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News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The World Energy Council Executive Assembly and World Energy Leaders Summit took place in Addis Ababa all this week (October 26 -30) attended by senior government officials from across Africa.

The Council of the European Union adopted on Monday (October 26) its Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan 2015-2020. The Action Plan will be implemented through the EU Trust Fund to be presented at the Valletta Summit on Migration in November.

Ethiopia

The President of Switzerland, Simonetta Sommaruga, made a three day official visit to Ethiopia at the beginning of the week (October 25-27), holding talks with President Dr. Mulatu Teshome and Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and addressed joint session of the two Houses of Parliament. **(See article)**

The Third India-Africa Summit Forum opened on Monday (October 26) in New Delhi under the theme: “Reinvigorated Partnership-Shared Vision”. The Summit was addressed by Prime Minister Hailemariam. Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros also addressed the Foreign Minister’s meeting and the India-Africa Business Forum as well as Ethio-India Business Forum on the sidelines of the Summit. **(See article)**

The Economist “Ethiopia Summit’ was held on Wednesday and Thursday this week (October 28 and 29) under the theme: Driving Ethiopia’s development. Prime Minister Hailemariam opened the Summit with a keynote speech on Wednesday **(See article)**.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom spoke at the Royal Institute for International Affairs, Chatham House in the UK on Friday last week (October 23). **(See article)**

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom met the President of Somalia’s South-West State, Sharif Hassan Sheik Adan on Monday (October 26).

Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Motuma Mekasa told the World Energy Council Executive Summit this week that Ethiopia was working ‘aggressively’ to develop untapped renewable energy sources from hydro-power, solar, wind, geothermal and dry waste resources.

Liberia’s Deputy State Minister Anthony Quiwonkpa Esra Demir, along with other officials from the Embassy of Liberia to Ethiopia, visited the Diaspora Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday (October 27).

Ambassador Ababi Demissie, Director General for Public Diplomacy and Communication Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, addressed the 9th AISEC East African Pioneers Congress 2015 on Monday (October 26) in Addis Ababa.

A group of journalists, composed of five Ugandan and two Rwandan journalists, on a visit to Ethiopia, visited the Bishoftu Automotive Industry operations of the Ethiopia's Metal and Engineering Corporation (MetEC) and the Adama Wind Power Plant on Monday (October 25) and visited the Grand Renaissance Dam later in the week.

The first group of Somalia students given scholarships by the Ethiopian Government arrived in Addis Ababa on Monday (October 26). The Government is providing scholarships for 325 Somalia students.

Djibouti

The Ministry of Higher Education and Research organized a Resilience, Research and Innovation conference this week (October 26-28) to review the role that research and innovations can play in guiding and enhancing the interventions to build resilience to drought and other shocks and stresses. The conference was co-organized by IGAD and the UN Food and Agricultural Organization.

Eritrea

The United Nations Security Council meeting on Friday (October 23) adopted resolution 2244 (2015), extending the arms embargos on Eritrea after the release of the latest UN Monitoring Group Report. **(See article)**

Swiss prosecutors said on Wednesday (October 28), they are investigating whether the Eritrean consulate has broken the law in allegedly forcing Eritrean Swiss-based nationals to pay a 2 percent tax by withholding consular services.

Somalia

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on a visit to Saudi Arabia, met with the King Salman, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. The President was heading a delegation that included the Ministers of Information and Finance, as well as the Commander of the National Intelligence Agency.

President Mohamud, referring to the reported divisions within Al-Shabaab, over whether to join ISIS or stay linked to Al Qaeda, said the disputes were “symptomatic of a group that has lost its way”. Both organizations were “destroyers” and Somalis, he said “do not need a new brand of horror and repression.”

The United Nations Security Council meeting on Friday (October 23) adopted resolution on 2244 (2015), extending the arms embargos on Somalia after the release of the latest UN Monitoring Group Report. **(See article)**

Dr. Ismail Jumale, Permanent Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Justice announced this week that judicial institutions in Puntland, the Galmudug Interim Administration, the Interim Jubaland Administration and the Interim South-West Administration were to be reorganized as part of an effort to restore the rule of law in Somalia.

The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a statement on Tuesday (October 27) that flash floods in Somalia had destroyed thousands of makeshift homes, affecting over 55,000. It warned that up to 900,000 people in Somalia could be affected by the strongest El Nino weather phenomenon in decades.

Twelve top officials in the Somaliland government including the Foreign Minister and the Minister for the Presidency resigned on Monday (October 25) following disputes within the ruling Kulmiye party. President Ahmed Silanyo accepted the resignations and appointed Dr. Said Ali Shire as Somaliland’s new foreign minister.

