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African Union

The African Contact Group for the International Criminal Court (ICC) spent a week-long stay in New York to engage with members of the United Nations Security Council over Africa's concern and its relationship with the ICC and to demand deferral of the trial of President Kenyatta. **(See article)**

Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, attended the Heads of State and Government Summit in South Africa on November 5 to discuss progress on the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC). **(See article)**

A five day Global Geospatial Data Infrastructure and Africa GIS Conference opened on Monday (November 4) in Addis Ababa under the theme: "Spatial Enablement in Support of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction", to consider the importance of geospatial science and technology in the production of affordable geospatial data sets for sustainable development in Africa.

Ethiopia

Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia on Monday (November 4) reiterated their commitment to coordination and constructive dialogue over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam but failed to agree on the formation of a tripartite mechanism for the implementation of the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts **(See article)**.

The African Media Initiative's three day 6th African Media Leaders' Forum started on (November 6) in Addis Ababa under the theme: "The African Media in the last 50 years and the future." Prime Minister Hailemariam opened the Forum with a keynote speech. **(See article)**

Mr. Jan Mikkelsen, the Country Representative of the IMF said that Ethiopia's economy has reached a crossroads; it needed to consider the balance between public and private sectors in the

economy and encourage more private sector investment to prevent growth rates from falling. He suggested that economic output would grow 7.5% over each of the next two fiscal years, to July 2014 and July 2015. He said the IMF appreciated the Government's efforts to reduce poverty and improve living standards.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros at a dinner hosted by the Federal Government of Somalia at Villa Somalia in Mogadishu on Tuesday (November 5) welcomed the success of the Jubbaland Reconciliation Conference. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said it was the first time in 23 years that a foreign minister of Ethiopia had spent a night in Mogadishu. During his visit, Dr. Tedros held talks with President Mohamud and Prime Minister Shirdon. **(See article)**

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kedir met a South Korean business delegation led by Mr. Kwang Yem Lee, chairman of KOS Company Ltd on Wednesday (November 6).

Ethiopia's Ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Girma Birru, chaired a meeting of the African Ambassadors AGOA Group, this week to discuss President Obama's Power Africa, his initiative to double access to power in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Ethiopian Consulate General in Hargeisa announced on Wednesday (November 6) that it was temporarily suspending the provision of visas and vehicle entry permits from Somaliland to Ethiopia for security reasons. The suspension is expected to last a month.

The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT) told an International Telecommunication Union (ITU) consultation forum in Addis Ababa on Wednesday that Ethiopia was undertaking expansion of its information communication technology within the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP).

The National Intelligence and Security Service and the Federal Police said on Tuesday (November 5) that police and security forces had been put on heightened alert following "strong evidence that indicates Al-Shabaab and terrorist groups backed by Eritrea are preparing to carry out attacks in Addis Ababa and other areas of the country soon."

The Ethiopian Ministry of Water and Energy and the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation have approved a 300 Megawatt Solar Project in eastern Ethiopia in partnership with two U.S. Firms, Global Trade and Development Consulting and Energy Ventures.

The Pan-African Award Committee has acknowledged Ethiopian as "African Airline of the Year" and "Best Cabin Crew in Africa" at the opening ceremony of the 9th Travel Market, AKWAAB, meeting in Nigeria (October 27). Ethiopian has also won the 2013 SKYTRAX award for "Best Airline Staff Service in Africa" and the 2013 Passengers Choice Award for "Best Airline in Africa."

Ethiopia's marathon runner, Tsegaye Kebede, after finishing second in last Sunday's ING New York City Marathon, won the World Marathon Majors title based on the results of the London,

Boston, Berlin, Chicago, and New York marathons as well as Olympic Games and the IAAF World Championships over a two year period. The winner takes a prize of \$500,000.

Flags flew at half-mast across Ethiopia yesterday, Sunday (November 3), for the continental day of mourning in memory of the victims of Lampedusa tragedy in which 359 migrants, most from Eritrea, drowned off the coast of Italy when their boat sank on October 3.

The annual Commonwealth Remembrance Day Service will be held in Gulele War Cemetery in Addis Ababa on Sunday (November 10). Senior Ethiopian military personnel, Ambassadors of countries accredited in Addis Ababa, accompanied by their Military Attaches, will lay wreaths at the Cemetery.

Djibouti

Djibouti's President Ismail Omar Guelleh received Somaliland's Foreign Minister and International Cooperation Mr. Mohamed Bihi Yonis on Sunday November 3. Discussions covered ways to consolidate the working ties between the two countries. The Somaliland Minister had previously visited Egypt and the United Kingdom

Kenya

A nine person delegation from Kenya, led by Kenyan MP Ms. Ann Nyokabi, a member of the Parliament's Foreign Relations and Defense Committee, made a three day visit to Somaliland this week.

Somalia

The three day Jubbaland Reconciliation and Peace Building Conference concluded in Mogadishu on Wednesday (November 6th), with participants agreeing to end hostilities, to continue reconciliation, to create an inclusive Interim Jubba Administration, amalgamate all local forces into the Somali National Army, to work with AMISOM and the SNA to clear Al-Shabaab out of the region, and work together to support the federalism process. **(See article)**

On Tuesday (November 5) Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon met with a delegation from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led by Denmark's Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Michael Starbaek Christensen, and the Danish Ambassador to Somalia, Geert Andersen in Mogadishu.

Somalia's Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon has welcomed the decision by a UK court this week to grant an interim injunction to allow the Somali money transfer company Dahabshiil to continue sending remittances to Somalia until the conclusion of a full trial. However he warned that a "permanent solution must be found to keep open this vital lifeline" as remittances were an essential source of income for more than half of all Somalis.

The Governor of Somalia's Central Bank, Ms. Yussur Abrar, the first woman appointed to this position, resigned last week claiming she had been asked to sanction deals which risked opening the door to corruption and that the Bank had been subject to interference, making it impossible to operate as a credible institution.

