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News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The East Africa Standby Force (EASF) Command Post Exercise (CPX) “Mashariki Salam 2014” concluded on Saturday (November 22) in Adama, Ethiopia. Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, regional Defence Ministers, and officials from the African Union, regional Chiefs of Defense Staff and Police chiefs attended. **(See article)**

Ethiopia

President Mulatu Teshome told the outgoing Ambassador of North Korea to Ethiopia, Ambassador Kim Chol, on Wednesday (November 26) that Ethiopia and North Korea should work together for their mutual benefit through deepening of cooperation in the health, irrigation and mining sectors.

President Mulatu Teshome of Ethiopia met on Thursday (November 28) with a delegation of Turkish investors headed by Erdogan Bayraktar to discuss joint efforts to promote business-to-business ties between Ethiopia and Turkey.

Ethiopia’s Deputy Prime Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, on an official visit to China this week, will be visiting South Korea next week to look into South Korea’s experiences in economic and social development and on ways for Ethiopia to benefit from these.

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, visited Israel this week (November 24-26), meeting President Reuven Rivlin, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman as well as opposition leader, Isaac Herzog, members of the Ethiopian Jewish community and business people. **(See article)**

The United Arab Emirates’ Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom inaugurated the Ethiopian embassy in Abu Dhabi on Saturday (November 22).

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kedir, expressed his congratulations on the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Thailand at a

celebration of Ethiopian music and Thai cultural performance at the Ethiopian National Theater on Monday (November 24).

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon has announced the appointment of Major General Birhanu Jula Gelalcha from Ethiopia as the new force commander of the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). He succeeds Lt. General Yohannes Gebremeskel Tesfamariam.

Dr. Tewoldeberhan Gebre-egzabher, Senior Advisor at the Ministry of Environment and Forests, says Ethiopia is successfully resisting severe climate change impacts and has made headway in tackling the severe effects of climate change through effective implementation of policies to help mitigate climate change. **(See article)**

Sudan's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Abdel Rahman Sir-el-katim, said on Monday (November 24) that Sudan remains committed to support the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) "because we believe that this dam will benefit Sudan together with Ethiopia and Egypt."

Ambassador Antonio Luis Cotrim, Portugal's Ambassador to Ethiopia, said this week (Wednesday, November 26) that the long-standing diplomatic ties between Ethiopia and Portugal need to be accelerated to allow for the steady development of bilateral trade and investment ties.

Ethiopian Airlines announced on Thursday the commencement of a Mobile Short Message Service (SMS) information system for customers in Ethiopia starting November 21. The service will permit customers to check flight availability, departure/arrival time, flight status and cargo shipment information.

Djibouti

President Ismail Omar Guelleh met with Somalia's Speaker of Parliament, Professor Mohamed Osman Jawari, on Sunday (November 23) and discussed recent political and security developments in Somali as well as the operation of Djibouti troops deployed with AMISOM.

The United States issued an advisory warning to travelers for Djibouti on Tuesday (November 25). The warning cites "specific threats from terrorism" aimed at Western and local interests in Djibouti which hosts U.S. and French military bases and contributes troops to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) fighting Al-Shabaab terrorists.

Kenya

Al Shabaab ambushed a Nairobi-bound bus outside the town of Mandera, on Saturday (November 22) and deliberately murdered 28 non-Muslims, sparing Muslim passengers. It claimed the atrocity was in retaliation for police raids on four mosques in Mombasa. The atrocity was condemned by UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, IGAD's Executive Secretary Engineer Mahboub Maalim, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union

Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Maman S. Sidikou. The UN Security Council also unanimously condemned the murders.

Somalia

Foreign Minister Abdirahman Duale Beyl on a visit to Yemen met with Yemen Prime Minister Khaled Bahah on Tuesday (November 25). Discussions covered cooperative relations and ways to consolidate bilateral relations in different areas. The two sides agreed on the formation of a Yemeni-Somali Joint Technical Committee. Mr. Beyl also held talks in Sana'a with Yemen's Foreign Minister, Abdullah Mohamed Al-Sayadi, on the situation of refugees in Yemen.

The Speaker of Parliament, Mohamed Osman Jawari, announced the postponement of all Parliament sessions on Monday (November 24). This followed yet another unsuccessful attempt to debate a motion of no confidence against the Prime Minister.

The African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, Ms. Bineta Diop, arrived in Mogadishu on Tuesday (November 25) for a four-day official visit. Her visit, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, underlined the Africa Union's solidarity with the Women and Children of Somalia and the AU's keenness on peace and security in Somalia.

The European Union counter-piracy 'Operation Atalanta' off the Somali coast has been extended by two more years to December 12, 2016. The main focus of 'Operation Atalanta' is the protection of World Food Program vessels delivering humanitarian aid to Somalia and the deterrence, prevention and disruption of piracy off the Somali coast.

The European Union's anti-piracy mission, EUCAP Nestor, opened a permanent operational base at Aden Adde International Airport in Mogadishu Monday (November 24). The mission's deployment in Mogadishu is expected to enhance its ability to support maritime security systems in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) together with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on Monday (November 24) issued Somalia Country Specific Guidelines to govern civil-military coordination in Somalia.

South Sudan

The UN Security Council on Tuesday extended the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for an additional six months, maintaining its mandate to focus on civilian protection, facilitation of relief assistance, and human rights monitoring. **(See article)**

The Governments of Egypt and South Sudan signed an agreement on technical and developmental cooperation in managing water resources on Saturday (November 23). The agreement, during a visit by South Sudan President Salva Kiir for talks with Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, covers ten projects worth US\$26.6 million for which Egypt will provide grants.

