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News in Brief

Africa and African Union

The African Union has established a team to investigate allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by Ugandan and Burundian troops serving under the AU Mission in Somalia. The Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Dlamini Zuma authorized the investigation into the allegations against AU personnel made by Human Rights Watch.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Zuma has appointed an assessment team of academics and women activists with special expertise on victims of sexual violence, protection and law enforcement and peace and security to conduct a comprehensive assessment to determine the extent, nature, patterns and trends of sexual exploitation and abuse in AMISOM. This is intended to inform and guide the AU in its policies and response mechanisms for all Peace Support Operations in Somalia.

The 8th Ministerial Meeting of COMESA infrastructure opened in Djibouti on Monday (October 20). The meeting discussed reconstruction projects and post-conflict development.

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn attended the Global Green Growth Forum (3GF) held in Copenhagen on Monday and Tuesday (October 20-21) this week. Ethiopia, taking part for the third time, is now a partner of the Forum (**See article**)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Borge Brende, held discussions with Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom on Friday (October 18) in Oslo. (**See article**)

Dr. Tedros Adhanom delivered the opening address at the DEVEX Partnerships Forum which opened Tuesday (October 21) at the Sheraton Addis. DEVEX is an international for-profit organization that works to reduce the time needed recruiting and information gathering for development professionals.

Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response announced an additional €5 million to respond to the needs of the growing number of refugees in Ethiopia. She said Ethiopia has given refuge to more than 190,000 South Sudanese people since the crisis there broke out last year. This raises the Commission's humanitarian aid in Ethiopia to €31 million for this year.

A three day conference on IGAD Economies and Federalism in Somalia opened in Addis Ababa. With a keynoted speech from Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister and Chair of the IGAD Council of Ministers, the conference, co-organized by the Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, is deliberating on governance, federalism and fiscal federalism in the context of Somalia.

Ambassador Kuang Tutlam, Ethiopia's Ambassador to Zimbabwe and non-resident Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Mauritius has presented his credentials to President Rajkeswur Purryag of Mauritius.

Djibouti

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, returned to Djibouti over the weekend after a working visit to Qatar. He took a message from President Ismail Omar Guelleh to the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, on Qatar's mediation over the border conflict between Eritrea and Djibouti in June 2008. The Minister also met with Qatar Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Khaled Al Attia.

The Parliamentary State Secretary to the Minister of Defense of Germany, Dr. Ralf Brauksiepe, paid a two day visit to Djibouti at the beginning of the week, and met with Djibouti's Minister of Defense, Hassan Darar Ouffaneh, on Monday (October 20)

Eritrea

The Board of the African Development Bank has approved the Interim Country Strategy Paper for Eritrea. The Strategy Paper covers the period 2014-2016. According to the Bank is intended to assist the Government of Eritrea in addressing its development challenges in a coordinated and consultative manner.

Kenya

A conference on peace and security in the Horn of Africa was held on Tuesday and Wednesday (October 21-22) in Nairobi. Organized by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) foundation, the theme was "Consolidating Regional Cooperation While Protecting National Security Interests-Diametric Opposition or Precondition for Peace and Stability?" (**See article**)

Somalia

The Somali Federal Parliament on Sunday (October 19) held a special session to discuss the creation of political parties and consider the drafting of a law on political parties in advance of the elections due in 2016.

Following a meeting on Somalia, the EU Foreign Affairs Council issued a statement on Monday (October 20) welcoming the political and security progress made in Somalia since the signing of the Somali Compact during the Brussels New Deal Conference for Somalia in September last year. It also welcomed the steps taken to implement the Government's 'Vision 2016: Framework for Action' plan and called for further efforts to meet its ambitious timeline.

Mustafa Duhulow, Minister of Information on Tuesday hosted a meeting between AMISOM and Somali Police forces and Civil Society groups in Mogadishu to encourage better coordination between AMISOM and the Federal Government institutions and engagement with the public.

One of Somalia's most powerful pirate chiefs Mohamed Garfanji was arrested by security forces in Mogadishu on Sunday (October 19) along with several bodyguards. He was reportedly responsible for the seizing of a South Korean supertanker, released after nine months in 2010 for a record nine million dollar ransom.

A press statement issued by Somaliland President's Office on Monday (October 20) said Somaliland Vice President, Abdirahman Abdullahi Ismail "Saylici" and other ministers had met with a UK fact finding mission, headed by Lynne Featherstone, UK Parliamentary Under Secretary for International Development. The UK delegation included Neil Wigan, UK Ambassador for Somalia, Rachel Turner, the Head of Central and Eastern Africa, and other DFID and Foreign Office officials.

South Sudan

Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin, chief mediator for the IGAD-mediated South Sudan peace talks, said in Juba on Wednesday (October 22) that "a breakthrough has been achieved on the outstanding issues". He gave no further details but added that these would be finalized next week at the forthcoming IGAD summit.

Members of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in government, the SPLM in opposition and the SPLM (former detainees) signed a roadmap agreement in Arusha, Tanzania, to recommit the parties to the principles of democracy, internal democracy, elections, succession and peaceful transfer of power. They also acknowledged "collective responsibility for the crisis." The agreement was witnessed by both President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar as well as Tanzanian President Kikwete.