A study by the International Criminal Police Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Bank estimated that more than US\$400 million was claimed in ransoms for pirate acts between April 2005 and December 2012 and 179 ships were hijacked. It also highlighted the results of associated criminal activity (**See article**)

The Somaliland Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mohamed Bihi Yonis, said during a visit to London that the most important objective of the next round of the talks between Somaliland and Somalia, being hosted by the Turkish Government will be the final separation between Somaliland and Somalia and nothing less.

The Deputy Head of the UK Mission to Ethiopia, Mr. Chris Allen visited Somaliland. He said the UK Government would remain a key strategic partner of Somaliland at the same time as it strengthened its relationship with Mogadishu. The UK will spend up to £95m in Somaliland in development assistance up to 2015, and it was putting £25m into the Somaliland Development Fund.

The United Nations Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) announced the opening of the Hiil Walaal Rehabilitation Center for Disengaged Combatants in Beled Weyne on Tuesday (November 5). The center, constructed with support from the Norwegian, Danish and Spanish governments, is the country's second rehabilitation facility, and will provide re-acclimation support and assistance to former militant fighters

Sterling Energy Ltd Wednesday said its subsidiary Sterling Energy (East Africa) Ltd has completed a deal to acquire interest in the Odweine Block in Somaliland. It will hold a 10% share, with Petrosoma Ltd taking 10%, Jacka Resources Somaliland Ltd 30% and operator Genel Energy Somaliland Ltd the remaining 50%.

South Sudan

The fifth session of the Joint Security Committee of Sudan and South Sudan was postponed from last weekend to November 15 to give time for the African Union committee assigned to determine the zero line between the two countries to begin its work.

Sudan

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn told Sudan's Foreign Minister, Ali Karti on Friday last week (November 1) that Ethiopia would not recognize the recently conducted referendum on the Abyei region organized by the Ngok Dinka and described by the African Union Commission as "illegal".

Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the joint chief mediator and head of the African Union United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) announced this week that Darfur rebel groups would participate in a workshop aiming to discuss the humanitarian situation in Darfur. He met rebel groups last week to discuss the organization of the workshop.

A delegation of European Union Ambassadors visited Eastern Sudan to inspect EU sponsored development projects in the region following the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, signed in 2006. The EU has provided 82 million Euros for implementation of development and rehabilitation projects since the agreement. The delegation discussed poverty reduction, food security, health and education, as well as the issues of smuggling and trafficking of human and the role of international organizations in eastern Sudan with local officials.

Water Ministers meet in Khartoum - a Win- Win solution for use of the Nile Waters

The Water Ministers of Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia met in Khartoum on Monday (November 4). The meeting followed an agreement between Egypt's then Foreign Affairs Minister, Mohamed Kamel Amr and Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus when they met on June 18 to "embark on consultations at the technical and political levels, with the participation of the Republic of the Sudan, to implement in a speedy manner the International Panel of Experts' recommendations." The Khartoum meeting was therefore called to discuss the setting up of a joint mechanism for implementing the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts (IPoE) regarding the Grand Renaissance Dam.

Ethiopia's Water and Energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegen in his speech to the meeting noted that "the main purpose of the meeting is to draw up the way forward for the follow up of the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in order to build trust and confidence and promote cooperation among the three eastern Nile countries." This, he said, should be with a view to ensure the successful implementation of the GERD project which was under construction, and in response to the national development objectives of Ethiopia and "its firm commitment to regional integration and sustainable cooperation."

Minister Alemayehu recalled the invitation extended by the Government of Ethiopia to the two downstream countries, Egypt and Sudan, to establish the International Panel of Experts to assess the benefits and impacts of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The Panel concluded its assignment by producing a consensus report duly signed by all members of the Panel. He noted that the Government of Ethiopia has fully accepted the Panel's report and appreciated "the conclusions that the Dam is being constructed in accordance with international standards and has no appreciable impact to the downstream countries". Ethiopia, he said, strongly believed the project would bring significant benefits to all the three countries, Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan.

The Minister noted that since the submission of the Panel's report the Government of Ethiopia had taken the necessary actions to make the recommendations of the Panel an integral part of the

construction of the dam. The recommendations were being handled in accordance with the practice of engineering and procurement and of the construction (EPC) contract. Therefore, the Minister urged the meeting to focus on creating an appropriate framework to follow-up the recommendations that were pertinent to the three countries. At the same time he cautioned that "the manner with which we handle and communicate our collective efforts and relations to the third parties will definitely influence the depth and orientation of our future cooperation."

He emphasized the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam was a project of the people of Ethiopia; its successful implementation was a central concern at their hearts, and the whole purpose of this endeavor was to develop and improve the lives and livelihood of the people. He stressed the enormous benefits the project would bring to the peoples of all three countries, and called on all to continue to provide genuine support for "this noble effort of the people of Ethiopia." The Minister expressed Ethiopia's commitment for sustainable cooperation which he said was based upon four pillars; a win-win approach, equitable and reasonable utilization, no significant harm and genuine cooperation. He said these pillars "will remain at the heart of our values that cannot be compromised by any changing situations."

The Minister of Water Resources and Electricity of the Republic of Sudan, Engineer Osama Abdallah Mohammed El Hassen, hoped that the meeting would arrive at recommendations that would enhance joint cooperation among the three countries. He pointed out that his government was committed to the Panel's findings, adding that the project opened new horizons for cooperation. The Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Dr. Muhammed Abdul Muttelib, in his remarks called for the implementation of the accords reached by the Foreign Ministers on June 18 in order to reach at an agreement at all levels.

