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News in brief

Africa and the African Union

The First Africa Climate Resilient Infrastructure Summit was held in Addis Ababa last week (April 27-29) on the theme “Africa: Towards Resilient Infrastructure Development.” **(See article)**

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn telephoned Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi on Thursday (May 7) to thank him for Egypt's rescue of a group of Ethiopian nationals held in Libya. A day earlier, Wednesday (May 6), the first group of Ethiopian migrants arrived back in Addis Ababa from Libya via Khartoum. Foreign minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, said efforts to facilitate the safe return of Ethiopians from Libya are continuing.

Prime Minister Hailemariam on Tuesday (May 5) held talks with visiting Sudanese Foreign Minister Ali Karti. Talks focused on the planned railway line, scheduled to be launched next year, to link Ethiopia and Sudan. Mr. Karti, on behalf of President Al-Bashir, invited the Prime Minister to visit Sudan on June 2 to attend President Al-Bashir's swearing-in ceremony.

Prime Minister Hailemariam held a Cotonou Agreement Article Eight dialogue with European Union Ambassadors on Tuesday last week (April 28). **(See article)**

A Public Diplomacy Delegation, led by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Abadulla Gameda, left for Sudan on Friday (May 8). The delegation included religious leaders, government officials, Parliamentarians, scholars, artists, journalists and business people. The delegation will be meeting with Sudanese officials and public figures as well as the Ethiopian community in Sudan and visit Sudanese historic sites during its six day visit. **(See article)**

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom met with UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Wu Hongbo on Monday (May 4) to discuss the progress of preparations for the Third Finance for Development Conference which will be held in Addis Ababa, July 13-16. Preparations for the conference which is expected to be attended by up to 6,000 participants,

including heads of state, finance ministers and representatives of international organizations and UN agencies, are on schedule.

A discussion on the current status of press freedom and its irreplaceable role in building democracy in Ethiopia held in Addis Ababa on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, Sunday (May 3). Government Communication Affairs Office Minister, Redwan Hussein, stressed the Government strongly believed in freedom of speech and the press, and it had championed this fundamental human right for the last two decades. He called on the media to observe the professional ethics of journalism.

Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, on Wednesday (May 6) met with Mohamed Behi Yonis, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somaliland. Discussions covered ways of promoting trade ties and ensuring peace and stability in the region.

President Reuven Rivlin of Israel said on Monday (May 4) that Israel had made mistakes in its treatment of the Ethiopian Jewish community. He was speaking after thousands of Ethiopian Israelis took to the streets on Sunday over allegations of police brutality.

The new Ethiopian Ambassador to the German Federal Republic, Ambassador Kuma Demeksa presented his letter of credence to the President of Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Joachim Gauck on Friday (April 24).

Djibouti

US Secretary of State, John Kerry, paid a working visit to Djibouti on Tuesday (May 5) , and held talks with President Ismail Omar Guelleh and other senior officials on security. He thanked President Guelleh for Djibouti's assistance to Americans who sought refuge in Djibouti from the violence in Yemen. (**See article**)

Djibouti Interior Minister Hassan Omar Mohamed on Sunday (May 3) accused neighboring Eritrea of using "armed mercenaries" to terrorize civilians in northern Djibouti and to try to destabilize the country. He said they were stealing food at gunpoint, blocking roads to prevent medical and humanitarian supplies from reaching the affected areas as well as kidnapping youngsters and forcibly taking them to Eritrea to be trained as "saboteurs."

Eritrea

Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mr. Sameh Shoukry, arrived in Asmara on Wednesday (May 6) on a short working visit. He held talks with President Isaias Afwerki and Foreign Minister Osman Saleh on strengthening Eritrean-Egyptian relations and regional and international developments.

Kenya

President Kenyatta announced that Kenya would be holding the East African regional Pan African Congress for the East African Community, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia and

Djibouti in August. Botswana will host the Southern Africa Pan Africa Congress, Congo will host for Central Africa and Ghana for Western Africa. The 9th Pan African Congress will be held next year.

US Secretary of State, John Kerry, visited Kenya for a two day visit on Sunday and Monday this week (May 3-4). He met with President Kenyatta and held talks on security cooperation and improving regional security, refugee assistance, human rights, trade and biodiversity. **(See article)**

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, was in Kenya this week to discuss security and voluntary repatriation from the Dadaab camp. After a meeting with President Kenyatta he said “The government of Kenya has already clarified that return would take place in the context of the Tripartite Agreement, and the Tripartite Agreement is an agreement for voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees, in safety and dignity, to their country.

Somalia

US Secretary of State, John Kerry, visited Mogadishu on Tuesday afternoon (May 5) and met with President Mohamud, Prime Minister Sharmarke and other officials to discuss security and progress towards Vision 2016. **(See article)**

UN Special Representative to Somalia, Nicolas Kay expressed doubt on Wednesday (May 6) that whether the elections could be on the basis of one person, one vote, but said the Government was committed to a process that would be “more inclusive and more representative” than in 2012. One option might be to expand the number of people choosing the president to include elders, civil society, women's groups and others.

The parliament of the Interim Jubaland Administration was inaugurated on Thursday (May 7). The occasion was attended by President Mohamud as well as Ethiopia’s Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom and Kenya’s Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Amina Mohamed as well as Puntland Deputy President, Abdihakim Abdullahi Haji Omar Amey, and other officials

South Sudan

Vice-president James Wani Igga said on Monday (May 4) at a consultative economic conference in Juba that the Government would cut public expenditure, raise taxes, increase exports to international markets and appeal for direct foreign investments to deal with the economic effects of conflict of the last 16 months.

