV and V must be halted until a Joint Strategic Environmental impact assessment had been done by both Ethiopia and Kenya and this was reviewed by WHC-IUCN. This report was also deposited as part of the official documents. The request was included in the Draft Decision tabled before the Committee.

Ethiopia, having received this report, provided its comments and prepared an Aid Memoire for consideration by the Committee members. It attended the meeting, together with Kenya to provide facts about the situation on the ground. Ethiopia and Kenya, in fact, attended to inform the committee that they had established Bilateral Institutional Mechanisms to resolve any outstanding issues between them. They said the current issue should be a subject for the bilateral mechanism.

When the issue was opened for debate, Senegal, the only African member in the Committee, took up the concerns of Ethiopia and Kenya and tabled an amendment to the draft decision. This asked the Committee to consider Ethiopia and Kenya request, and a majority of Committee supported the proposal. Others suggested the issue should rather be discussed informally by interested parties who could come up with an agreed text. Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, Germany, Poland and the WHC-IUCN secretariat are participated in these discussions. Ethiopia and Kenya presented their case jointly and the parties reached at an acceptable agreement.

This draft decision was tabled formally to the Committee for it was adopted unanimously. The decision welcomed the establishment of bilateral mechanisms between the state parties of Kenya and Ethiopia. It appreciated their intention to resolve any outstanding issues between themselves and requested both parties to undertake a joint strategic environmental impact assessment and, in due course, report to the committee. The Committee also took note of the joint WHC-IUCN report as well as comments by Ethiopia. It acknowledged that neither the Gilgel Gibe III Dam or the Kuraz Sugar projects impacted on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site of Lake Turkana and that mitigation measures has been put in place.

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### ***Somalia's President identifies opportunities and challenges in implementing Vision 2016...***

Somalia celebrated the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its independence on July 1, and President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud gave an interview to Ventures Africa giving a candid appreciation of how he saw Somalia's current political situation, the possibility of national elections in 2016, the state of

the economy and the progress that the country has made more recently. For the President there was still “one security issue, which is fighting against Al-Shabaab.” He said it was the decision of the government to establish interim administrations while building a legal framework for a federal state. These were emerging; the government had facilitated reconciliation and opening dialogue space for the formation of these administrations. He said he was very glad that most of the country now had politicians and leaders at the local level. The remaining interim administrations were now getting into shape, but it had been a very difficult and time-consuming process.

There were a lot of challenges in the federalization process, he said. One was the limited institutional memory of functioning state institutions. Those who were running such institutions 25 years ago had retired. The younger people managing the institutions now had no experience in running state institutions. He said “we have been in conflict for a long time so we are carrying the baggage of the past. We have a lot of scar.” Nevertheless “we are moving in the right direction.” The President referred to the recently established forum for national leaders, which, he said, he chairs with the interim administration Presidents.” He said they discussed national issues, cross-cutting issues that affect all member states at the national level, and once the interim administration parliaments were formed, a similar platform would be set up for the parliamentary speakers. He said the Prime Minister had also been working to link federal ministries their counterparts in the regional states – the Federal Minister of Health working with the ministers of health of the federal units and the same for Sports, Finance and Security. A set of networks to deliberate on national issues was being built to produce relationships between the Centre and the periphery.

Vision 2016, the end of the term of this government, the President said had three tracks: the review of the constitution; the formation of the Boundaries and Federation commission which will determine the boundaries of the regional states ; and democratization, the electoral system with related legislation like the Political Party Law, Electoral Management System and others. The laws establishing the commissions have been passed by parliament, the cabinet had selected commissioners, and parliament was in the process of endorsing the commissioners. The Constitution Review Commission, the president said, is already functioning, and the parliament oversight committee has handed over four chapters of the constitution to the Constitution Review Commission. The Constitution Review Commission, the parliament oversight committee and the Ministry of Constitution are all working together to deliver a permanent Constitution of Somalia. The Boundaries and Federation Commission and the Electoral Commission would be passed shortly. [Their members were in fact endorsed by Parliament this week.]