There was a difference of opinion on the establishment of a follow-up committee for the implementation of the Panel's report. Egypt proposed either the committee be composed with international experts or that the Panel itself should be recalled. Ethiopia, supported by Sudan, proposed the committee should be established with national experts from the three countries. Ato Alemayehu Tegen, in a press conference at the Ethiopian Embassy in Khartoum, expressed his optimism that the ministers would reach a solution before their next meeting, to be held on December 8 in Khartoum. He underlined Ethiopia's commitment to sustain true cooperation with Sudan and Egypt and underscored its keenness for fair and just usage of the dam by all parties without harming the interests of others. He repeated that all the three countries would greatly benefit from the dam, and reiterated Ethiopia's acceptance of the report of the International Panel of Experts which recommended building the dam according to the international standards and specifications without harming the interests of the downstream countries.

Ethiopia's approach is based on the principles of the four pillars: a win-win approach, equitable and reasonable utilization, no significant harm and genuine cooperation. It has repeatedly assured Egypt that the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which will be used for power generation purposes, is being built in a way that addresses Egypt's water security concerns. It is in this context that the foreign ministers of Ethiopia and Egypt in their joint statement issued on June 18 "agreed to take into account the developmental interests of Ethiopia as well as the water security concerns of downstream countries".

Ethiopia believes that finding solutions through dialogue to secure the interests of all parties is the only solution to meet the development aspirations of the Nile basin countries. It shares the call of Egypt's Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy that the Nile should be a source of unity and not a division for the countries of the Nile Basin. In an interview last week with the Egyptian newspaper *Asharq Al-Awsa*, focusing on Egypt's foreign policy and its relations with Africa, Mr. Fahmy said "Egypt's strategic approach regarding the Nile Basin represented one component of Egypt's new foreign policy platform towards the African continent". It included, he said, "ensuring water security for Egypt by all legitimate means so as to preserve the rights and interests of Egyptians to the waters of the Nile". He said Egypt aimed to increase its share so as to meet the developmental demands of the country adding that "At the same time, we aim to respect the developmental aspirations of the countries and peoples of the Nile Basin, including the Ethiopian people. We look forward to finding solutions through dialogue so as to secure the interests of all parties. Each party wants more than it currently has, whether it be water, energy or economic development; these aspirations cannot be met without joint action among the Nile Basin states."

Mr. Fahmy said "We are in constant communication with Ethiopia. In fact, the first call I made after assuming office was to the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, and I also met with him in New York." He said "I believe that the optimum approach is to explore ways in which we can work in concert with Ethiopia to achieve the common interest of the two countries and avoid addressing the water issue in zero-sum terms. More importantly, we must mold it into an opportunity to achieve the developmental aspirations of the two peoples based on the principles of realizing mutual gains while ensuring no harm comes to either party." He said he believed Ethiopia was fully aware of the importance Egypt ascribes to the issue of water security, given its full dependence on the Nile for water. He said that Egypt sought to increase its water resources and to do more than maintain the annual water quota in the light of growing water needs. He added "We do not oppose Ethiopia's right to take advantage of its natural resources so that it might achieve developmental gains, as long as it does not encroach upon Egypt's water rights." He said there is "no alternative to cooperation between the Nile Basin countries so that the Nile River becomes a unifying and not a divisive issue."

The Jubbaland Reconciliation and Peace Building Conference in Mogadishu

The three day Reconciliation and Peace Building Conference held in Mogadishu for the different clans and political groups of Jubbaland successfully ended on Wednesday evening (November 6). The Reconciliation and Peace building Conference was called in accordance with Addis Ababa Agreements to finalize the formation of the Jubba Interim Administration. Over 200 delegates drawn from Lower Juba, Gedo and Middle Juba regions attended the conference, and the concluding agreement was signed in the presence of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Fowzia Yusuf, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom and the Ambassadors of different countries. Dr. Tedros arrived on the second day of the conference, attending in Ethiopia's capacity as a guarantor of the August 27

agreement reached between the Interim Juba Delegation and the Federal Government of Somalia in Addis Ababa.

The 200 delegates at the Reconciliation Conference discussed ways to enhance on-going peace building and reconciliation efforts, how to increase security and re-integrate armed groups and extend the fight against terrorists, and ways to provide for economic progress and social development. The agreement reached this week put an end to the claims and controversies over the leadership of the Juba regions as all signatories accepted the leadership of Ahmed Mohamed Islam ‘Madobe’ and the Jubba Interim Administration.

The communiqué signed by all delegations committed all parties to accept the Addis Ababa Agreement of August 27, and called on the people of Jubba to continue the process of reconciliation, to strive “to build consensus, forgive each other, settle property issues, restrain provocations that can lead to conflict and send peace message to the residents.” It also calls on all stakeholders support the interim administration’s inclusive structure to be completed in respect of the minority rights, and on the Federal Government should take a lead role on this issue.

Participants agreed to strengthen the role of civil society in the Jubba regions, and to develop local available resources including livestock, agricultural, fishery and other natural resources, and encourage trade and private industries; re-establish education centers and vocational training centers; and establish public health services at district and village level. It is also agreed that the Federal Government and the International Community will give support to the Juba regions to meet residents’ need for basic social services.

The communiqué calls for the build-up of security institutions including the police force, military and guards, and says other sources of employment should be created for those who are not ready to join the security apparatus. It calls for the peaceful re-integration and redeployment of the Juba armed groups to form a unified force, and for the amalgamation of all local forces into the Somali National Army. They are to work alongside the Somali Federal Government and AMISOM to clear Al-Shabaab from the remainder of the region. The communiqué notes that it is of the utmost important for salaries to be paid in a timely manner, with appropriate training and equipment provided. It also calls for the establishment of centers for ex-militant demobilization, disarmament and re-integration.