The UNHCR reported on Friday (May 1) that the number of South Sudanese refugees who have fled to Ethiopia since fighting broke out in South Sudan in mid-December 2013 had risen to over 200,000. The UNHCR said that it expected many more to cross into Ethiopia following the escalation of fresh fighting in Upper Nile state.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry visited South Sudan this week on a two day tour of the region which also took him to Eritrea. According to Egypt's Foreign Ministry, he discussed terrorism, the situation in South Sudan, and development and stability in the Horn of Africa

Sudan

The United Nations and the Sudanese government on Tuesday (May 5) launched a joint appeal to donors to provide US\$1.03 billion to meet the humanitarian needs of 5.4 million people in Sudan, to cover the needs of people in eastern Sudan, Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

Article 8 dialogue between Ethiopia and the EU

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn held a Cotonou Agreement Article Eight dialogue with European Union Ambassadors on Tuesday last week (April 28). Article Eight of the Cotonou Agreement between the ACP countries and the EU calls for regular dialogue on democratic and economic governance. This political dialogue is held at the highest level at least twice a year. The opportunity is greatly appreciated by Ethiopia allowing it to explain policies and dissipate misunderstandings when they arise. It also helps partners to engage constructively in discussions accompanying development efforts. The agenda for last week's meeting included cooperation to combat illegal migration and related crimes, pre-election preparation, extremism and radicalization, peace and security in the Horn of Africa and economic development in Ethiopia.

The dialogue was preceded by brief welcoming remarks from Prime Minister Hailemariam, who appreciated the partnership between European Union institutions and member states. He expressed his thanks for the sympathy and solidarity extended by European Union over the recent murder of Ethiopians in Libya. He noted Ethiopia's commitment and resolve to fight terrorism alongside the international community. Ambassador Chantal Hebberecht, head of the European Union delegation expressed condolences on behalf of EU and member states for the killing of Ethiopian Christians by ISIS in Libya and also expressed the EU's solidarity with Ethiopia in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

Prime Minister Hailemariam stressed Ethiopia's desire to work closely with the EU member states on the issue of illegal migration. He pointed out that poverty was the main cause for migration and human trafficking and that sustainable development and eradication of poverty was the ultimate solution. Ethiopia he said was registering successes in dealing with poverty but there was a need for cooperation between the partners on projects that could generate more employment. The problem was not just poverty or lack of jobs but it was also a matter of perception and it was important to educate people about the value of the work available in their homeland and on ways to avoid illegal migration routes. He briefed the delegation on the work of the National Council working on migration and requested the assistance of the EU and of individual countries for further study of the root causes of migration. He reiterated the need for EU expertise to help understand why people choose the illegal routes.

The EU concurred with the importance of tackling the root causes of migration and the legal aspects as this could provide a win-win solution for both sides. Ambassador Chantal pointed out that the EU has allocated ten million Euro to support returnees from Saudi Arabia and to enhance the capacity of relevant Ethiopian government institutions. She also stressed the importance of the Khartoum process and the need to work on Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility (CAMM) at bilateral level.

The Prime Minister, underlining the importance of fighting illegal migration, said migration should operate legally. He appreciated the EU's engagement but stressed the need to have a legal framework to protect citizens. He said that the Government's first priority was the creation of jobs at home and noted that there were in fact enough opportunities available but it also needed attitudes to be changed. He said the Government was working to prevent illegal migration and was fighting human traffickers. It was vital to break the traffickers' networks. Not all lived in one country and Ethiopia was ready to work together with others to make traffickers accountable. It was currently putting a legal framework in place to punish the traffickers.

On the upcoming elections, the EU side appreciated Ethiopia's democratization process, based as it is on a very innovative constitution. It recognized the importance of stability and the unity of Ethiopia based on diversity. It requested information on the level of preparation of the relevant electoral institutions. It appreciated the effort of the public debates on TV and radio to make the upcoming elections free and fair.

The Prime Minister emphasized the Government's commitment and determination to make the election free, fair, credible and peaceful. Democratization, he said, is an existential issue for Ethiopia and accommodation is not an option, but a necessity. As far as the election is concerned, all institutions including the ruling party were determined to create a level playing field for all parties. In this regard, training was given to members of the EPRDF, and to the police, on the code of conduct for elections. The Prime Minister noted that the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) had built up its capacity to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency in recent years. It is, he pointed out, independent and accountable to parliament. The Media airtime slot given to each party was very generous, and indeed, the formula currently used to allocate air time was in favor of the opposition. He said the televised debates were appreciated by the public and they would certainly help them make informed decisions over which party might represent their interests.

Equally, despite all these efforts there were complaints made by all parties, including the EPRDF. Some of these might be legitimate; others were no more than allegations. There were procedures in place to address complaints; all were being investigated and verified case by case. He encouraged the EU Ambassadors to be involved in verification process and requested them to come forward with specific issues to be checked. The Prime Minister emphasized the determination of his Government to make the election peaceful as well as simultaneously dealing with any terrorist elements who wished to take the law into their own hands. He underlined that no one would be spared if they were involved in terrorist organizations whoever they might be. He stressed Ethiopia is a democratic country where freedom of expression is respected though the state, he said, had the responsibility to maintain public peace and safety of its citizens

The EU side welcomed the role of Ethiopia as an active player in fighting terrorism and inquired about the Ethiopian perspective on current developments in Yemen, Libya and their impact to the region. The question of how Ethiopia was prepared to fighting radicalization was also raised. It called on Ethiopia to take part in the global counter-terrorism forum and stressed the need to strengthen cooperation on counter- terrorism and to exchange information. The Prime Minister said that fighting terrorism was ideological and the struggle should focus, among other things, on changing the attitudes of youth who were susceptible to radicalization. He reminded the EU delegation that there some group leaders who benefitted from this and from unlimited source to fund their activities. He said it was important to work on checking the sources of funding and to cooperate and coordinate action. He also indicated it was important to look at the methods of propagation used by extremists. The involvement of religious and community leaders was crucial in this regard, he said. In this respect, the Prime Minister appreciated the contribution of the European Union in financing AMISOM in Somalia, and he encouraged member states to assist Somalia to build up its state institutions. He reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to continue its struggle against Al-Shabaab in coordination with the Somalia Federal Government and other countries in the region.