Asked whether Somalia would definitely hold elections in 2016, the President said this was a tricky question as it all depended upon the definition of elections. He said he did not rule out a one person, one vote election with ballot boxes across the country but this might be difficult. He said in Vision 2016 two principles were set out: enhancing the legitimacy of the current parliament; and transitioning to full democracy. Somalia had a parliament today, based on nominations by elders from all Somali clans and sub-clans. It was not elected by universal suffrage. This parliament assumes the responsibility of any normal parliament and it is functioning. The question was how to make more citizens participate in the parliamentary elections, to allow the parliament much broader legitimacy than the current one. He said any

process, any type of election that can help the transition to full democracy was well and good, but “if we cannot make full democracy we have to move forward so that next time we can enjoy the full democracy.” The government was, therefore, carrying out programs and implement Vision 2016 on the basis of these principles. .

Asked about the challenges in pursuit of Vision 2016, the President said “The challenges are too many and the list is endless.” He said he had recently held a meeting with the Heads of the troops producing states of AMISOM, They had agreed with him on the need to accelerate the pace of liberation so the interim administrations could work with the Federal Government to establish the local administrations at the district level. The remaining districts had to be liberated. The states had to be accessible and reachable by humanitarian, Somali Government and civil society organizations and the International Community because a lot of movement was involved in the implementation of Vision 2016. Thirdly, there was the military aspect of management of forces, improving command and control and sector relationships. On top of all this, he added, “We need a very large number of people to be involved in the implementation of the electoral system” and in such a difficult environment, mobilizing a large number of people to do the work, was in itself challenging. Related to this, he said, is the question of resources. Implementation of Vision 2016 needed a lot of resources, a lot of knowhow. Somalia had it part to play, so did the international community. The President said the responsibility of Somali government included finalizing the legal environment, mobilizing society and making people understand what was coming next, and providing a secure environment, but the “technical knowhow, support for technical knowhow, support for funding and support for security” all had some international responsibility.

The President also answered questions about the economy which he described as an informal economy, thought, he added “this is the time we are re-establishing institutions.” He said: “we have serious public finance reform ongoing in the country. The banking system, everything else is improving.” He noted that the IMF had produced an economic performance report on Somalia for 2014, the first time in 25 years. He said the indicators were not bad, indeed they were encouraging. There were agricultural products for export. Somalia was working with the International Monetary Fund to clear its debt arrears to donors amounting to almost \$5 billion. Without doing this, Somalia cannot access institutional international financing. We are working with the International Monetary Fund to address this issue. It had to follow the international procedures and make the country eligible to undergo the process. Somalia had to build the necessary institutions, put in place the necessary frameworks, improve transparency and accountability and put the correct systems in place. The challenge was to bring back systems to a country that had been without systems for a long time.

The President underlined that one of the main challenges to the economy was international pressure on remittances which provided Somalia with more than \$1.5billion per year. The flow of remittances has been restricted and that was proving to be an economic challenge to the country, he said. Another problem was the scarcity of the Somali shilling as this had “dollarized” the economy and this was causing some restraints. There was a serious lack of infrastructure restricting movement of goods, accessibility to farming areas, accessibility to major markets, accessibility to export areas. Nevertheless, even so, the economy was improving. Last year alone, he said, Somalia exported 5 million head of livestock.

Somalia, the President said, offered a lot of opportunity. With federalism, the country was becoming more market oriented. For investors it was a question of “first come first serve”. Private hospitals, private universities, and schools were mushrooming and the Government was building a regime that supported investment. As it built up public finance and a legal framework for investment it was securing the land and every other day the prospects were becoming clearer and more attractive. He said a set of international conferences for investment in Somalia were being planned and “we may have two conferences within the year”.

The President emphasized it was the Somalis themselves who had to rebuild this country, though the world could play a supportive role and, indeed, was doing so. Millions of people had been saved because of international support and intervention but “the real role of rebuilding this country lies on the shoulders of Somalis.” He called upon Somalis who were outside to come back and work. Yes, he said, “the environment is difficult, there are a lot of challenges on the ground, but even then, this is the only country that we have.” To those inside, including the politicians, he said “we need to focus on priority areas, priority legislations, priority projects and programs that would bring back Somalia.” He added: “We need to be very tolerant, we need to be very hard working, we need to be very open to dialogue and we need to be forgiving. Only then can we build the Somalia we dream about.”