Sudan

President al-Bashir arrived in Cairo on Saturday (October 18) for a two-day visit at the invitation of Egypt's President Abdel Fateh el-Sisi, during which the two leaders agreed to elevate the Joint Egypt-Sudan Committee from ministerial to presidential level.

Sudan's ruling National Congress Party's Shura Council nominated President Omer Hassan al-Bashir as the party's candidate for next year's presidential election.

United Nations Secretary-General's Humanitarian Envoy Abdullah al Matouq and UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres this week visited Sudan's White Nile State, where more than 50,000 South Sudanese refugees are in four camps. They said they were grateful to the Government of Sudan and its people for the hospitality given to South Sudanese refugees but they appealed urgently to the donor community for more financial support to respond to the continued influx of refugees from South Sudan.

Ethiopia becomes a partner of the Global Green Growth Forum

Ethiopia's efforts at tackling the adverse effects of climate change through its domestic policies as well as its commitment to a global response have been widely welcomed. The changes consequent on these arose from its decision to create and implement the right mix of policies. It began with the vision of the renaissance of Ethiopia. In other words, when the Ethiopian government set out a national plan to transform the economy, reduce poverty and attain middle income country status, it also acknowledged that this could only be achieved by building a climate-resilient green economy.

This decision was also informed by the fact that Ethiopia was a real victim of the effects of climate change though its contribution to the problem was virtually nil. Although a minimal contributor to the production of carbon, Ethiopia has always been on the receiving end of the adverse effects of climate change. It suffered severe famines in the 1980's due to changes in volume and pattern of rainfall and rising temperatures. This helped the Government to realize that unless a climate-resilient economy could be built up, the backbone of the country's economy, agriculture, would continue to be severely affected. The consequence would seriously hamper the development of the nation. It was in light of this, and in consideration of its responsibility as member of the global community to avert the impending danger of global warming and its commitment to the renaissance of Ethiopia, that the country developed the idea of the Climate Resilient Green Growth Strategy (CRGS) in 2011. This also involved harmonizing the policies of other sectors of development. The CRGS's main pillars have been defined to include massive reforestation; the introduction of improved agricultural technologies, as well as soil and conservation works; encouragement of the usage of power-saving technologies and the production and development of green and clean energy; and improving the productivity of the livestock sector.

The application of the CRGS has already brought immense changes to Ethiopia. Over the past few years, some 250,000 hectares of land in Oromia and Amhara Regional States has been rehabilitated. Ethiopia is heading towards becoming a major source of clean energy with the on-

schedule construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project, the Gilgel Gibe III, Adama II wind farm and other sustainable power projects. Internationally, with a view to strengthening partnership in areas of climate change, Ethiopia started to take part in the Global Green Growth Forum (3GF), an initiative launched by the governments of Denmark, Kenya, Korea , Qatar , Mexico and China three years ago. It was as part of this initiative that a delegation led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn attended this year's summit held in Copenhagen, Denmark, under the theme "Changing Production and Consumption Patterns through Transformative Action". Participating for the third time, Ethiopia is now a partner of the 3GF and a member of the advisory group.

This year's summit was intended to consider the key challenges impinging on global resources as a result of the world's expanding middle class. Leaders convened in Copenhagen to reflect on ways to ensure that the billions of middle class consumers in 2030 could live prosperous lives without compromising the opportunities for future generations. The discussion also covered suggested future consumers' lifestyle aspirations, and the power of brands and of governments to influence future consumer trends and societal norms in all regions of the world.

Prime Minister Hailemariam attended this year's plenary session, held under the theme "Walking in the Shoes of Future Middle Class Consumers " and another session entitled "Enabling the Producer for sustainable production". In his opening address, the Prime Minister said "We recognize that economic development that is not equitable and that can seriously, adversely and, in many cases, irreparably affect our local and global environment, is not sustainable. " He highlighted Ethiopia's bitter experience of the negative impact of climate change adversity, the losses it had suffered and the important gains it had made in the past decade as it moved towards building a climate-resilient economy. Discussing the challenges of the growing middle class on the environment of the globe, the Prime Minister said "if we are to improve the quality of lives across developed and developing countries, we must explore and decide on what transformative actions are required for sustainable consumption and production patterns." He added: "it is widely agreed that the way we produce and consume materials, energy, food, water is simply not sustainable. We must have honest and effective dialogue on what it takes to remain within the limits of the Earth. "

Prime Minister Hailemariam pointed out the influence and responsibility of the global media as well as national governments in developing countries in promoting sustainable lifestyles. He noted the importance of making sustainable products and services affordable as a crucial step in promoting sustainable lifestyles in low income and middle income countries. He underlined the need to adopt different policies that would reflect the underlying values and aspirations of citizens and of consumer of different types who might have different values and aspirations. In the plenary on "Enabling the Producer for sustainable production" the Prime Minister highlighted the point that for Ethiopia, a country which was focused on light-manufacturing in the short term, it was important to work on energy and logistic issues in order to enable producers follow sustainable production processes.

This year's summit discussed promising and successful examples of creating demands for sustainable goods and services that could be scaled up. It also noted the similarly overarching issue of framework conditions that governments, businesses, financial bodies, civil society

organizations and international organizations will need to bring forward, in partnership, to transform consumption patterns.