He pointed out that Yemen was historically, and geographically, very close to the Horn of Africa and Ethiopia had close people-to-people relations. For this reason, if no other, events in Yemen would have a spillover effect on the Horn of Africa. He said Ethiopia was looking to see how it could help through the SANAA Forum. The Prime Minister said military intervention would not provide a lasting solution to the crisis and a political solution must be sought. He said when the state structure had weakened to this point it would offer a safe haven for terrorism whether of Al Qaeda or ISIS. The Prime Minister also spoke of the current situation in Libya where the African Union and neighboring northern African countries were working together to support the negotiation process taking place in Algiers. He called upon European countries to assist the peace process, noting that as the situation was complicated and complex, ISIS was becoming involved. In the last resort, Libyans should settle the issues but the AU and neighbors of Libya should be available to help settle the crisis. They had a better understanding of the situation.

The Prime Minister also spoke of Ethiopia's economic development of the country, underscoring that country has achieved double digit economic growth for over a decade, and it was determined to continue its development with the same vigor in coming years.

At the end of the discussions, Ambassador Chantal thanked the Prime Minister. She praised Ethiopia's determination and engagement to stabilize the country and the region. The Prime Minister also welcomed the frank and open discussions. He said these should continue as it helped to cement relations between the two strategic partners. He thanked the EU on behalf of the Government and the people of Ethiopia for supporting the country in its efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Ethiopia's Public Diplomacy Delegation leaves for visit to Sudan

An Ethiopian Public Diplomacy delegation headed by the Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives, Abadulla Gameda, left Addis Ababa on Friday (May 8) for a week-long visit to Khartoum (May 8 -13). The objective of the Public Diplomacy Delegation's visit is to support and enhance the longstanding and excellent government-to-government relations and build and strengthen the people-to-people links between the two countries. The Delegation will also convey to the people and Government of the Republic of the Sudan Ethiopia's keen interest in the growth of the closest possible relationship between the two peoples. The Delegation comprises among others academics, religious leaders, business people, artists and farmers, renowned personalities and government officials.

Meeting with the members of the Delegation on Thursday (May 7) at the Prime Minister's Office, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn expressed his gratitude to the members of the Delegation for their commitment to work for closer people-to-people ties. He emphasized that improving good neighborliness on the basis of people to-people ties was a top priority for Ethiopia's foreign relations. This, he said, was rooted in the conviction that Ethiopia's development and stability is inextricably linked to neighboring countries. The Prime Minister, stressing Ethiopia emphasis on its deep-rooted and exemplary relations with Sudan, said both countries shared a multitude of things in common, including their civilization and cultures, languages, and people. He appealed to the Public Diplomacy Delegation to make clear Ethiopia's long-term commitment to acceleration of a people-driven economic and political integration within the framework of IGAD and the AU. He also noted that in the medium term, Ethiopia was working to expedite cooperation in the areas of infrastructure, border trade and investment, to encourage economic integration with Djibouti, Sudan and other IGAD Member States. Guided by the AU's Agenda 2063, the work of Ethiopia's Public Diplomacy Delegation will strongly support the long-term regional and continental vision of full economic and political integration of Africa.

The Prime Minister, describing government-to-government relations with the Sudan as excellent, underlined that the current political, diplomatic, security and commercial relations of the two countries featured a win-win partnership for the benefit of all. He said the institutionalization of people-to-people ties would contribute to the creation of a people-driven, prosperous and stable Africa. He praised the Government of Sudan for its unwavering support and commitment to the strengthening of all-round ties between Ethiopia and Sudan, for its agreement for the equitable and reasonable utilization of the Nile waters for mutual benefit of all the riparian peoples of the Nile basin, and for its support for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The bilateral cooperation and strategic partnership agreements signed by the two governments, he said, testified to their commitment for ensuring peace, stability, and economic integration in the IGAD sub-region in particular and Africa in general.

The Prime Minister noted that the first ever Ethiopian Public Diplomacy Delegation's visit to Cairo last year made a significant contribution to the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the GERD and he expressed his thanks to the members of this Delegation. He also expressed his hope that the Delegation's visit to Khartoum would, in general, encourage and expand the bonds of brotherhood and friendship with the peoples of the Sudan. The Prime Minister added that

sustainable development, peace and prosperity required that the two countries nurtured their cultural, social, economical and historic ties. It was important to create links and establish associations between cultural institutions, universities, youth and women's groups, media outlets and other organizations. Prime Minister Hailemariam also urged the Delegation to consult closely with the people of Sudan and work collectively to reject networks of illegal human trafficking.

During the visit, the Delegation will hold discussions with President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, Foreign Minister Ali Karti, Water Resources and Electricity Minister Ambassador Mutaz Musa Abdalla Salim, Investment Minister Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, and the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Alfateh Izz- Aldeen, as well as representatives from various political parties, universities, media and cultural groups and religious leaders, business persons, and members of the Ethiopian Diaspora community in Khartoum. The Delegation will also visit the Nile, the Merowe Dam, and various cultural and historic sites. A day long symposium will be held for high-level government officials and researchers to discuss topics related to bilateral relations and the use of Nile River. Topics will include: The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Safety issues and the benefits of the GERD; the importance of watershed management for sustainable utilization of the river; how to consolidate Ethiopia- Sudan cooperation on the Nile River; Ethiopia-Sudan Relations: a historical narration; trade, investment and market opportunities; and infrastructure development and economic integration.