### ***...and the new Interim Galmudug Administration elects its President***

Six candidates finally contested the election for the position of President of the Interim Galmudug Administration on Saturday (July 4). After three rounds of voting in the 89 member assembly, victory went to the former federal minister of the interior, Abdikarim Hussein Guleed. Abdikarim Hussein Guleed was declared the winner with 49 votes followed by the former Director of the Intelligence Agency Ahmed Fiqi who secured 40 votes. Among the other defeated candidates were Abdi Hassan Qaybdiid, previous President of Galmudug, and Ahmed Abdisalam, a former deputy Prime Minister (2007) and the current Somali Ambassador to Ethiopia. The election of the President was followed by the election of Mohamed Hashi Abdi as vice-president. Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud congratulated the newly appointed officials and welcomed the transparent and peaceful election process. He said “Somalia is progressing steadily towards the aims of devolution and state formation. The election of the Galmudug Interim Administration is the next step forward to creating a federal Somalia.” He went on: “I and my colleagues in the Federal Government are committed to working with President Guleed and his administration to build a strong relationship to ensure the people of Galmudug and the nation of Somalia progress together towards peace and prosperity.”

Following his election as the Head of the Interim Administration of Galmudug, Abdikarim Hussein Guleed thanked all the delegates, members of parliament and other stakeholders for the good job they did in the state building process. He said “we still have a long way to go and I urge you to forget about the election campaigns and focus on the tough tasks ahead.” He promised to serve Galmudug people with diligence, determination and sincerity. He now has to deal with a number of issues including the appointment of a cabinet and the setting up of a state administration as well as designating a state capital and dealing with relations with Puntland.

The designated capital for Galmudug is Dhusamereeb, but for the meantime it will remain Adaado. A rival conference has been taking place in Dhusamereeb with the similar objective of electing an assembly and a president for Galmudug. This conference was sponsored by the religious organization, Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a which took over Dhusamereeb in early June. On Wednesday, last week (July 1), Ahlu Sunna and the Himan and Heeb administration elected the chairman of Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a, Mohamed Shakir Ali Hassan, as president of the new state. Immediately after his election, President Abdikarim appealed to Ahlu Sunna to participate in his forthcoming government. He said: "I urge Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a to welcome the newly-formed Galmudug state; Ahlu Sunna played a big role in security and stabilization of [central regions]. We are ready to extend calls for talks to them, and take part in the administration." The Federal Minister of Interior, Abdirahman Mohamed Hussein, who attended the election in Adaado also urged Ahlu Sunna to join Abdikarim Hussein Guleed's administration and end unnecessary political difference through dialogue.

Speaking at a press conference in Puntland's capital of Garowe on Sunday, the Puntland Minister of Information, Mohamed Hassan Soo'ade, said that the election in Adaado was a sham process and as a result Puntland will also not recognize the newly elected head of Galmudug State Abdikarim Hussein Guleed. The Minister said the Puntland government could only enter into negotiations or talks with another government and not with either a person or a state that it did not recognize. Earlier, Puntland President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali called Galmudug a 'phantom' intended to "destabilize peaceful regions." He said the ongoing Adaado conference did not look like an effort to form a federal state, but was rather "a plot orchestrated from Mogadishu to undermine an existing and peaceful state." The problem was arisen because currently the northern half of Mudug is part of Puntland, and the city of Galkayo is divided between the two administrations. The Galmudug constitution, however, places all of Mudug in Galmudug.

The Federal Government said on Monday (July 6) that any complaints from Puntland about the newly formed Galmudug state should be settled through constitutional institutions. A cabinet meeting chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Mohamed Omar Arte noted the concerns of Puntland, but urged restraint. One of the federal institutions designed to solve disputes between states is the Boundaries and Federation Commission which was approved by Parliament that same day. However, Puntland has already said it rejects what it called an "illegal and illegitimate" Boundaries and Federation Commission. It claims the commission was constituted without the necessary consultation as stipulated in the Provisional Federal Constitution. A Puntland statement said: "No deliberation or outcome from such body is binding on Puntland". It added: "The Government of Puntland finds regrettable the Federal Government's continued sponsorship, support and active engagement in an illegitimate process that is detrimental to the on-going peace and state-building efforts in Somalia".