During his stay in Copenhagen, Prime Minister Hailemariam met with Danish business groups to explain the conducive investment environment available in Ethiopia. He paid a visit to Novo Nordisk, a global healthcare company specializing in the treatment of diabetes and production of insulin, which plans to scale up its activities in Ethiopia. He also held discussions with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Denmark on bilateral and other matters of mutual interest.

An 'Invest in Ethiopia' Forum in Norway...

Ethiopia's economic, political and social relations with other countries have continued to grow as the increasing amount of Foreign Direct Investment attracted in to the country demonstrates. The relationship in political and development cooperation that Ethiopia has with the Kingdom of Norway is one example of this. The cooperation and partnership between the two countries covers such sectors as education, energy, the environment, governance, trade and investment, and regional issues as well as other areas.

On Thursday last week (October 16), a Forum was held in Norway's capital, Oslo. It was described as opening a new chapter in investment and business cooperation between Ethiopia and Norway. The Forum, entitled 'Invest in Ethiopia' was organized by the Norwegian African Business Association (NABA), had the aim of enhancing business potentials in Ethiopia, creating awareness of the emerging investment opportunities there, and generally bringing major stakeholders in the investment sector together to discuss the various opportunities available. The Forum was attended by high-level government officials from the two countries as well as representatives of their business confederations and of Norwegian business companies. It successfully created a platform for the discussion of opportunities in manufacturing, and in agriculture, mining, infrastructure, and information technologies as well as renewable energy, including wind, solar, geothermal and hydro power.

Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom opened the Forum and in his remarks noted that the occasion demonstrated new possibilities to strengthen cooperation between Norway and Africa and more especially with Ethiopia. It would, he said, boost bilateral relations between Norway and Ethiopia, and increase investment and economic partnerships to add to the excellent relations the two countries already had in their strategic and political links.

Dr. Tedros noted that Norway had already proclaimed its partnership in support of the implementation of Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy and for the country's clean energy development as well as for the agriculture and forest sectors. He detailed the country's fast economic growth and development, noting its efforts to change from a largely subsistence agriculture to commercial farming, and the planned transition of the economy into manufacturing. He also underlined the country's success in achieving various sectors of its pro-poor development strategy which provides equal opportunities in development for a majority of the people, and gave an account of its progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

The Minister explained the business opportunities available in Ethiopia and called for Norwegian companies to invest. He cited eight major reasons for investing in Ethiopia: its political and social stability, its supportive macroeconomic policy, its strategic geographic position, abundant labor force, a conducive legal framework, competitive incentives, low corruption levels, and a supportive environment for foreign direct investment.

...and bilateral discussions between the Foreign Ministers of Ethiopia and Norway

While in Oslo, Dr. Tedros also met with Norway's Foreign Minister Borge Brende on Friday (October 17). Discussions covered bilateral and regional issues. Dr. Tedros noted the progress that was being made in various sectors in Ethiopia and notably the diversification of the energy sector, which is a particular interest for Norwegian development cooperation, and covers geothermal, hydro and wind power. He noted the huge long-term potential in the energy sector, detailed the current state of energy development and elaborated on Ethiopia's efforts and achievements in infrastructure development. Infrastructure development, in railways, road transport and telecommunications, is an area to which the country currently allocates a huge portion of its annual budget, he said. He indicated the central importance for cooperation with development partners and investors. He added that Ethiopia not only saw infrastructure development as a means to achieve its development needs but it was also a way to realize regional integration and enhance wider economic growth. The discussion covered areas of further development cooperation in energy, natural resource management, education, health, peace keeping and refugees.

The ministers also covered issues of regional and global concern including developments in Somalia and the South Sudan peace negotiations. Norway plays a significant role in the peace process in South Sudan as a member of the Troika. Dr. Tedros expressed his deep appreciation to the Norwegian Government for its close partnership in Ethiopia's development efforts as well as for its contributions to the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa. He cited the example of the contribution of Nodfund, the Norwegian Investment Fund, which specifically targets establishment and development of profitable and sustainable enterprises in developing countries. Mr. Brende said the Government of Norway regarded Ethiopia as one of the six priority countries in Norway's development cooperation program. He commended Ethiopia's efforts in aiming to realize the status of a carbon-free middle-income country by 2025, its successful achievements in meeting Millennium Development Goals, and its contributions to peace and security in the region.

Dr. Tedros, on Thursday (October 16), also met with members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense of the Norwegian Parliament. The talks covered issues of equitable economic growth, democratization, education, development cooperation and regional and international concerns such as the Ebola disease and terrorism. Dr. Tedros briefed the parliamentarians on the current progress of Ethiopia's pro-poor development commitments, pointing out that more than 70% of the annual budget of the country now went on social developmental sectors including education, health, agriculture, water and sanitation. The members of the Parliament appreciated Ethiopia's efforts to reduce poverty and its achievements.

They also acknowledged the practical growth in primary education, university expansion, health, gender equality and other similar areas.

The Ethiopian delegation also met separately on Thursday (October 16) with Mr. Tine Sundtoft, Norwegian Minister of Climate and the Environment and Mr. Morten Hoglund, State Secretary of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to discuss various bilateral issues and development cooperation and partnerships. Dr. Tedros also met with a group of Associations of Ethiopian Diaspora to discuss mechanisms through which they could contribute further towards the development of the country as well as benefit themselves through investment in areas such as railway construction, consultation, wind farm initiatives and other possible investments. In addition, the Minister met with members of the Ethiopian Diaspora residing in Oslo to discuss current developments in Ethiopia, possible areas for Diaspora engagement and mechanisms for cooperation. He also addressed concerns raised by the Diaspora. The Diaspora community made it clear they welcomed the efforts and achievements of the Government and expressed support and interest to contribute to their country's development.