US Secretary of State visits Kenya, Somalia and Djibouti

US Secretary of State, John Kerry on four day tour of East Africa this week visited Kenya, spent an afternoon in Mogadishu and paid a brief visit to Djibouti before flying on to Saudi Arabia. The main focus of his visits revolved around common issues relating to terrorism and insecurity in the region.

Mr. Kerry met with President Uhuru Kenyatta on Monday (May 4) on the second day of his two day visit to Kenya. He described his talks with the President as productive and said they covered security matters, economic growth and the proposed July visit of President Barack Obama to Kenya. The US State Department added that discussions also included refugee assistance, human rights, trade and biodiversity and his visit focused on "common goals, including accelerating economic growth, strengthening democratic institutions, and improving regional security." Speaking after meetings with the President and with opposition politicians in Nairobi who have been calling for Kenyan troops to withdraw from Somalia, Mr. Kerry called for Kenyans to be patient with their government's troop presence in Somalia and said recent attacks by Al-Shabaab in Kenya were part of the cost of playing that role. He said Kenya cannot withdraw its military from Somalia just yet, pointing out that the role the forces were playing was critical for ensuring stability in Somalia. He said any exit strategy needed to be carefully thought out to ensure it did not create more problems for Kenya and while Somalia was making progress and Al-Shabaab was beaten back, and an "exit strategy needs to be a success and we need a clearer sense of how the success will come." He said the United States would increase funding to AMISOM to ensure

it had all the necessary assets to accomplish its mission.

Mr. Kerry told a news conference that “We believe it is absolutely critical for Africa to be front and center in the solutions to challenges in Africa”, adding “Kenya will be safer if Somalia is more stable, Kenya will be safer if South Sudan can resolve its problems.” He said he had told President Kenyatta that Kenya had an important role to help resolve conflicts in Somalia, and in South Sudan whose Government and rebels he criticized for failing to end their conflict, saying their actions put the future of South Sudan at "grave risk".

Mr. Kerry said the US had spent over \$645 million in the fight against terror in Kenya and this year alone it had donated \$100 million. He said “We are deeply engaged in trying to help Kenya. We are working in border security, intelligence sharing, law enforcement and capacity building. We provide equipment to key sections in the military.” He also noted that in the next few weeks Kenya would be hosting a summit on counter-extremism, bringing together experts from all over the world to come up with strategies for depleting the pool of future terrorists. Terrorism was not just a challenge to Kenya, he said, it was a challenge for the whole world, adding “we have to do better in this regard.” During his visit, Mr. Kerry also laid a wreath at the site of the 1998 US embassy bombing in Nairobi where 242 Kenyans and 12 Americans were killed in the worst ever terrorist attack in Kenya.

Mr. Kerry pledged additional funding for Somali refugees and said the U.S. was committing an additional US\$45 million to the UNHCR to help refugees in Kenya, most in the Dadaab camp. Mr. Kerry said he and President Kenyatta had discussed Dadaab and the plan to repatriating the Somali refugees there. He said the President made it clear that Kenya has a great tradition of hosting refugees and that “the key is to accelerate efforts to have a plan in place” before the refugees can return. Mr. Kerry expressed hope that the Dadaab camp would remain open until the situation in Somalia was further contained. He urged the government to accelerate efforts to come up with a plan for the repatriation of the refugees in a manner that does not go against the refugees’ rights. He said “We have to resolve the underlying problem so that people can go back to their homes in peace.” He said he left Kenya with “a much greater awareness of the challenge, a much more immediate sense of the urgency and a much more commitment to work with the International partners to finish the work and relieve the burden to the people of Kenya.” On Wednesday this week (May 6) President Kenyatta told United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, that there would be no forced repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya. He said “Kenya has been, and will continue, fulfilling its international obligation.”

Mr. Kerry made a visit to Mogadishu on Tuesday afternoon, the first by a US Secretary of State. He met with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as well as Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, State Presidents and Federal Ministers. Foreign Minister Abdusalam Hadiye Omer described Mr. Kerry's visit as “historic”, showing the world that “the Somalia Government is functioning and that Somalia has turned around and is open for business, and that we are rebuilding Somalia.” Mr. Kerry told Somali leaders that Somalia's return to effective government was a historic opportunity “for everybody to push back against extremism and to empower people in a whole country to be able to live the promise of their nation.” He acknowledged the remarkable commitment and sacrifice of the nations and countries that make up a part of AMISOM, particularly Kenya, Burundi, Ethiopia, Uganda, Djibouti, and previously Sierra Leone

and described this as a “great statement about the leadership of African nations stepping up to deal with African problems.”

The US Secretary of State said the Somali Government must find the right balance of authority and responsibility between national, regional, and local levels. The question now was how quickly and completely the next steps of governing would be taken. The Somali Government had put forward a blueprint for the country’s development as a unified and federal state. It was working with the new regional administration to enhance stability and sow the seeds of prosperity in every part of Somalia. He said the President, the Prime Minister, and the regional leaders had affirmed to him that they were committed to making progress on finalizing and holding democratic elections in 2016. Mr. Kerry said they were committed to ensuring there was a broad consensus on exactly how the constitutional review and the elections are going to proceed. He said the President had assured him that the mandate would “not be extended beyond 2016, that the government will keep the schedule of Vision 2016 and avoid delays, that they will appoint the members of the national independent electoral commission and the boundaries and federation commission by next week.” He added that the President also said they would work with parliament to pass the political parties’ law by next month. Mr. Kerry also said he looked forward to seeing progress soon on the integration process of the new regional forces into the Somali National Army. This, he said, would allow the US to broaden its security assistance to those forces. Mr. Kerry, who said the US would start the process for re-establishing a US embassy in Mogadishu, stressed that “we all have a stake in what happens here in Somalia. The world cannot afford to have places on the map that are essentially ungoverned.”