The communiqué acknowledged the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia and commended the support by the international community and especially the Government of Ethiopia for its tireless support. At the concluding ceremonies, Dr. Tedros extended his appreciation to the parties for the commitment they had shown in implementing the Addis Ababa Agreement. He said “this shows that Somalia is saying enough is enough.” He added that “what Ethiopia did was mere facilitation of the negotiations and the success of it was a result of the willingness of the negotiating sides to bring peace.” The new agreement showed the reality of Somalis’ quest for peace and prosperity. President Mahmoud, in his speech, reiterated the importance of peace to Somalia, beyond and above anything. Prime Minister Shirdon called the agreement an “opportunity for all the communities of Jubba to move forward together as a united

region”. He said that the three days of “open and inclusive reconciliation talks between the communities of the Jubba region” leading to the agreement was “a great achievement and a huge opportunity for the Jubba region. It gives all the communities of Jubba the opportunity to move forward towards a peaceful and united region.” He added “I want the Interim Jubba Administration to be the stepping stone to a full-fledged Jubbaland federal state and the symbol of federal success in Somalia. This agreement gives Jubbaland and Somalia that opportunity.” The second and final stage of the reconciliation conference will be held in Kismayo.

Fast tracking Africa’s Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises

The African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) was the subject of an informal consultation among Heads of State and Government in Pretoria this week. AU member states that have expressed interest to contribute to the ACIRC attended. The objective of the informal consultation was to exchange views on the progress so far in establishing ACIRC, providing updates on the pledges for troop contributions or other forms of support as well as to discuss ways and means to hasten the process.

The Summit was preceded by a meeting of Chiefs of Defense Staffs on November 3 at which the African Union Commission provided an update on measures that have been taken to implement the decision, adopted at 21st ordinary session of the AU Assembly on ACIRC as a temporary arrangement pending full operationalization of the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability. It was pointed out that a team of experts under the leadership of Professor Ibrahim Gambari had been set up to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability component. The team has already visited all the regional brigades with the exception of the Central Africa region and is expected to submit its report next month. Some of the challenges and shortcomings identified by the team of experts were discussed. It was agreed that the decision to establish the ACIRC to provide for immediate response to crisis situations in the continent was imperative since the regional brigades are not likely to be ready to take up the challenge in a sufficient short time.

The Chiefs of Defense Staffs considered the report presented by the AU Commission, focusing on the principles to govern the ACIRC, including voluntarism, capacity, readiness, self-sustainment and proposed mandate. They proposed the ACIRC should be organized at the level of a brigade and its force strength should be increased to five thousand troops. They suggested that the force should have the ability to deploy within 14 days and that the African Union should bear the cost. The Chiefs of Defense Staffs proposed the setting up of a working group composed of military experts to elaborate in detail the modalities for operationalization of the ACIRC and report back in the first week of December. In regard to contributions for the ACIRC, Chad, South Africa and Uganda announced pledges to provide one battalion each, while Algeria committed itself to contribute with logistical and material support as well as intelligence sharing.

The outcome of the Chiefs of Defense Staffs’ meeting was presented to the Heads of State and Government on November 5. South African President Zuma presided and the Presidents of

Chad, Tanzania and Uganda also attended; Algeria, Angola, Ethiopia, Niger and Sudan were represented by ministers. Ethiopia's delegation was led by Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos, State Minister for Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Berhane pointed out that the comprehensive assessment being undertaken by the African Union Commission to review the progress made towards operationalization of the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability was critical in identifying challenges and shortcomings and in determining the future course of action. He called upon the Commission to present the assessment to the Chiefs of Defense Staffs and the Ministers of Defense as urgently as possible. He also emphasized the need to expedite full operationalization of the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability by 2015, and to exert efforts in the short term to fill gaps identified by the comprehensive assessment within the framework of the ACIRC as an interim measure to provide for an immediate response to emerging crisis situations.

The Heads of State and Government considered the report of the Chiefs of Defense Staffs and adopted their recommendations. During their discussions an additional pledge was made by Tanzania to contribute a battalion to the ACIRC; and Angola expressed its commitment to support the ACIRC financially, also indicating that it would announce a troop contribution once consultations were finalized at the national level.

African Union ICC Contact Group meets the UN Security Council members

The African Contact Group for the International Criminal Court during a week-long stay in New York held talks with members of the United Nations Security Council over Africa's concern and its relationship with the ICC and to demand deferral of the trial of President Kenyatta which was scheduled to open on November 12.

The Contact Group is made up of five members from each region of the continent and Ethiopia as current chair of the African Union. It met with representatives of each member of the United Nations Security Council and presented Africa's views about the International Criminal Court, emphasizing Africa's objections to the activities of the Court. In relation to the trial of Kenya's leaders, the delegation, which was led by Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, marshaled compelling arguments that clearly enunciated Africa's position that continuation of the trials will have a negative impact on the stability of Kenya and of the region.

The African Union established the Contact Group at the Extraordinary Assembly of Heads of State and Government held last month, on October 12. The African Union decided to establish the Contact Group because neither the UN Security Council nor the ICC had responded positively to Africa's requests with regard to the trials of the Kenyan leadership. The request for referral of the cases to Kenya on the basis of the principle of complementarity as envisaged in the Rome Statute was not accepted by the Security Council.. At the same time the UN Security Council did not respond to the request for deferral of the trial of President Kenyatta for one year as allowed by Article 16 of the Rome Statute. The request to conduct the trial via video conferencing was also denied. The UN Security Council failed even to acknowledge receipt of

the letters sent to it by the African Union. The ICC turned down Kenya's plea for the president and his deputy to attend only the beginning and the end of the trial sessions.

During its stay in New York, the African Union Contact Group explained to the representatives of the fifteen members of the UN Security Council the importance of implementing a package of legal and political solutions. It noted that dealing with the legal element of the problem alone, and meting out justice to victims at the expense of risking the stability of the nation, could not bring about lasting peace and stability. It also briefed the Security Council representatives on the long way Kenya had gone to build institutions to promote the rule of law and democracy in the country. The Contact Group noted the introduction of the new constitution in Kenya, the reform of its judiciary and the conduct of the successful election in 2012, as important and impressive steps towards a more stable, democratic country. It also emphasized that Kenya is conducting a process of reconciliation under which victims of the 2007 electoral violence are getting reparations as part of a national healing process.