A Horn of Africa Peace and Security Conference in Nairobi

A two day annual conference on peace and security in the Horn of Africa was held on Tuesday and Wednesday this week (October 21-22) in Nairobi, Kenya. The theme of this year's conference, organized by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) foundation, was "Consolidating Regional Cooperation While Protecting National Security Interests- Diametric Opposition or Precondition for Peace and Stability?" It brought together policy makers and experts from the region with the purpose of enhancing dialogue and debate on current security issues, and developing joint regional policy recommendations to support the resolution of ongoing crises in the Horn of Africa.

The 2014 conference, which feeds into the reflections and discussions arising from an FES regional project titled "Mapping National Security Interests In The Horn Of Africa", is also intended to address "The Dilemma Between Foreign Policy Dominated By Unilateral National Security Interests Versus The Need For And Different Approaches To Regional Security Cooperation". In doing so, it identified competing and coinciding national security interests, and explored different avenues for security cooperation within the Greater Horn of Africa region. The conference had five sessions with covering particular sub-themes. The first session dealt with the overall national security interests of the governments in the Horn of Africa, and the second and the third sessions covered the national security interests of the governments and neighbors of Somalia and South Sudan respectively. The fourth session addressed the national security interests of the regional states as opposed to those of the regional organizations and mechanisms with due emphasis paid to IGAD. The fifth and final session concluded the conference by discussing the roles of regional and international institutions in South Sudan and Somalia.

Ethiopia was represented at the conference by three teams from the Prime Minister Office, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development (EIIPD).

Ato Getachew Reda, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister with the rank of State Minister, and Ato Tsegay Berhe, Security Advisor to the Prime Minister with the rank of Minister, gave an account of Ethiopia's security interests in South Sudan and its role in helping to resolve the ongoing crisis there. Discussing the security implications of the problems in South Sudan, Ato Getachew noted the negative repercussions that the civil war in South Sudan would have on Ethiopia's efforts in support of regional integration. It also made South Sudan vulnerable to become a stepping stone for all anti-Ethiopian elements as well as offering dangers of a spillover effect to the peoples along the Ethio-South Sudan border. Ato Getachew also raised the danger of regionalization of the conflict which, he said, might also open additional space for "traditional spoilers like Eritrea". He noted the role Ethiopia was currently playing, in collaboration with regional and international institutions, in the efforts to resolve the crisis in south Sudan

.Professor Mekonnen Haddis, Chief Advisor to the Ministry presented details of the security interest of Ethiopia in Somalia and the wider region. After briefly elucidating the pillars of Ethiopia's national security policy and strategy, including human security and regional integration, Professor Mekonnen stressed the need to tackle the root causes of terrorism in Somalia. He noted that there were structural foundations conducive for the development of terrorism in Somalia and the wider region, and emphasized that a regional effort was necessary to address terrorist threats in Somalia. Al-Shabaab, he pointed out, was not just a threat to a single state but a threat to all the peoples of the wider region. He also stressed that such a regional effort needed to focus on addressing the fundamental causes of terrorism, including unemployment, economic destitution and political stagnation, and it should not just focus exclusively on military strategy. Professor Mekonnen concluded by underlining that Ethiopia's commitment to peace and security in Somalia was not just a rhetorical device but it was a foreign policy imperative based on firm national interest.

Overall, the Ethiopia delegation effectively presented Ethiopia's national security interests in the region, and discussed the country's strategies towards its neighbors and indeed the entire region of the Horn of Africa. It made sure that Ethiopia's foreign policy aims and strategies were clearly communicated to the participants of the conference.

Second meeting of the Tripartite National Committee on GERD in Cairo

The Tripartite National Committee for the implementation of the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts (IPoE) on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) held its second meeting in Cairo Thursday and Friday last week (October 16-17). The meeting followed the decisions reached at the 4th Tripartite Ministerial Meeting held in Khartoum in August and was preceded by the 1st meeting of the Tripartite National Committee held in Addis Ababa in September. Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan agreed at the 4th Tripartite Ministerial Meeting to set up a

Tripartite National Committee of four members from each country to follow up and conduct the studies recommended by the International Panel of Experts.

At the opening of the TNC meeting, Ethiopia's Water, Irrigation and Energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegenu stressed that: "The government of Ethiopia is constructing the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) with the objective of poverty eradication and to ensure sustainable economic growth. The GERD offers enormous opportunities and benefits to Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan as well as the Nile Basin States and beyond, through promoting regional economic integration." He confirmed Ethiopia's commitment to promote genuine and transparent cooperation with all the Nile basin countries based on "equitable and reasonable utilization, no significant harm and a win-win approach". Ethiopia, he repeated, does not have any intention to harm any country. The minister underlined the need to ensure that the final outcome of the IPoE recommended studies should be based on reliable and verifiable data and information, in-depth analysis, unbiased findings and recommendations that will be acceptable to all three countries.