On the final leg of his East African trip, Mr. Kerry paid a working visit to Djibouti on Tuesday (May 5), the first by a US Secretary of State to the country. After his arrival, Mr. Kerry visited Salman Mosque where he was welcomed by the Minister of Muslim Affairs and Culture, Aden Hassan Aden, religious leaders, delegates from religious institutions, youth and students and was given details of Islam from the Minister who attended the Violence Extremism Summit at the White House 3 months ago. The Minister praised Mr. Kerry for paying the courtesy visit to the Mosque. Mr. Kerry noted that Djibouti was “making a very significant contribution, helping to push back against extremism.”

Mr. Kerry held talks with President Ismail Omar Guelleh and other senior officials before flying on to Saudi Arabia on Wednesday. The focus of the talks was security, terrorism and the crisis in Yemen. He discussed how to more effectively deal with the threat that Al-Shabaab and others posed in the region. The US Secretary of State thanked President Guelleh and Foreign Minister Mahamoud Ali Youssouf, for their assistance to hundreds of Americans who had sought refuge from the violence in Yemen. At a joint press conference with Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssouf Mr. Kerry said the United States would donate \$68 million to international aid groups to help refugees and others displaced by the civil war. Foreign Minister Youssouf said the country has been dealing with an influx of refugees “by ourselves”, noting that the government had helped the refugees find hotels and converted a soccer stadium into a refugee camp.

During his visit, Mr. Kerry also visited US military personnel at Camp Lemonier, the US base in Djibouti. Camp Lemonier hosts some 4,500 US troops and aircraft as well as providing a base

for drone operations in Yemen and Somalia. Just a year ago, the US renewed the lease for another ten years, with an option for a further ten year extension.

Inauguration of the Parliament of the Interim Jubaland Administration in Somalia

The regional parliament of the Interim Jubaland Administration, an important achievement for both the Jubaland Administration and the Somali Federal Government was formally inaugurated in Somalia's southern port city of Kismayo on Thursday this week (May 7). The occasion, seen as a symbol of the consolidation of peace, national stability and cooperation between the Interim Jubaland Administration and the Federal Government was attended by the country's federal and regional state leaders, Foreign Ministers of neighboring countries, representatives from IGAD member states, partners and the Jubaland people. Among those joining the head of the Jubaland Administration Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam (Madobe) were Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Puntland Vice President Abdihakim Abdullahi Haji Omar Jubaland leader were , Ambassadors and senior government officials. The inauguration of the Parliament included speeches from Government leaders, and visiting dignitaries, and a cultural parade by the peoples of Jubaland and elsewhere in Somalia.

Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros began by wishing progress and development for the Jubaland state and for all Somalia. He spoke of the good expectations and feelings of neighboring countries towards Somalia and of aspirations of the region. Dr. Tedros said the peoples in the region shared a tremendous potential to prosper together. Of behalf of all the participants at the inaugural ceremony he said "we are very glad to be here with you as you celebrate this historic day of the inaugural of the Jubaland state parliament". He described the success in establishing the parliament as a milestone and noted that it was the result of discussions between the Jubaland leaders and the Federal Government. He praised the strong commitment shown by both sides to come together and solve their problems through discussion. He said both sides knew the root cause of their past problems as well as the solution, and he welcomed their success in solving their problems by discussion. One result of this achievement was that President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud became the first Somalia president to visit Jubaland state.

Dr. Tedros said that Ethiopia and Kenya have been with Somalia in every step of the way and they will continue to support Somalia in the developments that it takes in the future. He praised the progress that had been achieved in Somalia and said it was now time for Somalia to become open for business and investment. He stressed that Somalia deserved development and he was please to note this was now in process. He assured the parliamentarians that the regional countries could prosper together, underlining that the countries in the region really wanted peace, development, stability and prosperity. They were, indeed, committed to realize it. This, he said, should be a focus for further developments in Jubaland and elsewhere in Somalia.

Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Amina Mohamed also praised the success of the discussions between the Jubaland authority and the Federal Government. She said "we are

delighted to be part of this great milestone of the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Interim Jubaland State Administration.” She said neighboring countries were impressed to see the progress in Somalia. By the same token, she said, that at this inauguration of the parliament of Jubaland state “we witness the practical implementation of the Addis Ababa agreement of August 2013” between the Interim Jubaland Administration and the Federal Government. The Speaker of the parliament, Abdi Mohamed Abdirahman, said the inaugural ceremony was an opportunity to thank the “resilient people of Somalia, the Federal Government of Somali, IGAD member states, the African Union, the European Union, the United States of America, and the Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya” for their long and unwavering support during the process of the formation of Jubaland parliament. The newly elected Speaker said “I stand here today to affirm that Jubaland will continue to serve as an integral Federal state component of Somalia, while preserving our diplomatic friendship with our neighbors and partners.” The Speaker said the state had been “faced with many challenges: insecurity, lack of technical knowhow and human capacity” as well as “collapsed public institutions such as education and health sectors” He said “we have seen the carnage of inter-clan warfare for the last few decades,” adding that the effects of tribalism and clan division were particularly visible in the community. So, he went on “I urge all the members of this chamber to put the past behind us and guide this state towards peace. It’s is more vital now than ever before that we heal those old wounds, and work towards creating vibrant and peaceful Jubaland state.”

The Speaker concluded by saying that “We greatly appreciate the brotherly hand and guidance that our neighbors and friends have provided in the toughest of times. It was our neighbors who hosted Somalis, when most of our population fled the burning civil war. It was and still is, our international partners who have aided us in the fight against the Al-Shabaab insurgency.” It was, he said, with this history in mind that he reaffirmed Jubaland’s commitment “to being a resilient partner in peace and state building, now and in the future.”