The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, appealed to the international community on Tuesday (November 25) to address the dire situation of South Sudanese refugees. She said almost 194,000 South Sudanese refugees had arrived in Ethiopia since last December and with more fighting and major food security challenges that number could rise to 350,000 by the end of the first quarter of 2015.

Sudan

The second track negotiations on Darfur started in Addis Ababa on Sunday (November 23). The talks are mediated by the AU High Level implementation Panel, chaired by Thabo Mbeki.

Dr. Tedros' visit to Israel

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, was in Israel this week (November 24-26) and during his visit he met with President Reuven Rivlin, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman as well as opposition leader, Isaac Herzog, members of the Ethiopian Jewish community and business people.

In his meeting with President Reuven Rivlin, Dr. Tedros suggested that the age-old relationship between the two countries should be strengthened with increased trade and investment. He requested the President to encourage investors to come to Ethiopia. Dr. Tedros said Ethiopia had a lot to learn from Israel's expertise in agricultural practices for arid regions, an area in which Israel leads the world. Dr. Tedros also noted that his delegation included members from the Amhara and Tigray Regional States who would be discussing the establishment of cultural centres in areas where the Ethiopian Jews had lived for a long time. This, he said, would help further expand and strengthen people-to-people relations. President Reuven said Dr. Tedros' visit was a sign of increased cooperation between the two countries. He congratulated Ethiopia on its successful achievements and stressed his appreciation of the commitment of the people and the country's leadership to make Ethiopia a strong and prosperous nation. He seconded the importance of establishing cultural centres to further strengthen the long-standing historical relationship between the two countries.

In Dr. Tedros' meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, discussion centered on developments in Ethiopia and the region. Dr. Tedros and Prime Minister Netanyahu shared views on the historical connections between Ethiopia and Israel, on regional issues in the Horn of Africa, the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and cooperation in fighting terrorism in the region. Prime Minister Netanyahu said Israel would continue to support Ethiopia's regional role in stabilizing the Horn of Africa. Dr. Tedros explained the need to strengthen cooperation on issues related to peace and security in the Horn of Africa. Dr. Tedros briefed Prime Minister Netanyahu on developments in the South Sudan peace process and the fight against Al-Shabaab in Somalia. He mentioned Ethiopia's continued support unilaterally and through AU to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through peaceful negotiation and dialogue. Dr. Tedros also explained the efforts Ethiopia was making to resolve the Nile issue, and specifically the continued dialogue

with Egypt, for the benefit of all the riparian countries. Their discussion also covered the possibility of increased investment from Israel. Dr Tedros indicated that Ethiopia's inclusion in the list of countries in the Israel Foreign Trade Risks Insurance Corporation Ltd (ASHRA) would be crucial. Prime Minister Netanyahu agreed to discuss the issue with Ministry of Finance.

During his visit, Dr. Tedros also met with Foreign Minister Lieberman. Dr. Tedros pointed out that the volume of trade and investment between the two countries was not more than "peanuts" despite their long and strong ties. He requested the Israel government to increase its support to the Israeli business community to encourage investment in Ethiopia, specifically in the agricultural and food processing sectors. During the meeting the two Ministers signed an agreement for the promotion of trade and investment. Dr. Tedros briefed Foreign Minister Lieberman on the situations in Somalia and South Sudan. IGAD, he said had been working hard to find a peaceful solution in South Sudan and to get the South Sudan parties to resolve their differences within the given time-frame. On Somalia he noted that Al-Shabaab was continuing to decline following the death of its leader. However, he noted that the current differences within the leadership of the Federal Government were causing difficulties in the political process. Mr. Lieberman said the two countries should support each other diplomatically in international fora and work in cooperation to resolve issues in Somalia and South Sudan as well as other areas. He indicated that the fight against Al-Shabaab was being successful. Mr. Lieberman also said he appreciated that Ethiopian Airlines had continued its flights to Israel without interruption even in times of difficulty like the recent incident in Gaza.

Dr. Tedros also met the leader of the Israeli opposition and head of the Labour Party, Issac Herzog and briefed him on developments in Ethiopia and the region. He also visited Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV) and spent time with Ethiopian students attending lessons on cooperation between the two countries. Apart from official engagements, Dr Tedros also visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum where he laid a wreath. During his visit to the Museum, he expressed his deep sorrow at the Holocaust and at the level of human cruelty it had displayed, not even sparing innocent children among the six million killed so savagely by the Nazis. He said "this dark point in human history should never be repeated".

Dr Tedros held meetings with Ethiopian and Israeli citizens of Ethiopian origin, the business community and the African ambassadors in Tel Aviv. In his meeting with the Diaspora community, he highlighted socio-economic and political developments in Ethiopia and requested them to further strengthen their efforts to attract investment from Israel. He explained the opportunities in several sectors for development and investment in Ethiopia and detailed the government policies supporting these. He said investors could be confident that their investments would produce profits in a very short time. On the sidelines of his visit, Dr. Tedros visited the Jaffa Gate, the Ethiopian Monasteries, and attended a musical evening organized by the founder of 'The Queen of Sheba Foundation'. The performance was dedicated to the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

Relations between Ethiopia and Israel are strong and historic, starting when Ethiopia opened its consulate in Jerusalem, aiming to preserve the Ethiopian monasteries and other heritage sites in the city. Diplomatic relation began in 1956 when Israel opened a consular office in Addis Ababa,

upgraded to ambassadorial level in 1961. Since the early 1990s bilateral relations have been and have been marked by exchanges of visits at Prime Minister, Ministerial and other official levels to underline the interest of both countries to cooperate in political, economic and social spheres.