The Minister of Water Resources and Electricity of the Republic of Sudan, Mutaz Musa Abdalla Salim, said Sudan appreciated the momentum of the GERD process and he expressed his hope that this would continue to produce the best results for the Eastern Nile countries and ultimately for the cooperation of the whole of the Nile Basin. He urged all the actors in the three countries, whether politicians, the media and the people as a whole, to work hard to create a conducive environment of trust and confidence and allow this cooperation mature and develop. He called for the avoidance of unnecessary rhetoric and dispute. The minister noted that the GERD project was the first real test of investment in the Nile Basin on the ground and he urged the three countries to make it a success so that it could be replicated in other sub-basins in the region. He asked those present "to try to move and reset minds for wide and inclusive regionalization and avoid narrow dark parochial nationalism; and send a message to the whole world and to our region that we are denying our differences".

Hossam El Din Moghazy, Egypt Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation expressed his firm conviction about the Tripartite National Committee's professionalism and called for cooperation in order to expedite the studies on the recommendations. The minister also urged their talks should be based on the common interests of the three countries. He noted that development is something that all countries aspired to, and the Nile Basin states were no exception,

The Tripartite National Committee deliberated on the names of nine international companies suggested as possibilities for conducting the two studies: on a 'water resources/ hydropower system simulation model' and a 'trans-boundary environment and socio-economic impact assessment'. It shortlisted seven of them and the meeting agreed to request for proposals from these. It also chose a legal firm to follow up on the financial procedures and consultancy relating to these studies. They agreed to meet again in Sudan in November to take the process a stage further.

It was following the expressions of concern by Egypt and Sudan on the construction of the GERD, that the Government of Ethiopia called for the participation of the two downstream countries in the creation of the International Panel of Experts (IPoE) and invited the review of

the GERD study documents. The intention was to build trust and confidence among the three countries. This was an unprecedented initiative and Ethiopia believes it could serve as a lesson to both to strengthen cooperation in the Nile basin as well as for other trans-boundary watercourses. The IPoE, after a year of deliberation, reviewing documents and making field visits, produced a consensus final report on May 31 last year. Subsequently, the three countries held a series of four Tripartite Water Affairs Ministerial meetings and agreed to establish a framework to follow up the implementation of the recommendations of the IPoE. The IPoE in its final report said that the grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project would not result in any significant harm to the two downstream countries, Sudan and Egypt.

Regional Conference on Human Trafficking and Smuggling in Khartoum

A Regional Conference on Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Horn of Africa was held in Khartoum last week (October 13-16). The overall objective of the Conference, organized by the African Union (AU) in collaboration with the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), was to foster improved cooperation among regional states to address the challenges of human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants both within and from the Horn of Africa as well as create a forum for cooperation among member states and transit and destination countries. Ethiopia was represented by a delegation led by State Minister Getachew Reda, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister with the rank of State Minister, and senior experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There were also delegations from Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, South Sudan, Sudan and Tunisia, and participants also included representatives from the AU Commission, the East African Community, IOM, UNHCR, UNODC, ILO, ICRC, the League of Arab States as well as Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Yemen, the UK and the USA.

The number of international migrants worldwide is estimated to have reached 232 million by September 2013, of which 19 million were believed to be in Africa. The continent indeed is generally characterized by dynamic migratory patterns and has a long history of intra-regional as well as inter-regional migration flows. Along with the large scale movements this figure represents, highly organized transnational criminal syndicates have also emerged. These include those involved in trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. They have become a serious threat to the international community and to Africa in particular. This phenomenon has taken on complex, even deadly, new dimensions in the wake of globalization. The scale of trafficking in person and smuggling of migrants from and within Africa is indeed growing as are atrocities and abuses against victims and vulnerable migrants.

The Conference debated the growing global concern on human trafficking and the need to address it in a concerted manner by strengthening cooperation among member states and partners at length. Participants discussed various legal and administrative measures taken in their respective countries and the organizations set up to tackle the problems. Equally, there was general agreement that much more needed to be done in view of the complexity and continuing growth of the problem.

The Conference concluded with the adoption of a Declaration, a Strategy and a Plan of Action through which participants expressed their commitment to address the problem and identified key areas for intervention and for specific activities. In the Declaration, participants vowed to take measures including the ratification and implementation of international and regional instruments that addressed human trafficking and smuggling, and also tackled factors such as poverty, unemployment and social exclusion which contributed to the illegal migration of people. The Declaration also covered commitments to mainstream the prevention of human trafficking and smuggling into broader policies and programs and to foster cooperation among all stake holders.

Other key areas that were highlighted included intervention and specific activities focused on prevention, protection and assistance to victims, the enforcement of laws and prosecution of traffickers and border management. In addition, emphasis was also given to the need for partnership and international cooperation, capacity building for government officials and increased collaboration of concerned agencies and information sharing

In the country presentations, the delegation of Ethiopia presented the situation of human trafficking and smuggling within the country and the measures being taken to address the problem. The government's interventions and its integrated approach are based on the concept of a Prevention-Promotion Approach that recognizes the freedom of movement of people. Other elements in its approach include measures to enhance international cooperation, including joint border cooperation with neighboring countries and the conclusion of labor agreements with countries to which migrants go. The Government has been holding negotiations with some Middle Eastern countries which have been the recipient of many Ethiopians seeking domestic work. Ethiopia's commitment was also underlined by the fact that it has signed most international instruments and agreements relating to these issues, and by its emphasis on educating people on the consequences and dangers of illegal migration and, in contrast, the opportunities that well-regulated legal migration can make available.