The day after his election, President Abdikarim Hussein Guleed said he wanted to open a dialogue with Puntland. He said: "we are ready to talk to each and every side. Brothers of Puntland, we say let's help each other, together work on security and set up a co-operation." Somalia's partners have also called for dialogue. The United Nations, IGAD, EU, AU, and the US issued a statement calling on the Federal Government and on the new Galmudug leadership to open dialogue with Puntland to resolve the dispute. The statement said: "We call on the Galmudug administration and the FGS to open dialogue with Puntland to resolve the dispute on

boundaries, noting that the legal issue arising from state formation processes will ultimately be resolved through the work of the Boundaries and Federation Commission and the harmonization of constitutions.”

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### ***The Second Growth and Transformation Plan under public consultation***

The draft for Ethiopia’s Growth and Transformation Plan II was recently released. The Growth and Transformation Plan I covered the period 2010/11 to 2014-15 and ends this year. The GTP II will cover the next five years (2015/16-2019/20) and the draft has now been opened for consultation with stakeholders at all levels. As part of the process to provide operational platforms for implementation of the specific elements and objectives of the plan, the draft has been formulated taking into consideration essential benchmarks. These include the national vision, and national and sectoral policies and strategies, as well as the implementation processes and outcomes of the GTP I, the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and developments in both regional and international economies.

As one of the benchmarks, the GTP II draft uses the national vision that provides targets to accelerate the path of transformation and renaissance on which Ethiopia has embarked over the last five years. The GTP II is therefore identified as providing a significant chapter in the continued process of achieving broad-based, accelerated and sustained economic growth to ensure Ethiopia joins the list of Middle Income Countries by 2025. In addition, the macro and sectoral level formulations are also based on the multi-fold achievements that the national policies and strategies have so far achieved in sustaining inclusive economic growth and fostering the democratization process.

The implementation processes and outcomes of GTP I have also been used as bench marks for the formulation of GTP II. The GTP II targets are intended to reinvigorate the strengths and positive experiences achieved during the implementation phase of GTP I, to turn the challenges into opportunities and carrying out implementation of ongoing but unfinished socio-economic development projects. The draft GTP II also takes the new global Sustainable Development Goals into account, mindful of the fact that the country managed to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals during GTP I. Similarly, the Plan is also aligned with the AU Agenda 2063, which calls for the realization of a developed and industrialized Africa.

The new plan notes the changing nature of the global economic order. It considers the targets of joining the World Trade Organization and other inter-continental economic and trade blocks within the next ten years. It, therefore, underlines the critical need to enhance the productivity of the national economy and in particular to boost the capacity of the manufacturing sector and thereby enhance the competitive advantage of the country’s exports. The draft in this regard calls for expansion of efforts to make effective use of the Duty-Free and Quota-Free market opportunities offered by industrialized countries.

On the basis of such essential and fundamental benchmarks, the draft GTP II document, whose principal goal is to make Ethiopia a Middle Income country by 2025, defines targets aiming to



achieve four key objectives. These are: pursuing macro-economic stability and thereby helping the country continue to register an annual average economic growth of 11%; building up the process of economic transformation through the expansion of national engineering and manufacturing capacity to foster productivity and enhance quality and competitive advantage; sustain ongoing mobilization of the public to ensure the people remain as the sole owners and beneficiaries of economic development; and finally, strengthening the process of developing a democratic developmental state and building a developmental political economy.

In order to achieve these four key objectives, the draft GTP II Document sets out a number of strategic pillars. These, primarily laid down during GTP I, are now to be implemented, enhanced and accelerated, in a more effective manner in order to forge an economic transformation. These strategic pillars include providing for accelerated, sustained and equitable economic growth and development, strengthening the productive capacity of the national economy to accelerate and improve its quality and competitive advantage, ensuring increased domestic investment and making it a competent force for development, building up the capacity of the construction sector and expanding access. They also involve raising the service quality of infrastructure, managing the accelerated process of urban development to encourage its contribution to overall rapid economic growth, ensuring accelerated and sustained human development and technological capacity building, strengthening the implementation capacity of the government and developing wider public participation to ensure democratic and developmental good governance, ensuring inclusive capacity development for women and the youth and developing a sustainable green economy.