The Second Africa-Turkey Summit in Malabo

The Second Africa-Turkey Summit was held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea last week (November 19-21) under the theme of “New Model of Partnership for the Strengthening of Sustainable Development and Integration”. Turkey has been participating in open sessions of the African Union Summits since 2005 and the relationship between Africa and Turkey strengthened significantly after the African Union declared Turkey a strategic partner of the continent in 2008. The first Africa-Turkey Cooperation Summit was held in Istanbul, in August 2008.

The latest Summit was preceded by a senior officials meeting, held on November 19, and this was followed by a Ministerial meeting on November 20. During the Ministerial meeting the Turkish Foreign Minister announced that his country will contribute US\$ 5 million to support efforts to fight the Ebola outbreak in western Africa. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey led the Turkish delegation which included Foreign Affairs Minister Mevlut Cavucuglu and more than 200 businessmen. The Summit was also attended by African leaders, representatives of the African Union (AU) and regional economic communities as well as development partners. State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kedir, headed the Ethiopian Delegation at both the Ministerial and the Summit levels.

The senior official and ministerial level meetings discussed the three main documents of the Summit: the Joint Implementation Plan of Africa- Turkey Partnership 2015 - 2019, the Matrix of Major Priority Projects of the African-Turkey Partnership 2015-2019; and the Declaration of the Summit. The Joint Implementation Plan to cover Africa-Turkey Cooperation for the next five years. It focuses on peace and security and areas of institutional cooperation as well as economic sector cooperation especially in the areas of trade and investment. Other areas include agriculture, business, rural development, and in the service sector such elements as job creation, education and health. The Joint Plan also covers such sectors as infrastructure, mining, energy and transport whose implementation requires a significant amount of financial resources.

In the area of institutional cooperation, the Joint Implementation Plan notes that African and Turkish Ministers should hold political consultations on matters of mutual interest and global issues. The document envisages cooperation in international organizations and cooperation with regional communities and civil societies. In trade and investment it outlines various forms of cooperation, exchanges of visits, organization of trade forums with the aim of increasing the trade and investment volume between Africa and Turkey from US\$30 billion to US\$50 billion in this period. Turkey will also give tariff preferences to African countries in line with its membership of the European Union Customs Union.

With respect to agriculture, rural development and small and micro-enterprises, a range of cooperation possibilities are considered including experience sharing, technical support, capacity

development and technical assistance. In the area of infrastructure, the Summit reaffirmed support for the goals and objectives of the Program for Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA). Cooperation in infrastructure, transportation, information, renewable energy facilities and improving technical and institutional capacity are all part of the Joint Implementation Plan. Cultural exchanges and cooperation among the educational institutions of Africa and Turkey as well as media and communication organizations, and youth and sport are part of the agreed areas of cooperation. In regard to the environment, the Declaration of the Summit notes a consensus to work towards a legally binding agreement on green house gas emissions. In the area of manufacturing the Joint Plan aims to boost cooperation in developing expertise, particularly in area of cotton and textile, to enable Africa add value to its raw material benefit from the sector.

Considering the Matrix of Major Priority Projects of the Africa-Turkey Partnership, African leaders commended the projects which would impact on the socio-economic transformation of the continent. With the need to bring industrialization and structural economic transformation to the continent, the need to cooperate in building energy and railway infrastructure was underlined. The Ethiopian delegation both at senior officials and Summit levels underlined the importance of focusing on resource allocation as well as on expansion of infrastructure and development of transportation. The Summit also discussed on the importance of cooperation in the fields of aviation infrastructure. Emphasis was placed on the need for streamlining cooperation to help African countries to expand runways and air terminals in order to enhance flight interconnections. African leaders expressed concerns regarding the allocation of adequate resources to carry out the activities specified in the Matrix. The importance of avoiding a budget gap that might adversely affect the implementation of projects and programs was underlined.

In general, the Summit firmly embraced the Africa–Turkey partnership and appreciated the steady growth of trade and investment volumes. It expressed hopes that the momentum could be continued throughout the new five year plan period. The Summit agreed that Africa and Turkey should strengthen their partnership to benefit their respective citizens. Both parties stressed the historic opportunity created by their partnership to provide a united front to augment economic development and closer collaboration in cultural spheres.

The Malabo Declaration of the Summit agreed to continue collaboration in all fields of peace and security, including conflict prevention, resolution and management through the exchange of expertise, information, training programs and strengthening the culture of peace. It condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fight against this scourge. It agreed to intensify coordination of positions in global economic and commercial fora, and promote investment exchanges and encourage establishment of direct trade relations between Africa and Turkey as well as work towards the mobilization of stable financial resources for the promotion of economic and social development in Africa and Turkey. The Declaration supported Africa’s continental priority programs including the African Peace and Security Architecture, the African Peer Review Mechanism, NEPAD, the Continental Free Trade Area and the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa as well as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program. It agreed to work towards the adoption, in Paris in 2015, of a fair, equitable and legally binding Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Declaration agreed to cooperate in the field of livestock breeding within the framework of enhancing food security and coordination, enhance cooperation within CAADP framework in developing expertise in the fields of manufacturing, particularly cotton and textile, promote tourism and cultural interaction amongst peoples, and enhance private sector investments in cultural and media exchange programs, strengthen collaboration in the fields of science and technology and higher education, enhance joint cooperation in the fields of health and promote cooperation to improve the status of the youth through capacity building programs and knowledge exchanges. The Declaration supported the empowerment of women by enhancing women's economic, social and legal status and called for the development of relations and cooperation between institutions operating in the fields of human rights and democracy. It agreed to enhance cooperation in combating the crime of human trafficking and illegal migration and to pursue efforts toward reaching the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 with the conviction that the post-2015 development agenda and the AU Agenda 2063 would provide a unique opportunity to realize a common vision of a peaceful, just and equitable world that is free of poverty and respects the environment. The leaders also agreed to hold the Third Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit in 2019 in Turkey. A Ministerial Review Conference is to meet every three years to evaluate the progress of Joint Implementation Plan of the Africa- Turkey Partnership.