The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea: latest annual report on Eritrea....

The Eritrean section of the latest annual report of the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, released on October 10 and made public last week, is a detailed 46 page document with another 60 pages of additional supporting evidence in nine annexes. It provides overwhelming evidence that the Government of Eritrea continues to violate UN Security Council resolution 1907 (2009) "by importing weapons and ammunition from eastern Sudan on a regular basis and with the knowledge and direction of Eritrean officials affiliated with the president's Office." It provides full details of these activities. It also provides a wealth of detailed information, drawn from senior former Eritrea military and party officials, of Eritrea's active support for regional armed groups and the way its attempts to destabilize Ethiopia "shape Eritrea's foreign policy." It notes the Government's lack of financial transparency and the possibility that mining income may support activities that violate UN Security Council resolution 1907 (2009). It gives an account of the Government's failure to provide any details about Djibouti prisoners of war from

2008 and its refusal to assist the Monitoring Group or allow it to visit Asmara despite Security Council demands.

The Report notes that Security Council resolution 1907 (2009) specifically prohibits Eritrea from “harboring, financing, facilitating, supporting, organizing, training, or inciting individuals or groups to perpetrate acts of violence or terrorist acts against other States or their citizens in the region”. It then provides an impressive amount of evidence to demonstrate that Eritrea has continued to do precisely that and on a significant scale. It says Eritrean support for regional armed groups continued to relate largely to its rivalry with Ethiopia, and details the support provided to armed opposition groups “including the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the Tigray People’s Democratic Movement (TPDM), and Ginbot Sebat (Ginbot 7)”. The report says this support varies from one group to the other but it emphasizes, for example, that in the case of ONLF, Eritrea is violating resolution 1907 (2009) by supporting an Ethiopian armed opposition group deployed to and operating in Somali territory. It says Eritrea reactivated its contacts with the group’s leadership in 2013 when it hosted a conference in Asmara to raise funds for ONLF and develop a military strategy. Senior Eritrean officials and ONLF central committee members were present at the conference. The report says that Eritrea has continued to provide logistical and financial support to the ONLF. It also says the ONLF and Al-Shabaab now “appear to have forged a logistical entente that is facilitating ONLF operations inside Somalia and that has allowed ONLF to move with ease through territory controlled by Al-Shabaab in Somalia.”

The report said it had “multiple corroborating testimonies that Eritrea continues to support the Tigray People’s Democratic Movement (TPDM), in violation of paragraph 15 (b) of (UNSC resolution 1907 (2009)”. It goes into considerable detail of this support for the TPDM, which it suggests has become the most important Ethiopian opposition group based inside Eritrea. It says it received information from reliable Eritrean military and ex-military sources that weapons from the logistics department of the Eritrean Defense Forces were being systematically transferred to TPDM, including “the following weapons had been transferred from EDF to the TPDM in autumn 2013, most likely during the month of September: sniper rifles, Walther PP semi-automatic pistols, Doshkas, Tokarev T pistols, and binoculars”. The Monitoring Group had found in 2012 that TPDM fighters were being trained in Harena Island, as well as in smaller military training outposts close to the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It said it now had information that this training was continuing in Harena.

The report describes the TPDM as having “a dual function as an Ethiopian armed opposition group and a protector of the Afwerki regime”. Its fighters, who are from the same ethnic group as President Afwerki, are seen to be personally loyal to him, unlike the defence forces whose loyalties have been questioned by the President in recent years. This is seen to be particularly relevant after the failed attempted “Forto” army mutiny confronting the Eritrean regime on 21 January 2013.” The Monitoring Group says it raised the question of the source of the weapons used to arm TPDM with the Senior Political Adviser to the President of Eritrea, Yemane Gebreab. He told the Group “that the Government of Eritrea does not support TPDM... [and] further stated that in his view, there were no arms going to the TPDM.” Ambassador Girma, Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations, is quoted as saying that Ethiopian

armed groups were a creation of Ethiopia's internal dynamics and claimed that "Eritrea was not engaged in any internal destabilization in Ethiopia."

The report also says Eritrea appears to be continuing to provide a level of logistical and military support to Ginbot 7 (Ginbot Sebat) though it adds it was unable to assess the extent and consistency of this when compared with Asmara's previous support for Ginbot 7. This was presumably because it was unable to visit Asmara. The report notes that Eritrean Diplomatic missions and the country's military officers are actively involved in the recruitment and training as well as operational aspects of Ginbot 7 rebel group. It gives details of the Embassy of Eritrea in Pretoria, South Africa, providing laissez-passers and of Eritrean army personnel escorting recruits from Sudan to the training center on Harena Island to receive training in "guerrilla warfare tactics, firearms, hand guns, automatic weapons, explosives and anti-tank weapons". Among the details provided by the report are the names of Eritrean military personnel in charge of training and day-to-day operations: for Ginbot 7, a Captain, identified as "Dawitt; of overall supervision of Ethiopian armed group, excluding the ONLF, Colonel Fitsum Yishak ("Lenin"); and of all foreign armed groups, (Colonel Tesfaldet Habteselasie, in the President's Office. The report also notes that some of the former Ginbot 7 fighters said they had had direct contact with Andargachew Tsige, the Secretary-General of Ginbot 7, who was arrested while in transit in Yemen en route to Eritrea in June this year, and later extradited to Ethiopia.