The Contact Group made it clear to the Security Council representatives that the trial of Kenya's President and his deputy will obstruct this healing process for the very reason that it will apparently bar them from discharging their constitutional mandate. The Contact Group reiterated that Kenya is trying to find its way out of the still fragile political and security situation of the post 2007 election, and the trials of its leaders is certain to plunge the country and the region back to instability. Indeed, the Contact Group made it clear that the trial will actually jeopardize the stability both of Kenya and of the volatile East African region. It explained that the trials would indeed pose a threat to international peace and stability, and this alone warranted their deferral under Article 16 of the Rome Statute.

The AU Contact Group urged the UN Security Council members to consider and understand Africa's position from the vantage point of the complex interplay between peace and justice in countries emerging out of conflict, and emphasized Africa's viewpoint that efforts aimed at pursuing justice needs to take into consideration the impact on peace and stability of the region. It also brought to the attention of the Security Council representatives that Kenyan troops are involved in fighting the terrorist group Al-Shabaab and the country had just suffered a major terror attack at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi which claimed the lives of more than seventy people. The Contract Group pointed out that the trial of the Kenyan leaders at this time might indeed create a security vacuum in Kenya's battle against the threat of terrorism. The scourge of terrorism explained the international dimension of the problem.

On the basis of these explanations, the Contact Group requested the deferral of the trial of President Kenyatta. It further buttressed its demand for deferral with the argument that deferral would give time for the African Union to engage with the next meeting of the Assembly of State Parties, scheduled to convene from November 21-28. The Assembly of States Parties is made up of all the states which have signed the Rome Statute and provides management oversight of the administration of the Court; and can consider any question of the non-cooperation of States Parties with the Court; and perform any other function consistent with the Statutes or the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

The Contact Group concluded its meeting by underlining the urgent need for all Security Council members to reach an amicable solution to this impasse. The African Group in the UN Security Council tabled a draft resolution for deferral to be considered by the Security Council. In the meantime, the ICC decided to postpone the trial of President Kenyatta for three months, until February 5, 2014.

The 6th African Media Leaders Forum takes place in Addis Ababa

The 6th African Media Leaders Forum is taking place in Addis Ababa this week for the first time. The theme of the three day meeting (November 6-8) is “Media and African Renaissance”, and the focus is on improving the continent’s reporting. There are sessions on “Building a strong and resilient Africa- Tackling the infrastructure and institutional deficit of the continent. What role the media can play? “Africa’s food renaissance”; and “Africa speaking for and about herself – creating an informed, inclusive and representative continent”. Various streams and special panel discussions will cover ‘Funding and Business development’; ‘Media technology and Innovation’; ‘Ethics and Leadership’; and the ‘One Africa award 2013’ and the ‘Daily Trust: The African Year Award’. There is also a Heads of State Round table on the subject of “Reflecting on enabling a conducive media development environment in Africa: Funding, Ethics, Technological innovation and Freedom”. The forum is attended by more than 400 leaders of African Media professionals and executives, representatives of partner organizations and academics, addressing questions such as ‘Are the African media capable of transforming the continent?’ ‘Building a strong and resilient Africa – Tackling the infrastructural and institutional deficit of the continent: What role can Media play? How can Africa speak for and about itself – and create an informed, inclusive and representative continent?’

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Chairperson of the African Union, opened the Forum with a keynote address, noting that no other subject was more pertinent and pressing today than the media and the African renaissance in terms of building Africa’s image as the continent’s emerging union of states shows its determination “to push ahead along the path of democracy and development.” The Prime Minister said he had no doubt that the deliberations would produce important pointers towards what needs to be done “if Africa’s success story is to be told in a way that accurately reflects our aspirations, achievements and challenges alike”. He recommended that Africa should consider building its own continental media network run by independent professionals “who are capable of telling it as it is.” He said that Ethiopia would strongly support such a project it believed that the African continent must end the legacy of dependency, and this included the vital area of information provision. He added: “No one is better placed to seize this initiative and take ownership of this idea than you African journalists and media leaders.”

The Prime Minister said coverage of events in Africa was still marred by stereotypes from the troubling times of the mid 1970s or the late 1990s when the continent was still caught in “a deficit of good governance, economic growth, and free press, compounded by the adverse effect of cold war rivalry for global dominance” and news of Africa was dominated by bleak stories of

internecine conflict, state failure and economic collapse. As the late Prime Minister Meles put it: “Africa was mired in a dead-end while the rest of the world surged ahead, leaving Africa far behind”. Now, things were changing and the international media could even refer to “Africa Rising”. Certainly much remains to be done and a few countries have yet to put the legacy of political instability and economic chaos behind them. Nevertheless, “on the whole, Africa has embarked on a new beginning, certain in its conviction that a better future lies ahead as it is confident that its endeavor would eventually be crowned by resounding success”.

The Prime Minister said the case of Ethiopia could be taken as an example of what was once a symbol of everything that was wrong in the continent but was now one of the fastest growing economies in world. It had achieved a transformation and ushered in a virtual renaissance. The secret behind this, he said, lay in a profound understanding of the interconnection between democracy and development in the Ethiopian context. The current ruling party, understanding that democracy for Ethiopia was a categorical imperative if the country was to survive and continue as a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural, and a united and thriving nation, opened the floodgates of democracy before the requisite, institutional mechanisms were put in place. It had also emphasized the role of media and communication strategy in building a national consensus around development, democracy and good governance.

Prime Minister Hailemariam underlined the importance of citizens having unrestricted access to information in order to make informed decision that affect their daily lives and their long-term interests. In this regard, he said Ethiopia’s policy towards the media as embodied in the Information Act “envisages nothing less than all round rapid effort to establish good governance, grass roots empowerment, decentralization of much of the authority for policy making to lower local self administrative units and create rapid sustainable development.” He said it was “an integral component of all the important strategic goals aimed at cementing the values of free thinking, rule of law, culture of transparency and the creation of a national consensus on all that unites our society.” So, he stressed, the Government recognized the value and importance of popular participation, the presence of a diligent civil society, and an active and vibrant media that provides accurate, relevant and timely information to the public and promotes uninhibited public dialogue and discussion, as well as an a free flow of information that contributes to the success and fruition of its media policy.