The UN Security Council extends the mandate of UNMISS

The UN Security Council on Tuesday (November 25) extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 30 May 2015, while keeping the focus on civilian protection, facilitation of relief assistance, and human rights monitoring. Expressing its “grave alarm about the further deteriorating political, security and humanitarian crisis” in South Sudan, the Council authorized the Mission to use “all necessary means” to carry out its civilian protection, human rights and humanitarian assistance duties, and to support the 2014 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Government and Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Unanimously adopting resolution 2187 (2014) under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Council called for the immediate and full implementation of the January Cessation of Hostilities Agreement as well as the Agreement to resolve the crisis in South Sudan, signed in May. It endorsed these earlier agreements signed by the Government of South Sudan and the SPLM/A (in Opposition) as well as the 9 November 2014 Rededication and Implementation Modalities for the Cessation of Hostilities. It also expressed its intention to consider all appropriate measures, in consultation with relevant partners, including the IGAD and African Union, against those who take action that undermines the peace, stability, and security of South Sudan, including those who prevent implementation of these agreements.

To support implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, the Council decided that UNMISS would continue to consist of a military component of up to 12,500 troops, as well as a police component, including Formed Police Units, of up to 1,323 personnel. These were the strengths decided in December 2013, after the conflict between President Salva Kiir and former Vice-President Riek Machar broke out and led to nearly 100,000 civilians fleeing to UNMISS

bases. The civilian component of UNMISS would continue to be reduced. The Council requested the Secretary-General to provide information on force generation, the restructuring of the UNMISS force, logistical support and enablers, as well as an update on force operations, deployment and future requirements.

The Council also requested UNMISS to continue to streamline its activities, keep the Mission's requirements and composition under review and making any mandate adjustments at an "appropriate stage" in the implementation of a credible peace agreement. UNMISS should also coordinate with the IGAD Joint Technical Committee, and with the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism and Monitoring and Verification Teams.

UNMISS should also continue to protect civilians under threat of physical violence, irrespective of the source, within its capacity and areas of deployment. It should deter such violence, through proactive deployment and patrolling, with due attention to displaced civilians, and identify threats and attacks against civilians as well as implement a mission-wide early warning strategy in support of its protection strategy, and foster a secure environment for safe returns. The Council also authorized UNMISS to monitor, investigate, verify and report regularly on human rights abuses and humanitarian law violations, including those that could constitute war crimes, as well as abuses against children and women. It should coordinate with the African Union Commission of Inquiry for South Sudan. UNMISS could help create the conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, by establishing effective security conditions.

It demanded that the Government of South Sudan and all relevant parties cooperate fully in the deployment, operations, and monitoring, verification, and reporting functions of UNMISS; and that all parties allow full, safe and unhindered access of relief personnel, equipment and supplies, to all those in need and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance. It requested UNMISS to ensure full compliance with the United Nations zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. It condemned in the strongest terms attacks on and threats made to UNMISS personnel and United Nations facilities, as well as those of IGAD. It stressed that efforts to undermine the ability of UNMISS to implement its mandate and attacks on United Nations personnel would not be tolerated.

It demanded all parties immediately cease all forms of violence and human rights violations and abuses against children and urges the Government to fully and immediately implement its revised action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children. It also called on the Government of South Sudan to move forward expeditiously and transparently to complete the investigations of allegations of human rights violations and abuses consistent with international standards. It condemned attacks on oil installations, petroleum companies and their employees, and the continued fighting around these facilities. It demanded that the Government of South Sudan and all relevant parties cooperate in the Mission's deployment, operations, monitoring, verification and reporting functions. It strongly urged the Government of South Sudan to immediately implement its revised action plan to end the recruitment of children into the army.

The Security Council also urged all parties to engage in an open and fully inclusive national dialogue seeking to establish lasting peace, reconciliation and good governance, including full and effective participation of youth, women, diverse communities, faith groups, civil society, and the formerly detained SPLM leaders, and it encouraged the efforts of IGAD and the United Nations to reach a peace agreement between the parties.

East Africa Standby Force set for operationalization in December

The East Africa Standby Force (EASF) Command Post Exercise (CPX) “Mashariki Salam 2014” concluded on Saturday (November 22) in Adama, Ethiopia. The exercise was intended to prove the EASF’s preparedness before the declaration of full operational capability which is due next month. It concluded with an announcement of EASF’s readiness to immediately respond to current security challenges in the region. Mandated to enhance peace and security in the East African region, the EASF consists of military, police and civilian components and a mechanism to provide capability for rapid deployment of forces to carry out preventive deployment, rapid intervention, peace support and peace enforcement. Started ten years ago, it has focused on building capacity to respond to security needs using an integrated approach that brings the three components, military, civilian and police, together to train in various areas of peace support operations. As part of its preparations for operational capability, EASF has organized major exercises in different member states to provide opportunities for interaction to demonstrate the potential compatibility of the forces to work together as well as help to assess their readiness for deployment. This was part of the EASF’s progress towards full operationalization of the ASF in 2015 within the African Peace and Security Architecture and in line with the AU Roadmap III.