Central to almost all these strategic pillars is the strong emphasis of the necessity to provide for acceleration of the productive capacity of the manufacturing sector and the development of quality and enhancement of competitive advantages, in order to make the overall process of ensuring accelerated economic transformation possible. In addition, all the strategic pillars are intended to align with Post-2015 global Sustainable Development Goals.

With reference to the first strategic pillar, the new Plan stresses the need for all-inclusive, accelerated and sustained economic growth and development, in order to create massive employment opportunities and forge significant poverty reduction. In view of the prospect of accelerating the renaissance via enhancement of economic transformation, the plan therefore stresses the aim of making Ethiopia a Middle Income country by 2025. On the second strategic pillar, the draft focuses on necessity of expanding the capacity of the manufacturing sector in terms of productivity, quality, competitive advantage and aspects of the benchmarking. For the third pillar, the Plan envisages the private sector as the main development force behind the efforts to ensure all-inclusive, accelerated and sustained development to take up its share of the gross national product, expanded investment, the creation of employment opportunities, development of the export sector and the process of technology transfers.

For the construction sector and the expansion of infrastructure, the draft GTP II Document targets development of import substitution and efforts to ease the shortage of skilled manpower and the area of mitigating financial limitations. It aims to scale up infrastructural development with a view to attract investment, explore new market destinations, develop competitiveness and enhance regional integration through the construction and development of roads, railway, ports,

air transport, energy, telecommunications, water and irrigation programs. For urban development, emphasis is given to the need for a decentralized mode of urban development and a well-designed special plan to ensure that the country's cities and towns offer ample employment opportunities, reduce housing shortages, inter-connect with changes in rural development, and remain at the receiving end of quick access to the provision of infrastructural facilities. Taking note of the great significance attached to the target of accelerating the process of human development, the Plan underlines the development of a healthy, skilled and technology-equipped productive force. Efforts, it says, should be geared to achieve both quality and access to social services, particularly in education and the health sector. This means that acceleration of links between higher learning institutions and manufacturing industries should become a priority. In order to expand government capacity, the long fight against corruption and rent-seeking attitudes and practices will be intensified. According to the Plan, this will be carried out through the process of strengthening the implementation capacity of the developmental political leadership and the civil service. The result will be to build a strong democratic and developmental state.

On mobilizing women and youth, the draft GTP II aims to develop overall capacity to ensure that women and youth can become involved in active and organized ways in the process of democratization, building up good governance and in socio-economic and cultural developments.

All of these elements can be seen in the proposals to enhance agricultural growth through integrated development programs for both farmers and pastoralists. Educated youth will be encouraged to organize and invest in agricultural projects and be joined by local and selected foreign investors to participate in pulses, horticulture, vegetables, fruits and animal husbandry. Small scale and household farmers and pastoralists will continue to play a key role with strategies to fully utilize the potential of household farmers, implementation of agricultural development programs based in development zones and resolution of problems linked with inputs and utilization of technologies. The private sector will be encouraged to actively take part in agricultural investment. Another priority will be harmonizing agricultural development strategies with the vision of green economic growth, both in theory and practice, by the enhancement of environmental conservation developments. Irrigation programs will be given priority. To boost farmers' earning power, focus will be given to shift production into value added areas and enhancing agricultural markets. Equitably benefitting both youth and women under rapid rural development, agricultural output at the small holder farmer level is expected to grow from the current 270 million quintals to 406 million quintals by the end of GTP II. With extensive irrigation development programs to benefit small holder farmers four million hectares of land will be irrigated. Medium and large irrigation projects will be conducted by the Government at regional and federal levels.

Tested and tried technologies will be distributed to all and development of new technologies will be encouraged – and part of the agricultural strategy includes upgrading agricultural research and extension institutions. Parallel to this identification of animal wealth development zones will be carried out and efforts made to develop ranches by private businesses as well as improve breeding in pastoralist and arid areas. Closely related to this is emphasis on modernizing the marketing of agricultural produce. Federal and regional mechanized farms will be established to prevent any anticipated shortfall in vegetable, fruit and animal husbandry production.