UN Debate on strengthening cooperation between the UN and regional organizations

The UN in New York held a High-level thematic debate on Strengthening Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional and Sub-regional Organizations on Monday and Tuesday this week (May 4-5). As well as a plenary session, the occasion also included two panels on “Strengthening the strategic relationship between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations in the areas of peace, stability and human rights”, and on “Galvanizing support of regional and sub-regional organizations for the implementation of a transformative post-2015 development agenda”.

Cooperation between the UN and such organizations is a cornerstone of UN activity and regional and sub-regional organizations play pivotal roles in peace and security as well as in development. The outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) “The Future We Want” emphasized that regional and sub-regional organizations “have a significant role to play in promoting a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in their respective regions”. It urged these organizations to prioritize sustainable development through implementation of regional

agreements and arrangements and exchanges of information, underlining the importance of regional organizations in formulating and implementing the post-2015 development agenda.

The main objective of the High-level thematic debate was to provide a platform for participants to exchange views on the concrete measures to build and strengthen strategic partnerships between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations, and how to strengthen mechanisms to promote understanding and effective coordination. It aimed to discuss ways to galvanize international support for building up the capacities of regional and sub-regional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution and peace-building; to consider actions needed to encourage cooperation and experience-sharing among regional and sub-regional organizations, especially in the areas of mediation and peaceful settlement of disputes; and to find ways to mobilize these organizations to play an effective role in the implementation of a transformative post-2015 development agenda.

UN General Assembly President Sam Kutesa, who drew attention to the importance of the Organization's cooperation with regional partners to shape a "bold new vision" for a post-2015 development agenda, noted that more than 25 regional and sub-regional organizations had established formal cooperative relationships with the United Nations. He said that ultimately the implementation of the new post-2015 agenda would be done on the ground "in our regions, countries and communities." Regional and sub-regional organizations are often uniquely positioned to understand particular local dynamics and root causes of development challenges. Mr. Kutesa said: "We should build on the lessons of our past and current experiences to create ever more innovative and flexible partnership arrangements that draw on respective strengths, while encouraging expanded cooperation and dialogue," adding that it is "incumbent upon us to find ways of ensuring predictable and sustainable financing for regional and sub-regional organizations, especially in cases where they undertake peacekeeping operations under a UN mandate."

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon highlighted the importance of the UN's cooperation with regional partners. He said "We are forging a bold new vision for sustainable development, including a set of sustainable development goals. And we are aiming for a new, universal climate agreement." He said that the Ebola crisis, the tragedy of migrants dying at sea, the international drug trade, organized crime and the rise of violent extremism all showed the urgent need for a collective response. And that, he added, was why it was critical to do "everything possible to enable the United Nations, regional and sub-regional organizations to boost our cooperation, build on our strengths and pool our limited resources."

In a wide-ranging keynote address, President Museveni of Uganda said that strengthening cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations would greatly benefit implementation of the post-2015 agenda. He argued that regional and sub-regional organizations were at the centre of promoting cooperation and integration in such areas as trade and investment and infrastructure development as well as critical sectors such as agriculture, energy water and security, as well as fostering private sector partnerships. He said strengthening cooperation must begin with a re-examination of the UN's bodies and structures with a view to "change some of the old-fashioned ones to conform with current realities." Uganda strongly believed, he said, that for genuine cooperation to occur between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations,

reform of the Security Council in particular was imperative. This, he said, would help us collectively prevent the use of the UN for national or group interests of powerful members to undermine the efforts of regional organizations and peace in the world.

Ethiopia believes the UN has established an effective, complimentary and mutually supportive cooperation with the African Union, particularly in the peace and security area. Equally, the challenges facing the world today make this cooperation even more indispensable than before, and this requires even more innovative and flexible approaches in the application of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Now is time for institutionalization of this cooperation by establishing formal mechanisms of consultation and dialogue. Equally, of course, the importance of the role of regional and sub-regional organizations is not limited to the security area. This can be seen in the AU effort to craft its Vision 2063, which has coincided with the effort at the international level to develop the post-2015 development agenda. Regional and sub-regional organizations have become indispensable in the collective efforts to create a peaceful and prosperous world. This is why it is necessary to encourage close cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations such as IGAD. This is not a matter of choice but one of absolute necessity to tackle the current challenges facing all UN member states today.

The First Africa Climate Resilient Infrastructure Summit held in Addis Ababa

The First Africa Climate Resilient Infrastructure Summit opened in Addis Ababa on Monday (April 27). The three-day Summit, under the theme “Africa: Towards Resilient Infrastructure Development”, was hosted by the African Union in collaboration with Entico Event Limited. It brought together African ministers in charge of energy, transport, infrastructure, agriculture as well as development partners, financial institutions, private sector and national experts, among others with about 500 delegates. The summit aimed at introducing ministers and officials to practical solutions and technical cooperation from the private sector, technology providers, consultancies and service providers as well as the AfDB, EU, World Bank and UN agencies, Regional Economic Communities, research institutions and universities, in order to tackle the challenges of climate change, its impact in the area of energy and ICT as well as building infrastructure, water, agriculture and food security.

Over the next fifty years, Africa, and the world, will experience higher temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, rising sea levels and more frequent extreme weather events ranging from droughts, flooding and changing heat wave patterns. There is a need to plan ahead and consider the steps needed to ensure that infrastructure and services can meet the challenges. The four infrastructure sectors the Summit focused on are Energy, Agriculture and Food Security and Water, ICT and Transport.

The AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, Dr. Elham M.A. Ibrahim, welcoming participants, said the Summit emphasized the need to ensure climate change resilience in developing Africa's infrastructure. This is all the more important as Africa is currently at the stage of building its infrastructure both at the national and regional levels, which are all geared towards achieving a Sustainable Future for Africa. Dr. Ibrahim noted that there was ample

evidence that climate change was already impacting negatively on key sectors in Africa including agriculture and food security, water supply, healthcare, energy and regional security and biodiversity. Africa currently “stands out as the most vulnerable region to the impacts of climate change, despite accounting for less than 4% of the global GHG emissions.” This, she said, was directly linked to the developmental challenges facing the continent, which she itemized as weak economies and institutions, widespread poverty, limited human, financial and technical capacities, conflicts and inadequate social infrastructure. She said the Summit provided an excellent platform for experts, policy-makers and partners to engage in fruitful deliberations and make recommendations and she believed it would serve as a wake-up call for our institutions and decision-makers to consider the likely impacts of climate change on our existing and planned infrastructure in various key sectors in Africa.

Dr. Ibrahim said the currently low levels of infrastructure provided Africa with ample opportunities to integrate the climate change dimension into infrastructure development plans. Climate change should now be taken into account in designing, building and managing infrastructure. It would add significant economic costs to development goals but also prove cost-effective in the long-run. The Commissioner said ensuring a climate-proof and sustainable future for Africa would entail integrating climate-change policies into planning and implementation processes; repositioning current policies to stimulate adoption of climate change strategies and opportunities in institutional frameworks and financial and capital markets; the introduction and promotion of innovative climate-financing initiatives as well as mobilizing private sector participation; enhancing technical capacity-building to ensure technical innovation and technology transfer and adoption; and informed decision-making through awareness creation, and research and development.

Mr. Jamal Saghir, senior regional advisor to World Bank called for climate change and infrastructure development programs to be put at the heart of Africa’s development agenda. He emphasized the need to raise awareness to increase dialogue to better draw attention to the issue. He said that the World Bank had launched a global infrastructure facility in 2014 and set aside US\$4 billion for climate change combating measures. He called for more emphasis on renewable energy development as well as stepping-up technical capacity to curb the challenges poised by climate change in Africa.

A new World Bank report, produced in collaboration with the UNECA, on “Enhancing the Climate Resilience of Africa's Infrastructure” was presented at the Summit. This underlines the importance of mainstreaming climate change into infrastructure development in Africa, with a focus on hydropower, irrigation and electricity. Makhtar Diop, World Bank Vice President of the Africa Region said “understanding the causes, addressing the effects of climate change and building climate-resilient infrastructure are central to our efforts to end poverty in Africa. The reason is simple. If left unchecked, climate change could potentially overwhelm existing development efforts.”

The report uses for the first time, a consistent approach for both river basins and power systems across the continent as well as a wide range of state-of-the-art climate projections to evaluate the risks posed by climate change to planned investments in Africa’s water and power sectors. It analyses how investment plans could be modified to minimize those risks, and quantifies the

corresponding benefits and costs. It looks at the impact of climate projections on the main river basins, Congo, Nile, Niger, Orange, Senegal, Volta and Zambezi and across the Western, Eastern, Central and the Southern Power Pools, evaluating the economic impacts of an uncertain climate on hydropower and irrigation expansion plans compared to a constant climate. The report found that without fully integrating climate change considerations into plans, there would be significant economic costs. The report recommends several areas of intervention. These include: developing technical guidelines for integration of climate change in the planning and design of infrastructure; promoting a knowledge repository for climate resilient infrastructure development; establishing an Africa climate resilience project preparation facility; launching climate-resilient training programs for infrastructure professionals; and setting up an observatory to link technical work with policy development.

Mr. Paul Desanker, Manager of the Adaptation Program, United Nations Framework, Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), described the work of the Governors' Climate and Forests Fund (GCF Fund), a non-profit climate finance facility. The GCF Fund works with member states to support initiatives that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and demonstrates realistic pathways to achieving low emission rural development. He noted that the GCF has mobilized US\$10 billion this year and was in the process of identifying projects that require funding in various regions. These will help facilitate the integration of climate change resilient programs into national frameworks, thereby ensuring sustainability in the long-run. European Investment Bank Loan Officer, Ms. Morag Baird underscored the role played by EIB to achieve sustainable development and poverty reduction around the world. She said nineteen billion euros have been set aside by the Bank for climate action alone, Ms. Baird stressed it is largely involved in efforts to manage climate change with climate intervention approaches incorporated into the EIBs program agenda.

The Summit offered the opportunity to achieve stronger ties and partnerships as well as extensive networking opportunities while its plenary sessions addressed major issues and possibilities for 'Climate Ready' and "Investment Ready" Projects. Sessions focused on the challenges of preparing infrastructure for a changing climate; climate risks and implications for infrastructure energy; climate resilient infrastructure and ways to achieve it; the risks of failed or inefficient infrastructure from climate change; the potential opportunities offered by a low carbon, climate resilient world; and infrastructure interdependencies including transport, control and management systems for green energy. An associated exhibition allowed industrialists and developers in the fields of technology, research and development to showcase their equipment, materials, services, innovations and other practices.

The AU Director for Infrastructure and Energy, Mr. Aboubakari Baba-Moussa delivered the closing remarks on behalf of Commissioner Elham Ibrahim and the African Union Commission on Wednesday (April 29). Emphasizing that the vision of the African Union Commission was to ensure the implementation of Sustainable Development in Africa, as laid out in Agenda 2063, he noted challenges including poverty reduction and job creation, expansion of energy and healthcare services. He said developing Africa's infrastructure both at national and regional levels was important to ensure a sustainable future for Africa. Director Baba-Moussa said the discussions at the Summit had highlighted the fact that climate change is already impacting negatively on key sectors including agriculture and food security, infrastructure, water supply,

transport and energy. There was a vital need to mainstream climate change into development policies, to provide opportunities for designing climate-resilient and low carbon development pathways for Africa.