The conclusion of last week’s Command Post Exercise was attended by Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, regional Defence Ministers, and officials from the African Union, regional Chiefs of Defence Staff and Police chiefs. General James Kabarebe, Rwanda’s Minister of Defence and current Chair of the Council of Ministers of Defence and Security of the EASF, said “We can confirm today that EASF is ready to respond swiftly and firmly to the current and emerging security challenges in the Eastern Africa region” He said it was “an exciting moment to witness EASF preparedness as we take a final leap in our journey of reaching full operational capability in December 2014’ noting that this was a year before the planned date. CPX 2014, he said, had demonstrated and validated the multidimensional force readiness. General Kabarebe who noted that member states had pledged all the required 5,200 personnel required, said the EASF Secretariat has already confirmed these pledges.

General Kabarebe pointed out that the CPX 2014 exercise had proved the multidimensional force’s readiness to offer a holistic “package of necessary measures to respond to the current and future regional security challenges.” He said that while attaining full operational capability by December 2014 was an important milestone for the region, it was long overdue as citizens of the region had suffered from threats of intra-state conflicts and state collapse. He emphasized that EASF was needed to avert the tide of insecurity orchestrated by “negative forces like the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Lord’s Resistance Army, and Al-Shabaab. He said “It is unacceptable for our continent to depend on outside intervention and noted that the region was now determined “to take charge of our collective security,” stressing that the strong political will and resolve yielded “a formidable force that has gained operational capability.” "The EASF, he said, now “provides a coherent and comprehensive package of necessary measures to respond to the current and future security challenges that are relevant to the Eastern Africa region and across the continent."

Prime Minister Hailemariam applauded the successful completion of the Command Post Exercise and congratulated the “respective militaries for having undertaken such a successful exercise that will go a long way in fully operationalizing the long-awaited EASF that will help solve conflicts and support peace operations.” The Prime Minister said “the transition from the previous arrangement of East African Standby Brigade to what we have today is indeed a very encouraging progress as it represents one of the first successful initiatives among the five regional forces comprising the African Standby Force.” He described the successful completion of the Command Post Exercise as “an immensely uplifting moment.”

El-Ghasim Wane, AU Director of Peace and Security, also praised the accomplishment of the EASF: "What the Eastern Africa Standby Force has accomplished today is a clear manifestation of the region’s commitment to peace and security." He said the EASF has set a basis for the operationalization of the African Standby Force, adding that he had no doubt that other regions would follow suit. The Director said “today we can proudly state that the EASF is ready to respond swiftly and firmly to the current and emerging security challenges in the Eastern Africa region and across the continent."

Africa, experiencing a new era of unprecedented economic growth within the changing narrative of the rise of the South, is at a critical point to embrace the transformation and realization of its Renaissance. The continent’s economic growth, coupled with increased foreign direct investment, improved economic and political governance, the rise of the middle class, population growth and rapid urbanization is turning Africa away from its past of indignity, hunger and conflict into a new growth pole balancing economic and social development and environmental protection. Progress has been impressive but Africa still faces many problems in maintaining the momentum, both traditional and non-traditional threats and risks. If these political, security and economic challenges are left unaddressed, the future success of these positive trends cannot be guaranteed. It is very necessary to put recent developments on a more secure footing.

This applies to East Africa as well as other areas. The region has faced a series of crises as well as numerous opportunities. It has reached a crucial stage in consolidating the successes achieved and staving off challenges. Security is a *sine qua non* for development, and the EASF is the region’s commitment to a shared, sustainable, cooperative security architecture as part of the promotion of regional and continental peace and security. Established in 2004 as one of the five regional multidimensional Forces of the African Standby Force (ASF), the EASF, with its Military, Police and Civilian components, stands ready to uphold the banner of a regional mechanism to provide capability for rapid deployment of forces to carry out preventive deployment, rapid intervention, peace support operations and peace enforcement; to beef up efforts for the promotion of regional and continental peace through a regional conflict prevention, management and resolution capability able to respond effectively to crises; and to develop a fully operational and multidimensional integrated force ready for deployment. It is particularly encouraging that the EASF will reach full operational capability in December this year, a year before the planned date. It underlines that the region is better placed to jointly respond to threats to its development in a way that also contributes to regional cooperation and integration free from outside intervention. As Prime Minister Hailemariam said “this is a significant indication of the way that African solutions for African problems can shape the future of the people of the continent.”

The EASF's success in reaching full operational capability early provides an excellent example for the other four regional elements of the African Standby Force. It underlines the capacity of the EASF Member States (Rwanda (the current chair), Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda) to operate regional economic cooperation and integration. It will help the region work to resolve conflicts without the support of outside partners. Ethiopia particularly welcomes a secure, stable and safe Eastern Africa region as both an opportunity and a necessity. It allows Ethiopia and other states in the region to build on past achievements and work for sustainable development and security. Using the principles of mutual and shared benefits and cooperative security architecture, it is possible to make significant headway in the furtherance of regional economic cooperation and integration and the realization of sustainable peace to which Ethiopia is committed. It is a staunch supporter and an avid defender of regional peace and security. The full operationalization of the EASF in December is welcome as the basis for further efforts to avert more emerging threats, conventional or otherwise, in the region.