Educated young people will be encouraged and trained to organize and engage in agriculture, to develop export-oriented and agro processing. The number of private investors in agriculture has remained minimal and to encourage more the Government will extend integrated support to local investors. The regional states will provide full support to new investments in agriculture by readying land. Agriculture will be able to play a crucial role in job creation. Agriculture is set to grow by 8% annually during GTP 2. If this is achieved, Ethiopia will achieve food security, stabilize inflation, supply agro-processing plants with raw materials and boost export trade; and due attention will also be given to improving raw material supplies and their utilization; provision of agricultural extension services; building capacity and encouraging investment in agro-businesses.

Overall, the GTP II Plan envisages the creation of a sustainable green economy on the basis of these developments and various strategies, including the strengthening of the practices of Natural Resources Management and ensuring Adaptation to Climate Change and Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases. The draft GTP II Document is now the subject of country-wide consultation for all stakeholders across the country. It will be finalized and issued officially before the end of the year.

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### ***Ethiopia receives the “2015 –World Best Tourist Destination” award***

Ethiopia, the oldest independent country in Africa, has been elected the winner of the World Best Tourist Destination award for 2015. It was crowned as the most deserving candidate, with an excellent record of promoting social-friendly tourism and of ecological and poverty reduction strategies based on tourism. This award goes to countries that are embracing tourism as a resource for cultural and social development, who respect the ethics of human relations and preserve their cultural and natural heritage. The cities and countries must also prove their commitment towards sustainable development, ‘fair’ tourism and historical preservation.

The European Council on Tourism and Trade acknowledged the Government of Ethiopia for recognizing the importance of tourism as a key facilitator for the country’s development and international promotion. It noted the creation of exemplary structures like the Tourism Transformation Council, the emphasis on investing in infrastructure and capacity building, of creating a special team for destination promotion and management and for the protection of the cultural, natural and historical patrimony of the country. Professor Dr. Anton Caragea, President of the European Council on Tourism and Trade, noted that in the 21st century tourism had become more than an industry, more than an integral part of the life of billions of people. It had become an intricate part of countries’ international image, a part of diplomatic life and a key public opinion factor.

According to the General Assembly of the European Council on Tourism and Trade, Ethiopia received the “2015 - World Best Tourist Destination” award due to the excellent work for the preservation of landmark sites. These included the ruins of the city of Aksum- the heart of ancient Ethiopia; the Fasil Ghebbi- the residence of the Ethiopian emperors during the 16th and 17th century; Harar Jugol with the city’s 82 mosques, 102 shrines, and the unique interior design

of its townhouses; Lalibela, a holy city encompassing eleven medieval stone-carved churches of the 13th century; the Konso Cultural Landscape (containing 55 kilometers of stonewalled terraces and fortified settlements); the Lower Valley of the Awash where humanity took its first steps and where the bones of the Eve of all mankind, Dinkeneshe or Lucy, were found; and the Lower Valley of the Omo which also contains fragments of the remains of early humanoid ancestors and the fossils of *Homo Gracilis*.

Among other reasons given for awarding the 2015 prize to Ethiopia were the rich cultural and historic legacies of more recently developed landmarks including the Sheikh Hussein Religious, Cultural and Historical Site; the Melka Kunture Paleolithic site in the upper Awash Valley; the Gedeo Cultural and Natural Landscape; the Bale Mountains National Park; and the Sof Omar Cave complex, the longest cave in Ethiopia at 15.1 kilometers long, and the longest system of caves in Africa, sacred both to Islam and the local Oromo population.

With all these are being developed within the framework of the government's aim to make tourism one of the country's leading economic sectors and a top tourist destination in Africa, the European Council on Tourism and Trade designated Prime Minister Hailemariam as a world leader of tourism and a member of European Tourism Academy in "recognition of the role and significance of tourism on the world stage". It was the emphasis on building on Ethiopia's natural, historical and cultural resources to strengthen the tourism sector, identify pressing value-chain gaps and intervene to resolve these gaps, on the basis of tangible scientific studies jointly organized with the private sector and the international tourism community, that allowed Ethiopia to take the 2015 World Best Tourist Destination award, and to be accepted as a favorite cultural destination.

The European Council on Tourism and Trade is a driving force in the international promotion of tourism as a tool for development and international cooperation. It looks to the Ethiopian Government to support the creation of a new world community based on peace, development and tourism as pillars of international cooperation. And recognizing Ethiopia as a perfect, safe and outstanding place to visit, world tourism experts have expressed their confidence in the potential and the future of tourism in Ethiopia.