The report points out that the Government of Eritrea continues to refuse to disclose its budget and appropriations, and the annual budget is not publically available. This lack of financial transparency, it says, creates structural ambiguities and limits effective monitoring of the country's compliance with resolution 1907 (2009). The report notes that the Government continues to impose a variety of extraterritorial taxation requirements on Eritrean citizens abroad and foreign nationals of Eritrean descent. It says it received various credible testimonies that Eritrean officials still resorted to coercive measures to extract payment from Eritrean nationals, including denying passports and exit visas and blocking individuals from shipping goods to Eritrea unless they could show receipt of payment of these extra-territorial taxes. It says it is "the assessment of the Monitoring Group that senior Eritrean officials continue to collect millions of dollars per year through unofficial revenues by means of private business arrangements involving PFDJ-run companies domestically and abroad", adding that the Government maintains a global financial structure that includes "tax havens, secret trusts and companies incorporated under the names of officials and, in most cases, the names of private individuals."

The report details the efforts of the Monitoring Group to investigate whether hard currency from mining revenues used to support activities that would constitute a violation of resolution 1907 (2009). It said it reviewed hundreds of financial records related to mining activities and did not find suspicious transfers, but it added, "given the opacity of Eritrea's financial management and lack of budget appropriations" it could not rule out the possibility that funds derived from mining activities were being diverted to finance violations of resolution 1907 (2009). It said the Canadian mining company, Nevsum, which paid US\$87 million to the Government in 2013, and US\$317 million in 2012, refused to disclose relevant information on the basis of "business confidentiality"; the Eritrean Government refused to give any information on the grounds that this was a matter for Nevsum!

Another area where the Monitoring Group failed to get any information was over the issue of Djibouti prisoners of war, a part of the Comprehensive Agreement signed in June 2010 by Djibouti and Eritrea under the auspices of the Government of Qatar. Djiboutian officials say there are still 17 Djiboutian soldiers held by Eritrea. The Government of Eritrea has still not acknowledged that it holds any Djiboutian combatants or provided any information on their condition. In a reply to the Monitoring Group in August, the Government claimed it was committed to the Comprehensive Agreement and the Qatar mediation process, but it made no reference to Djibouti prisoners. The Monitoring Group said this constituted an “obstruction of resolution 1862 (2009) and that those responsible should be considered for targeted measures under resolution 1907 (2009)”

In accordance with paragraph 31 of UN Security Council resolution 2111 (2013), the Monitoring Group has tried to engage with the Government of Eritrea. It held two meetings with Eritrean officials outside the country in December last year and February this year as well as a videoconference in July. However it did not get full responses to requests for information nor permission to visit Eritrea. The report notes that in UNSC resolution 2011 (2013) the Security Council said it expected the Government of Eritrea to facilitate the entry of the Monitoring Group to Eritrea “without further delay”. The Monitoring Group adds “the Government of Eritrea has persistently prevented the Monitoring Group from visiting Asmara or pursuing its investigations inside Eritrea.”

Two other points might be noted. The report does say that the Monitoring Group found no evidence of Eritrean support to Al-Shabaab over the last year. However, it adds, it did not rule out the possibility that Eritrea might be providing some assistance to elements within Al-Shabaab without detection. It added that it was the overall assessment of the Monitoring Group that Eritrea was now a marginal actor in Somalia, suggesting that increased public scrutiny by the international community had made any direct support to Al-Shabaab much riskier. The report also notes that it was unable to verify allegations that Eritrea facilitated and in some cases provided weapons to three armed groups in South Sudan: Riek Machar’s group (Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement in Opposition), George Athor Deng’s rebel forces, and the David Yau Yau group. It says senior officials of the Government of South Sudan claimed that Eritrea delivered military equipment to the Machar forces on four occasions this year but it did not provide any evidence and in this case the Monitoring Group could not confirm that Eritrea had violated resolution 1907 (2009) by providing military and logistical support to armed rebel groups in South Sudan.

Despite its inability to confirm violations of the UN Security Council resolution 1907 (2009) in these two instances, the Monitoring Group Report on Eritrea makes it very clear why there is reason for sanctions to continue. As the detailed evidence emphatically underlines, Eritrea has made no effort to change its policies. It has continued its activities “harboring, financing, facilitating, supporting, organizing, training, or inciting individuals or groups to perpetrate acts of violence or terrorist acts against other States or their citizens in the region” in direct contravention of UN Security Council resolutions. There has been no modification of policies or behavior towards Ethiopia or the region as a whole, and without this it must remain impossible to consider lifting sanctions.

...and on Somalia

The Monitoring Group's Report on Somalia is even more detailed with its 59 pages supported by nine annexes covering over four hundred pages. The annexes provide details to support its comments on the activities of Al-Shabaab and the threat it poses to the region and internationally, on piracy, misappropriation of public financial resources in Somalia, violations of the arms embargo, obstruction of humanitarian assistance, violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the ban on charcoal.