The third annual Powering Africa: Ethiopia Executive Meeting

The third annual "Powering Africa: Executive Meeting" was held in Addis Ababa on Thursday and Friday last week (November 20-21). The purpose of the meeting was to encourage the investment momentum for energy development and galvanize engagement for public-private partnerships in the sector. It connected Ethiopia's Government and energy agencies with international and local power and infrastructure developers and financiers seeking new investment opportunities within the region. Organized under the theme of "Investing in Ethiopia's Green Energy Future" it brought together power-focused representatives from a range of Ethiopian government agencies as well as about 90 executive leaders from international power-infrastructure developers and financiers, engineering and technology companies, power consultation firms, manufacturers, equipment and machinery suppliers.

The series of Powering Africa Ethiopia Meetings have been playing a vital role in providing an interactive business platform. The preceding meeting was able to bring together power-focused investors to unlock investment strategies for Ethiopia's energy future. In a similar fashion, this meeting created a robust platform to respond to the ongoing and evolving energy sector development in Ethiopia. The meeting recognized that energy is a critically important enabler of social and economic development and a source of revenue for much needed investment in infrastructure and other purposes. Deliberations covered enabling an investment environment for Ethiopia's power sector; regional power interconnectivity; the outlook on project financing models and capital market developments; legal frameworks and regulatory developments; and rural electrification and local capacity development. These items were considered in tandem with Ethiopia's dramatic transformation towards a climate resilient green economy with a deadline to achieve middle income status by 2025. Ethiopia is, of course, aiming to boost its capacity to 10,000mw by 2015 from a current level of 2,200mw. By 2037, the Government aims to reach a power output of 37,000mw in order to meet the country's demand for energy and provide reliable power supplies at international standards internally and for export.

In a keynote address, Dr. Yinager Dessie, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that Ethiopia has been working with determination to increase the provision of renewable energy for Africa. He said energy was important to sustain the fast growth of Africa. Ethiopia had been expanding regional power integration by developing transmission infrastructure connecting Ethiopian electric networks with neighboring countries. This had helped in creating regional power sharing, reducing energy costs, and promoting sustainable and renewable power generation, he said. Ethiopia, he pointed out, had abundant and diverse renewable energy resources which made it an attractive destination for international investments in clean energy. It was exerting efforts to benefit neighboring countries by producing electric power from water, wind, and geothermal and other resources. The State Minister also indicated the Government employed policies and strategies to make Ethiopia an attractive destination for private power investment. He said the country had an appropriate institutional framework and very generous incentives to encourage investment flows into the energy sector. These initiatives could provide the foundation for a large increase in annual average investment in the power sector. Dr. Yinager also underlined that the Government had laid the groundwork for the participation of private sector investment in power generation, infrastructure development and manufacturing of electrical products and materials. It was making every effort to provide the right mix of institutional capacity, regulatory framework, investment incentives, and other factors with a focus on creating the right conditions to catalyze markets for renewable energy which could bring multiple benefits, including emissions reductions, energy security, and environmental sustainability.

Dr. Yinager pointed out that Ethiopia was “witnessing new power demand generators including railway construction, increasing irrigation, the proliferation of industrial zones, increasing regional demand, effects of rapid urbanization and increasing commercial sales, expanding industrial, commercial and residential consumers and plan of exporting power to neighboring countries electrification.” It was expanding regional power integration through the development of transmission infrastructure, to connect Ethiopia’s electrical grid with neighboring countries, creating power sharing, reducing energy costs and promoting sustainable and renewable power generation. Given the level of investment required, the Government was promoting private sector participation. One example was the agreement with Reykjavik Geothermal, a US-Icelandic development company, to develop 1,000mw of geothermal energy through an independent power producer (IPP) arrangement. This would entail an investment of approximately US\$4 billion over an 8-10 year period. Reykjavik Geothermal will be the first Independent Power Producer (IPP) in Ethiopia and the Corbetti Geothermal Project will be the largest single geothermal power plant ever built in Africa. Participants at the meeting also paid a site visit to the Repi Landfill Waste-to-Energy Project being implemented by Cambridge Industries-Energy. This aims to generate renewable energy that can be connected to the grid or provided for a captive network. The Managing Partner of Cambridge Industries-Energy, Samuel Alemayehu, said that Cambridge had developed the ground work for an Ethiopian plant, which would be the first Waste-to-Energy facility in Sub-Saharan Africa, with an installed capacity of 50MW.

Ethiopia has been working for continuous improvement in governance, maintaining macro-economic and political stability which leads to minimization of risks and allows for a higher level of power sector investment. Expansion of low cost sources of power, reducing power losses and improving efficiency and cross-border electricity trade, all help to harmonize recovery of the

costs of supply and keep energy prices at levels to allow consumers to benefit from affordable energy services. Participants also discussed Power Purchase Agreements (PPA), as long term off-take agreements allowing repayment of debt by providing an adequate and predictable revenue stream. A number of financial institutions such as PTA Bank, Development Bank of South Africa, Gold Wind, Blackstone, and the International Finance Corporation expressed interest in financing projects to be developed by independent power producers. The China Africa Development Fund, Cummins and Manitoba were also among those participated in the meeting. The world's three leading ratings agencies issued Ethiopia's first sovereign credit rating earlier this year, with Moody's giving a 'B1' rating, and Fitch and Standard & Poor's a 'B'. These largely positive ratings will help boost foreign direct investment.