The Summit had highlighted key areas that must be strengthened to address the twin challenges of infrastructure development and climate change. To climate-proof infrastructure Africa should, he said, integrate climate-change policies into planning and implementation processes; reposition current policies to stimulate adoption of climate change strategies and opportunities in our institutional frameworks, and financial and capital markets; introduce and promote innovative and climate financing initiatives as well as mobilize private sector participation; enhance technical capacity building to provide for technical innovation and technology transfer and adoption; and encourage informed decision-making through awareness creation and research and development. There were, he stressed, huge opportunities to integrate climate change resilience into Africa. It would significantly add to the costs of development goals, but it would also provide cost-effective environmental and social benefits in the long-run. In conclusion, Director Baba-Moussa said the Summit was another “wake-up” about the impact of climate change on Africa’s current and future infrastructure developments.

Ethio-Turkey Business Forum held in Istanbul

Istanbul, the financial center of Turkey, hosted an Ethio-Turkish Business Forum on Monday last week (April 27). The Business Forum was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in cooperation with the Embassy of Ethiopia in Ankara, Wafa Marketing and Promotion Agency and the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association. The Embassy of Turkey through its Economic and Commercial Counselor’s office in Addis Ababa closely supported the program, creating links with major companies in Turkey. Nihat Zeybekci, Minister of Economy of Turkey and other government representatives also attended. The Forum was attended by a 60 member delegation from Ethiopia led by Ahmed Abtew, the Minister of Industry. As well as attended the Forum, the delegation also carried out a number of visits to selected energy companies, industrial zones and agro-processing centers.

Minister of Industry, Ahmed Abtew, in a key note address underlined the importance of enhancing concrete cooperation between the business communities. There had, he noted, been strong commitments expressed at high leadership level by both countries to expand cooperation in the fields of energy, construction and Industry. He emphasized the huge potential that existed to expand the light manufacturing sector in Ethiopia with the available human resources, very competitive energy costs and diverse resources available in the country. He commended the increasing flow of Turkish investments which had become one of the major sources of FDI within a very short time.

Mr. Nihat Zeybekci, Minister of Economy of Turkey, expressed Turkey’s commitment to strengthen links with Ethiopia. He noted his own personal commitment to encourage Turkish businesses to invest in Ethiopia. He described the Ethiopian people as very hospitable and

hardworking. He also underlined Ethiopia's special place in Islam as it a nation that had given refuge to the first Muslim immigrants, the family of the Prophet. He also noted that since Turkey had decided to strengthen its links with Africa, Ethiopia has been the main driver of the links with the continent. He indicated that Turkish investment had reached to about US\$3 billion as well as creating jobs for close to 30,000 people. He emphasized the need to increase the relations between the two countries and lift them from cooperation to partnership. He said that if there was another city in which he would choose to live, he would pick without hesitation "the new flower", Addis Ababa.

Representatives of the two business communities expressed their commitment to foster links in areas of mutual interest and benefit. The Ethiopian side was represented by Ato Abebaw Mekonnen, Vice-President of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association, and the Turkish side by Mr. Omar Cihad Vardan, Chairman of the DEIK. Three presentations were made during the forum to provide the audience with details of the current conducive investment environment in Ethiopia. Ato Zemedenh Negatu, Managing Partner of Ernst and Young, gave an impressive enumeration of ten major reasons why Turkish businesses should consider investing in Ethiopia. Among these were political stability, double digit economic growth, the ease of doing business, a young and disciplined work force and the strategic geographic location. He emphasized that Ethiopia had become one of the leading countries in Africa for future industrial development along with South Africa, Nigeria and Angola. Engineer Azeb Asnake, CEO of Ethiopian Electric Power, detailed some of the future areas of cooperation that could attract Turkish investment and technology transfer. She listed all the clean energy resources endowments of Ethiopia relating to hydropower, wind, thermal, solar and other renewable energy sources including waste conversion.

The Business Diplomacy Directorate General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia gave details of how Turkish investors could benefit by investing in Ethiopia. Its presentation focused on highlighting the particular emphasis given by the leadership in Ethiopia to promote an educated nation, a well developed infrastructure and conducive incentives and legal frameworks, all a prerequisite for the flourishing of the private sector. The Directorate also noted the expectations of the business forum for more concrete relations between the business communities.

Following the Business Forum, there were extensive opportunities for one-to-one networking between the 60 member Ethiopian delegation and the 150 Turkish businesses. Minister Ahmed Abtew had meetings with representatives of six energy companies, as well as of Bisse, a brand garment manufacturing company, and the construction giant Yapi Mekazi which is currently working on Awash-Woldia- Hara Gebeya railway project. Three of the energy companies expressed strong interest to become jointly involved in Ethiopia. Minister Ahmed Abtew's explanation of the need for investment in the building and installation of blast furnaces, production of construction materials, development of techno-parks development and energy related manufacturing investment, led Calik Enerji, ENKA and Yapi Mekezi to express interest in possibilities to invest in these areas.

After the Forum, the Ethiopian Delegation also had an opportunity to visit Argun Industrial Zone to see links between universities, techno-parks and industries and the agro-processing zone

dedicated to production of sunflower edible oil. Private sector representatives from the construction, coffee export and oilseeds sectors also had had a chance to explore cooperation, markets and value addition for their products. The Forum is expected to increase specific cooperation with Turkish companies in a number of areas, including energy, textile, Industrial Zone Development and the expansion of production of construction input materials.