The report notes that despite the increases in troop strength and financial support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the gains from the continuing offensive and the international assistance to the Somali security sector, coupled with the easing of the arms embargo, Harakaat al-Shabaab al-Mujaahidiin (Al-Shabaab) remained the principal threat to peace and security in Somalia, and throughout the Horn of Africa. Despite the violent purge of many commanders in 2013, and the more recent death of Mukhtar Ali al-Zubayr (Ahmed Godane), Al-Shabaab managed to maintain an effective and violent footprint in Mogadishu and elsewhere. The Report suggests counter-terrorism pressure and its own removal of internal divisions had forced the Al-Shabaab core to become more operationally audacious and place greater emphasis on exporting its violence. It says Al-Shabaab's regional strategy is now that of a resurgent extremist group fully aligning itself with and pursue strategies adapted to transnational Al-Qaida operations. It also suggests other factors elsewhere indicate broader threats to peace and security. These include Somaliland clashes with Puntland forces and militias loyal to Khatumo in Sool, clan-based political violence in Lower Shabelle and Middle Shabelle involving militias of the Biyamal and Habar Gedir in Lower Shabelle; and Abgaal and Shiidle in Middle Shabelle.

The Report notes that Somali piracy remains at a low point though it also warns that many of its underlying causes continue to exist and it therefore remains a threat to peace, security and stability. It also points out that many of the principal organizers, financiers and facilitators of this "transnational organized crime" remain undisturbed and unpunished. Investigations into the finances of pirates and former pirates, it says, have revealed large sums of money circulating inside and outside Somalia, financial dealings with Somali politicians, money-laundering overseas and various bank accounts of pirate leaders, financiers and facilitators held in Somalia and elsewhere.

The report claims that despite the establishment of the Federal Government in 2012 the underlying corruption as a system of governance has not yet fundamentally changed. The Monitoring Group said its investigations consistently found patterns of misappropriation with diversion rates of between 70 and 80 per cent and it said the diverted funds appeared to be partisan agendas that constitute threats to peace and security. It claimed the phenomenon of "secret contracting" had become a way of doing business since at least mid-2013 and this created the opportunity for misappropriation. Contracts regarding national public assets had been signed by government officials but kept confidential from other bodies including international donors. It noted, for example, that during 2013 and 2014, the Government had continued to engage in private negotiations with oil and gas companies and other corporations, resulting in a number of secret contracts and cooperation agreements, and mentioned the agreement with the UK Soma

Oil and Gas Exploration and pointing out that contract had never been made public, nor was it approved by Parliament. The Report said the successive changes of the Governor of the Central Bank had not provided ideal conditions for any fundamental reform of the Bank though a system of payment vouchers did provide a better chance to reconcile the accounts of the Bank with the Office of the Accountant General. It noted that Mogadishu port revenues had increased but it also estimated that at least 30 to 35 per cent of monthly port revenue cannot be accounted for.

The Report says that while the reports of the Federal Government on arms have improved there have been a number of violations of the arms embargo, including diversion of weapons to arms networks connected to the Federal Government, arms deliveries to Puntland and the delivery of military-type vehicles to Jubaland. It said that since the partial suspension of the arms embargo, the Government's imports of weapons exceeded "the needs of the current offensive against al Shabaab." It notes the fragility of humanitarian access in many parts of the country, and points out this has been degraded by the successes of the national army and AMISOM making supply lines to some urban areas vulnerable to attack by Al-Shabaab. The provision of assistance to rural areas remained particularly difficult. It also says that there has been continued diversion of humanitarian assistance by State actors (including the security forces) non-State armed actors (including Al-Shabaab), the staff of humanitarian agencies, private contractors and criminal entities. The Report draws attention to violations of the prohibition on gender-based violence, recruitment and use of children and forced displacement and says "members of all parties to the conflicts, including Al-Shabaab and its affiliates, AMISOM and its strategic partners, the national armed forces, the security forces of regional administrations and their allies, armed actors associated with the various regional, sub-regional and local administrations and clan militias" were all responsible.

One of the most detailed sections covers the trade in charcoal. The report says "the transnational business architecture for the trade remains in place and continues to adapt to ensure large-scale profit. The supply chain entails a complex picture of collusion and collaboration by traders, transporters, brokers, wholesalers and individuals involved in manufacturing false paperwork in order to facilitate systematic violations of the ban on Somali charcoal." It says "upwards of 1 million bags of charcoal have been exported each month from Kismayo, in addition to those exported from Al-Shabaab-controlled Barawe and other smaller ports. At least 161 vessels had transported charcoal from Kismayo and the town of Barawe between June 2013 and May 2014, and 5 million bags left the towns between September 2013 and mid-April. It claims traders in the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are fueling the trade in charcoal from Somalia which was banned by the Security Council in 2012, and adds that "Poor cooperation from state members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, notably in terms of a lack of response to requests for customs documentation," hampered the group's investigations. It claims charcoal exports to Gulf states were worth at least \$250 million a year and "could be much more, given that the group may not have identified all shipments.". It estimated that about 33 percent of the charcoal was shipped by individuals who have repeatedly been named by the Monitoring Group as being closely linked to al-Shabaab.

The report says the Monitoring Group received only poor cooperation from members of the Gulf Cooperation Council over its investigations into the charcoal trade. It also said it had not had cooperation from the Somali National Intelligence Service over access to seized weapons of Al-

Shabaab prisoners. In addition it had poor cooperation from the Somaliland authorities over weapon shipments and mixed cooperation from the Puntland administration over Al-Shabaab activities in Puntland.