The Prime Minister noted that in order to tackle the challenges faced by the media sector, the Government was organizing a series of consultative forums that aimed, inter alia, to provide an enabling environment for the media industry in Ethiopia. It had triggered a widely supported reform initiative to identify problems affecting the development of the country’s media industry and it was making every effort to introduce a policy framework that would encourage investment in quality among national content providers to boost greater diversity and competition in programming. He also noted that considerable efforts were being made to safeguard and promote journalistic standards, actively encouraging journalists and media organizations to establish their own self-regulatory mechanisms. He, however, admitted, more needed to be done to ensure a vibrant media landscape. This, he said, was vital to achieve the goal of reaching the level of a mid-level income society with an active citizen body.

The second International Ethiopian Coffee Conference

The second International Ethiopian Coffee Conference was held November 4 to 5, in Addis Ababa. The two day conference, organized by the Ethiopian Coffee Exporters Association, was opened by President Mulatu Teshome, and attended by Yacob Yala, the State Minister for Trade, Mr. Roberio Oliveira Silva, the Executive Director of the International Coffee Organization and other high level officials with over 250 participants.

The theme of the conference was "Building a Sustainable Coffee Future." It focused on extending the success of the first conference which had set out the challenges and pitfalls to be addressed in promoting Ethiopian coffee in a global market. The aim this time was to discuss ways to raise Ethiopia's coffee exports and expand its stake in the global coffee market by exploiting the opportunities and curbing the challenges of increasing the volume of production, quality, diversity, traceability and sustainability of the crop in domestic and world markets.

President Mulatu underlined the need for Ethiopia to expand the volume of coffee production in order to obtain more revenue and increase foreign currency earnings. He said the country had to increase its exports in order to offset the sharp decline of coffee prices following the global economic crisis. He urged exporters to add value in order to effectively and efficiently compete with other countries in the global coffee arena. He noted that the government was committed to support the coffee export business as part of its strategy was a rapid growth of the agricultural sector to raise the output of coffee, one of the major employers in the country.

The Executive Director of the International Coffee Organization, Mr. Silva, expressed his concern over the "sustained downward trend in coffee prices" globally for the past two and half years. He noted that the world has reached a situation in which "the market of coffee doesn't even cover the cost of production for many producers." To deal with the challenges of market imbalances and distortions, he explained that the ICO has outlined four strategies: working with the World Bank to gain access to finance in reducing costs; building up farmers associations to allow them to obtain finance; providing available statistical information to help eliminate the impact of falling prices; and supporting farming practices to lessen the impact of climate change through adaptation and mitigation mechanisms.

The US Ambassador to Ethiopia Patricia Marie Haslach told the conference that the United States government said it was prepared to support Ethiopia's coffee sector and its coffee farmers in increasing the volume of production and in standardization of quality. It was prepared to "support 300, 000 smallholder farmers and increase the country's coffee exports to \$ 1 billion by 2016."

Ethiopia's coffee production has steadily increased over the last five years from 283,000 tons in 2008/09 to 400,000 tons in 2012/13, at an annual percentage growth rate of 11.3%. The overall improvement in production has brought Ethiopia to the position of the leading producer and exporter in Africa, and one of the leading world producers. The export performance has also

steadily increased from 133, 993 tons in 2008/09 to 199,103 tons in 2012/13 at an annual growth rate of 7.9%. The export value increased from US\$375.8 million to USD746.4 million in the same period, but with falling international prices, last year's earnings were disappointing compared to the previous year's US\$832 million.

According to the Ethiopian Coffee Exporters Association, Ethiopia has done remarkably well in improving domestic consumption. Half of the coffee is supposed to be consumed within the local market. With its long cultural heritage of coffee, which of course originated in Ethiopia, the motherland of Arabica bean, it is no surprise that it leads the African continent with a per capita consumption of 2.3 kilograms. Coffee is also unquestionably the bedrock of the country's agricultural sector, having generated close to 25% of foreign exchange in the 2012/13 fiscal year, and providing substantial employment opportunities. The Government has given substantial emphasis to the development of the coffee industry in order to maximize export earnings. It has supported a variety of projects and programs in the coffee industry to tackle challenges of production, quality and diversification. The Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research has multiplied and distributed seeds and seedlings of improved specialty coffee varieties as part of the Government's efforts to improve the industry's competitiveness in the growing specialty coffee market.

UK Parliamentarians, businesses explore Ethiopia's initiatives for investment and trade....

Members of the Ethiopia All Party Parliamentary Group and scores of businesses have agreed to boost relations with Ethiopia and promote investment and trade, exploiting the enabling environment created by Ethiopia, one of Africa's most vibrant emerging economies. The announcement was made at a gathering at the Ethiopian Embassy in London, jointly organized with the All Party Parliamentary Group and the Embassy, where members of the UK Parliament and British businesses explored areas for engagement in Ethiopia's multi-faceted development programme. The main focus was on agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure, services and the development of social facilities.

Addressing the gathering at the Ethiopian Embassy in London, Ambassador Berhanu Kebede, Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, cited the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan that envisages the creation of millions of new jobs, providing homes to hundreds of thousands of people, constructing educational and health facilities across the country, developing infrastructure and constructing railway networks as well as a series of dams to provide the power for emerging industries and manufacturing plants and for export. The Ambassador called for more British investment in Ethiopia noting that companies like Diageo, Nyota Minerals, Pittards, South West Energy and Unilever were on the growing list of Ethiopia's development partners. New investment, he pointed out, would further consolidate the bond between the peoples and governments of the two nations.