The CEO of Ethiopian Electric Power, Engineer Azeb Asnake, assured participants that the government had an institutional and legal framework that specifically encouraged private sector investment in power generation without any capacity limits. The Government was strengthening its support to investors engaged in renewable energy, she noted. The energy sub-sector development policy directions in the current Growth and Transformation Plan period are geared towards minimizing the gap between the demand and supply of electricity and to increasing the current low per capita consumption and raising the supply of power to produce exports. Mekuria Lemma, Director of Strategy and Investment Department at Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP), said the Government planned to spend US\$20 billion on the power development program in the next Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP-II) covering 2015 to 2020. This would be for the building of an additional 10 or more power generating projects. These would allow foreign investors to slot into the sector to complement domestic efforts. He said EEP envisaged constructing 114 new transmission substations, 63 substations reinforcements and 13,540 KM of new 500 KV to 66 KV transmission lines which will be required up to the year 2020.

The Secretary-General of the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP), Lebba Changullah, said that Ethiopia had huge hydro-power capabilities. He emphasized that regional power interconnection enables access to cheaper power for neighboring countries and increases system reliability by providing alternative sources of power. According to a International Energy Agency's recent report, "Africa Energy Outlook", energy demand in sub-Saharan Africa grew by around 45% from 2000 to 2012, but this still only accounts for 4% of the world total, despite Africa being home to 13% of global population. The report underlined the acute scarcity of modern energy services in many countries. It also acknowledges, however, that the efficiency was improving and programs were bringing in new capital, including private investment. The report also noted that new hydro-power capacity in Ethiopia and other countries could play a major role in bringing down sub-Saharan Africa's average power costs and reduce the use of oil. Securing a more prosperous future for sub-Saharan Africa depended on increased investment in supply; improved management of natural resources; and wider regional cooperation.

Regional power connectivity was another focus of the meeting. State Minister Yinager noted that regional initiatives were increasing across Africa. In the IGAD region, the interconnections between Ethiopia-Djibouti and Ethiopia-Sudan had become functional, providing mutual benefit for all parties and giving positive signals for the development of renewable energy resources. The Ethiopia-Kenya transmission interconnector would soon be providing energy transporting services between the energy supply and demand areas through much of eastern and southern

Africa. He emphasized that Ethiopia was “committed to developing regional interconnections and operating as a power pool”.

Mr. Brian Herlihy, the founder and CEO of BlackRhino Group, spoke on investment prospects in transformational power and infrastructural projects in Africa and the company’s involvement in Ethiopia and Djibouti. He said BlackRhino with MOGS, a South African Investment Group, was proposing a pipeline that would permit fuel to be imported from a ship directly to a storage facility. This would be a low cost solution for transport of fuel with a secure buried pipeline. It would offload from a ship to a subsea and then a land pipeline to pump direct to a storage facility in Ethiopia, avoiding theft or adulteration. It could also free up other Djibouti port facilities. Nelly Elessa, Program Development Manager of EnergyNet Consulting Services (UK), the chief organizer of the meeting, appreciated the Government of Ethiopia’s efforts to develop a green economy. Her organization was determined to continue its support to Government’s efforts.

The meeting underlined the fact that power will undoubtedly shape the future of Africa. There is optimism that the efforts to promote electrification in Africa are gaining momentum. There is also an imperative necessity to resolve the paradox of huge green power potential and extreme energy poverty, and to more effectively enable energy contributions to inclusive economic growth.

Ethiopia’s successful progress towards addressing climate change

Ethiopia has successfully resisted some of the impact of climate change and made headway in tackling the severe effects of climate change. Dr. Tewoldeberhan Gebre-egzabher, Senior Advisor at the Ministry of Environment and Forest said this had been achieved through the effective implementation of policies and strategies specifically devised for this purpose. This success has been underlined in a recently published report by the International Institute for Environment and Development: “Bringing together the low-carbon and resilience agendas: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Rwanda”.

Dr. Tewoldeberhan cited the reduction of carbon emissions as an example of Ethiopia’s successful efforts in the fight against climate change. He said well-crafted economic policies were laying the foundation for a massive expansion and development of green energy infrastructure. This included a number of major hydroelectric dams. He also noted the participation of the population in planting literally billions of seedlings across the country. This, he said, had raised the previously declining 3% forest coverage to a growing 10% in the last decade. Dr. Tewoldeberhan added that the engagement of millions of Ethiopians in various rural soil and water conservation programs across all the country’s regions had contributed to the reduction of climate change challenges and the enhancement of agricultural productivity.

The International Institute for Environment and Development’s report acknowledged that Ethiopia, along with Bangladesh and Rwanda, were in the forefront of developing national plans that addressed elements of both climate change mitigation and adaptation along with low carbon resilient development agendas. It also noted that these countries were “exemplary” for their early adoption of a low-carbon resilient agenda into their national planning, linked together with their

own specific pathways and priorities. Ethiopia launched its “Developing a Climate Resilient Green Economy” (CRGE) in 2010. It is based on the country’s National Environmental Policy, the Growth and Transformation Plan (now in its final year of implementation) and the “Program of Adaptation on Climate Change” among others. The CRGE vision outlines Ethiopia’s ambition to build a climate-resilient green economy by 2025 and support the country’s development objective of achieving middle-income status by the same date.

The report notes that a Sectoral Reduction Mechanism (SRM) is being developed to mobilize action for reducing vulnerability and emissions. This will support actors to prepare and mainstream plans that will reduce vulnerability and emissions and coordinate their implementation by identifying and drawing down financial, technological and technical investment. The report also indicates that a number of institutional mechanisms are in place that can play a role in finding synergies between the green economy and the climate-resilient agendas. It cites the example of the CRGE Inter Ministerial Steering Committee, under the Council of Ministers, a cross sectoral committee that sets priorities and funding criteria. There is also the CRGE management committee, a standing committee of senior representatives from line ministries, and the National Planning Committee, that have oversight over the initiative and the mandate to ensure it aligns with the national development plan of the country. According to the report, the National Climate Funds provide a source of finance for those responsible for implementation and application of aspects of the national policy, often line ministries, local governments and NGOs.