Ambassador Berhanu also detailed Ethiopia's intensive engagement in the fight against poverty through the implementation of its extensive pro-poor programmes. He emphasized that the

government has also striven to promote and consolidate the nascent democratic institutions, laying the foundation for a prosperous, peaceful, viable and democratic nation. It had, he said, put in place a democratic order that gives precedence to the sovereignty and equality of nations and nationalities in their pursuit of a better life and a prosperous country.

The Chairman of the All Parliamentary Party Group, Lawrence Robertson MP, noted how exemplary the bilateral relations between Ethiopia and the UK were. He expressed Parliament's commitment to bring these friendly relations to a new high for the mutual benefit of the two peoples. He said it was moving to hear just how much progress had been made. He congratulated Ethiopia on what had been achieved, and described the plans to move forward in terms of education, housing and power generation as very impressive. He added that the "great relationship between the UK and Ethiopia in terms of friendship, in terms of development and in so many other ways" as really something to cherish. It will continue to grow even stronger, he added. Mr. Robertson announced upcoming visits to Ethiopia by two delegations which would, he said, keep up the momentum of engagement and cooperation between the two countries.

The meeting was also addressed by the Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society, Professor Martyn Poliakoff, who gave an account of the relationship between the Royal Society and the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, which he noted was working on the promotion of scientific research, including work on the Professor's own area of expertise, "green chemistry", the exploration of how to produce chemicals in a way that minimizes the impact on Earth's biodiversity. He welcomed the Ethiopian government's "bold measure" in encouraging 70 per cent of new university entrants to study science and engineering. This was a bid to develop technology, he said, that would spur the country's growth and benefit the people concerned in terms of preparing them for skilled employment in key areas. Professor Poliakoff said the newly established Ethiopian Academy of Sciences was one of the strongest academies of science in the region, adding that "Ethiopian scientists are making themselves felt and are becoming integrated into the greater scientific effort." He looked forward to "the first Ethiopian Nobel Prize."

.....and Ethiopia at the World Travel Market in London

The World Travel Market was held in London this week (November 4-7) and a 20-member delegation, led by Solomon Tadesse, Director General of the Ethiopian Tourism Organization, participated to showcase Ethiopia's tourist destinations which include nine of the UNESCO designated heritage sites with outstanding universal value. The Ethiopian stand was opened in the presence of Ambassador Berhanu Kebede, Ato Solomon Tadesse, Director General of the Ethiopian Tourism Organization, and the Ethiopian Airlines Area General Manager, Michael Yared. With the dance troupe, Dankira, in attendance, the stand attracted a record number of visitors.

The Embassy in London organized a cultural event together with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Wednesday (November 6) to celebrate and promote Ethiopia's rich and diverse culture, as well as its exotic heritage, flora and fauna. Tourism Associations, tour operators, travel writers, prospective investors and representatives from the airline industry were among the guests. Ambassador Berhanu Kebede pointed out Ethiopia was known for its cultural heritage

and artifacts as well as being famous for its world-class athletes and for being the cradle of humankind. It was also home to the Gelada Baboon, Mountain Nyala, the Red Wolf and other exotic wild animals and birds. He noted that the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan envisages developing essential infrastructure and the hospitality industry to cater for the needs of tourists. The Government had recently announced several new authorities including a Tourism Agency and an Organization to implement the country's vision to boost climate-neutral tourism. The Ambassador stressed that conserving tourist attractions was crucial to maintaining and enhancing the flow of tourists and ensuring the protection of tourist attractions.

Ato Solomon said the Government has set up a Tourism Transformation Agency under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister, the Ethiopian Tourism Organization which he headed, and an Ethiopian Tourism Board which would be fully established when the delegation returns to Ethiopia. He said he appreciated the Ethiopian tour operators' hard work and diligence in promoting Ethiopian tourist attractions to visitors at the World Travel Market. The occasion included Ethiopian cuisine, a musical show and a screening of Mekonnen Michael's film "Heaven and Earth" which depicts the role of religious institutions as custodians of culture and tradition and their contribution to traditional education and literacy.

An IMF Article IV Consultation report on the Sudanese economy

The International Monetary Fund released its Sudan Article IV Consultation report on Friday last week. This noted that with South Sudan oil again flowing through the pipelines extending to the terminals in Port Sudan, South Sudan's remittances to Khartoum will rise from US\$442 million in 2013 to US \$1.42 billion next year. The report adds that they will start decreasing to US\$1.40 billion in 2015 and US \$1.11 billion in 2016. The dispute over the fees assessed to transport the oil led South Sudan to suspend production in early 2012 for almost a year. This seriously affected the economies of both countries, causing them to lose billions of dollars in potential revenue. Last year the African Union High Level Implementation Panel brokered an agreement under which South Sudan pays a fixed fee for every barrel of oil exported as well as around US\$3.2 billion to offset Sudan's loss of revenue following South Sudan's independence.

The deal over the oil transit costs will, the IMF says, help bring Sudan's fiscal deficit down to 2% of its GDP in 2013 compared to 3.8% in 2012. It projects this figure will drop further in 2014 to 0.9% before rising in subsequent years. The IMF notes that non-oil economic growth is expected to slow to 2.3% this year, down from 4.6% in 2012, due to a slowdown in industrial and service activities. In order to improve the country's macroeconomic outlook, the IMF urges Sudan to "rationalize" government spending, improve revenue collection, make exchange rate more flexible and restrict credit extended by the Central Bank of Sudan to the government as well as refrain from rescheduling reimbursements due to be made by Khartoum. The IMF also says the Bank should stop acquiring the government bonds known as Musharaka Certificates.

The IMF also presses Sudan to overhaul its tax coding, and improve its tax revenue, pointing out the revenue-to-GDP ratio (6.2%) is very low. Improving tax revenue, it says, will mean raising

some taxes, streamlining tax exemptions, rationalizing business tax incentives, and taxing gold activities. These should be accompanied by measures aimed at developing a tax procedure code, strengthening the audit capacity, reinforcing the penalties for failure to pay taxes and improving business registration processes and other operations.

The IMF says that establishing a taxation system for the increasingly important gold sector should be a central part of this policy. Gold accounted for 40% of export earnings last year compared to a mere 1% in 2008. While foreign reserves have been boosted as a result of Central bank gold trading, “benefits accruing to the budget, on the other hand, were negligible”, says the IMF, as under the current taxation system, artisanal miners are not taxed, but gold mining companies are subject to a royalty of 7% and a business profits tax, of 30% and pay dividend for the equity share held by the government. This compares favorably with other gold producing countries but in the long term, the IMF says, Sudan needs to impose a tax on mining companies to ensure that taxation moves in line with changes in activity. It suggests a withholding tax could be levied when artisanal miners sell their findings to gold merchants.

The IMF warns against moves by the government to boost public sector wages calling it inflationary. It said any such increase should be linked to increases in the economic productivity. As an alternative, savings from the reductions in subsidies which began last year could be used to provide for better social programs and higher capital spending. The IMF acknowledged that phasing out subsidies would have a negative impact for the nearly half the population living below the poverty line. It therefore emphasized that increases in social expenditure should accompany this and that in the medium term the authorities should gradually move from a broad-based subsidy scheme to a targeted one.

The government agreed that it could no longer afford the “generous subsidies” on petroleum products. So last September, the government announced a cut back fuel subsidies. The result was a rise of almost 100% in gasoline and diesel prices. Violent clashes broke out between demonstrators and security forces in a number of towns. According to official figures over 80 people died. The IMF approved of the decision, arguing that subsidies disproportionately benefited the rich, claiming that the lowest quintile of the population “receives about 3 percent of the subsidy, whereas the top quintile receives more than 50 percent.” It said that the phasing out of fuel subsidies should proceed gradually over the next few years. The Finance Minister has now said that next year the government will cut subsidies further on a some products including fuel in order the reduce the budget deficit and stabilize the exchange rate of the Sudanese pound.

The 19th Annual Conference of the Parties (COP19) in Warsaw

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will hold its 19th Annual Conference of the Parties (COP19) from November 11-22 in Warsaw, Poland. It will provide a critical opportunity for the global community to come together and move forward to combat climate change, at a time when there is a perception that climate change negotiations have been weakening. Policymakers will have the opportunity to make critical decisions at this

climate summit, as well as set timelines and milestones for reaching new agreements by the time COP 21 meets in 2015. There is still a good deal of anticipation that some real progress can be made in the next two weeks.

Earth's average temperature has risen by 0.8°C over the past century, and is projected to rise another 1° to 6°C over the next hundred years. Global climate change has already had visible effects on the environment, and rising global temperatures have been accompanied by changes in weather and climate. Many places have witnessed changes in rainfall, resulting in more floods, increasing droughts and intense rains, as well as more frequent and severe heat waves. The planet's oceans and glaciers are also experiencing major big changes with oceans warming and becoming more acidic, ice caps melting, and sea levels rising.

The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with its Special Report on Extreme Events focusing on Africa stresses the importance of addressing the vulnerability of key sectors including agriculture, food security, water supply, energy, security, migration, health, and biodiversity. According to the report, the capacity of African countries to address these challenges is compromised by inadequate technology, weak social infrastructure, conflict and poor institutional arrangements.

Africa's political leadership have realized that to provide a strong voice in the climate change negotiation processes, and put Africa's interests on the table, it is imperative to enter the negotiations with a single voice defining a common position and detailing Africa's stance on key issues. Only this can send a sufficiently strong message that Africa is serious about extracting tangible benefits from the climate change negotiations. As a result, Africa has been actively engaged in the UN climate change negotiations since the inception of the UNFCCC, and, indeed for the first time, it went to COP15 in Copenhagen in December 2009 with a single negotiating team led by Ethiopia's late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. In the months leading up to meeting, Prime Minister Meles made it clear that Africa demanded a fair hearing and a fair share from the Copenhagen Accord. It was at COP15 that the developed nations pledged \$30 billion annually for climate action in developing countries between 2010 and 2012, and they also agreed to increase this financing to \$100 billion annually by 2020 through a Green Trust Fund.

Following COP15, negotiations gained momentum at meetings held in Cancun in 2010 and at the "African COP" in Durban in 2011. The Parties launched a new platform of negotiations under the Durban Platform towards a new protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force, to be concluded by 2015 and to take effect after 2020. At the 2012 Doha Conference, the Parties agreed to launch a second round of commitments under the Kyoto Protocol and there was consensus amongst members that the 2°C increase in global atmospheric conditions would be unavoidable.

COP19 is taking place at a time of increased awareness on the impact of climate change in Africa. There are numerous initiatives on adaptation and mitigation offering an opportunity to bring together actors and map initiatives in the climate change and agriculture sub-sector as well as identify critical gaps and ensure that Africa's concerns are at the forefront of the discussions. The summit hopes to achieve the basis for a comprehensive agreement on climate change by

2015, and it presents an opportunity for Africa's voices to influence the debate. The issues of climate change also provide an opportunity for a collective reflection on many of the questions that are central to Africa's economic growth and development and the opportunities and the challenges it creates for the continent.

During the negotiations, at COP19 in Warsaw, it is expected that new commitments will be discussed for a medium-term finance mechanism for the 2013-2020 period. There has been a vacuum in ensuring predictable funding for climate change ever since the \$30 billion, the fast start finance, that was pledged by developed countries over a three-year period, came to an end in 2012. Industrialized countries have said that they would raise funds to the tune of \$100 billion a year by 2020. However, there has been no firm commitment to provide finance for the intervening period between 2012 and 2020. It is also expected that the Green Climate Fund, initially discussed in Durban, will now be operationalized to benefit developing countries, especially in Africa, on aspects of adaptation and mitigation of the impact of climate change. It is critical for Africa that the negotiations in Warsaw show progress on adaptation, that agriculture is made part of the future international climate change regime and that technology transfer and finance for capacity building is made part of agricultural adaptation.