According to a recent statement by Dr Katie Mach, a climate scientist at Stanford University and lead author of the Fifth Assessment Report of the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: "Climate change will increase risk associated with extremes, such as extreme heat, heavy rain and drought. It will also make poverty reduction more difficult and decrease food security." Dr Wagayehu Bekele, director of climate and environment at the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) said in recent media interviews that “Climate change and the ensuing higher frequency and intensity of extreme weather... has already led to visible shifts in the cropping calendar of Ethiopia and significantly increases the risks related to agricultural production, exposing smallholder farmers to vulnerability.” He also noted that “Climate change not only risks exacerbating the food security problem, for those whose livelihoods directly or indirectly depend on agriculture, but also exerts pressure on overall economic development, as agriculture is the basis for the economic development of the country."

In fact, Ethiopia has been implementing a number of projects to protect citizens from the most damaging effects of climate change, typically by adapting to changes that are already taking place. The Government has set up a Climate Resilient Green Fund, which has already leveraged 25 million dollars from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), as well as 10 million dollars from Norway. The Agricultural Transformation Agency was set up to help make the country's agriculture industry more resilient to challenges like climate change.

Ethiopia’s approach to climate change was underlined by Prime Minister Hailemariam in Ethiopia's National Statement at the UN Climate Summit in New York two months ago (September 23). The Prime Minister noted that the country had set a long-term, national vision of

ensuring its renaissance as well as a medium-term goal to become a middle-income country by 2025. To achieve these, he noted it had rejected the conventional business-as-usual path of development in favor of building a green climate-resilient middle-income economy, with zero-net carbon dioxide emission. The Prime Minister said economic growth had historically been associated with increased emissions of greenhouse gases, but Ethiopia had been working for continued double-digit economic growth without increasing emissions, rather indeed to reduce them. It had implemented policies of agricultural intensification, rehabilitation of degraded land, investment in water storage and irrigation, improved inputs, practices and marketing systems, improved access to veterinary health services, increased generation of power from renewable energy sources, rural electrification, extensive use of energy efficient technologies and practices, and investment in railway systems powered by electricity generated from renewable energy.

The Prime Minister said the country had now put in place the required policy and institutional framework for a climate-resilient green economy. It had already started implementing some of these measures, investing in the generation of clean and renewable power. By the middle of 2015 or shortly thereafter, it expects to increase power generation capacity from the baseline of 2000 MW to 10,000 MW. The country's energy regulatory body has been given an expanded mandate and the authority to regulate energy efficiency. A series of re-forestation and soil and water conservation measures are being taken across the country. In sum, and most importantly, said the Prime Minister, Ethiopia had mainstreamed climate change considerations in planning and had, therefore, determined that its next generation development plans would be green and climate-resilient.

Djibouti's Minister of Foreign Affairs on Africa's relations with China and the West

Mahamoud Ali Youssouf, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti, has criticized the idea that Africa should have to choose between two competing blocs, Chinese and Western. This idea was, he said, widespread among Western strategists, think tanks, and journalists, he said, but African governments and businesses take a more nuanced view. The Minister said economic growth was no longer a distant promise in Africa, but a reality. According to the World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP grew at a 4.7% annual rate in 2013, with the pace expected to accelerate to 5.1% in 2015 and 2016. Today, he said, no global investor can afford to ignore Africa's tremendous potential; and similarly, no developing country should ignore the great opportunities implied by engagement with Asia's emerging powers.

It was, therefore, only natural that trade and diplomatic relations between two dynamic continents should expand. Mr. Youssouf pointed out that exports from Africa to Asia increased more than six-fold between 2001 and 2011. Trade between the two continents now almost matched that between Africa and Europe, and China has become Africa's single largest trading partner, with trade flows rising from \$11 billion in 2000 to \$210 billion last year. China's direct investment in Africa has grown from a scant \$500 million in 2003 to \$15 billion in 2012. The Minister added: "And there is plenty of room for further growth". Africa accounts for only 5% of China's overall foreign trade and investment.

The Minister said Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has been explicit about China's desire to form a progressive relationship with Africa, based on mutual respect and a commitment to develop African communities. Africa accounted for only a small fraction of China's foreign investment but it received nearly half of China's total foreign aid. For Africa, the Minister said, the focus must be on building the right environment for investment. African governments had an opportunity to learn from the region's economic success stories, while boosting their own countries' industrial development.

The Minister noted that much of Asia's investment in Africa focused on infrastructure that directly supported African priorities: telecoms, power plants and transmission lines, water and sanitation, roads and railways, ports, aviation, and airports. These investments represented a long-term commitment, and Africa benefited in many ways, gaining not only jobs today, but also a more advanced industrial base that would underpin employment and drive economic growth long into the future. It also supported Africa's drive toward greater mobility, higher productivity, and a more prominent role in world trade.

The Minister added that short-term investment and economic growth could not, of course, come at the expense of medium-term social development and job creation or long-term sustainability and stability. It was the responsibility of all African governments to ensure that investments and partnerships, whether with emerging-market investors such as China, Brazil, India, and the Gulf states, or with Europe and the US, are built on fair terms: "To see ties between Africa and Asia as part of a battle between East and West is simplistic, outdated, and, above all, wrong-headed." (www.project-syndicate.org)