South Sudan

South Sudan’s rebels, the SPLM-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) on Monday (October 25) signed the minutes of the transitional security arrangements agreed at the security workshop in Addis Ababa. **(See article)**

The Final Report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, headed by former Nigerian President Obasanjo, was released on Tuesday this week (October 27) together with ‘A Separate Opinion’ written by Professor Mahamod Mamdani. **(See article)**

Sudan

President Omer Hassan al-Bashir, addressing a graduation ceremony at the military academy on Tuesday (October 27), renewed his call for rebels under arms to join in negotiations, pledging to provide the necessary guarantees to allow them to participate freely and present their concerns openly.

Prime Minister Hailemariam attends the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi

The Third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) was held in New Delhi, this week October 26 to October 29. The Official Document of this Third India- Africa Forum Summit emphasized that the event marked the celebration of the close partnership between Africa and India. It was an acknowledgement of the shared history of the two areas as well as of their future prospects. The Summit allowed for consultations for the highest political level between the Heads of Government across Africa and the Government of India and provided a new thrust to their age-old partnership. It provided an opportunity not only to reflect on the past but also to define the road ahead.

During the week meetings of officials and of the Foreign Ministers took place in advance of the official opening of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit on Thursday, October 29, under the theme: “Reinvigorated Partnership-Shared Vision.” Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the gathering of African Heads of State and Government, underlining that, “This is not just a meeting of India and Africa. It is that humanity has come under one roof.” He said India and Africa speak with one voice, serve under same blue helmets to promote international peace and security and stand together in the fight against hunger and disease. He also said that India and Africa should speak in one voice both at the United Nations and the UN Security Council. Prime Minister Modi welcomed the partnership of India and Africa, saying “Africa has rejoiced in our achievement and taken part in our successes.” He said “We will raise the level of our support towards a prosperous and integrated Africa” and stressed “Africa’s lofty vision and India’s development priorities have been aligned.” Prime Minister Modi went on to say that he had every confidence that the peoples of Africa will rise above their problems, noting that the continent had begun to replace the fault lines with bridges and economic reforms. Mindful of the fact that youth make up two-thirds of the population of both Africa and India, he added: “If the future belongs to the youth, this century is ours.” Prime Minister Modi also disclosed that the Government of India was offering additional concessional loans of US\$10billion to Africa for the next five years.

In his address to the Summit, Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn reminded the Heads of State and Government that the peoples of Africa and of India have had all-round relations for millennia. They had, more recently, fought together against colonialism, further strengthening their relationship. Africa and India, the Prime Minister said, were now working together, hand in hand, as part of their joint struggle, fighting for causes including poverty eradication, sustainable development, counter-terrorism and the efforts to achieve a fairer and more just world. Prime Minister Hailemariam said he believed the Third India-Africa Forum Summit would take the longstanding relationship to a higher level so that the people of Africa and India would benefit further and “take their rightful place in the affairs of the world.”

Reminding participants that Ethiopia had hosted the Second India-Africa Forum Summit, back in May 2011 in Addis Ababa, the Prime Minister noted that the Summit had been successful in adopting the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Africa-India Framework for Enhanced Cooperation. Reflecting on the Ethio-India partnership, the Prime Minister said, “I would note with satisfaction that Ethiopia was selected to host the India-Africa Integrated Textiles Cluster and work to implement this project is underway.” He said India’s support to Ethiopia’s efforts

towards regional integration through the Ethio-Djibouti railway construction was in the tendering process. Ethiopia, Prime Minister Hailemariam said, had registered double digit annual economic growth over the last twelve years “thanks to the clear and participatory development policies and strategies we have followed”; and he noted that in order to sustain this high growth rate the country had just launched its Second Five Year Growth and Transformation Plan.

Earlier in the week, on Tuesday, October 27, Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom addressed the Foreign Ministers’ Meeting at the Third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS). Thanking the people and Government of India for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to the Ethiopian delegation, Dr. Tedros commended the Senior Officials of the IAFS for the good work they had done in finalizing the Outcome Document for the Summit. He noted the long relationship between India and Africa and their shared experiences of fighting colonialism and apartheid. This, he said, was the basis for an inclusive partnership based on mutuality, complementarity and a true sense of solidarity. Reminding his listeners of the successful Second India-Africa Summit, Dr. Tedros said that while the outcome of such meetings could provide the basis for the strong existing cooperation between India and Africa, both parties also needed to work together to enhance cooperation and move it to a higher level. He noted that the India-Africa partnership was based on the framework and key areas of priority action established by the African Union’s Agenda 2063 which provided the solidarity and mutual understanding of the partnership. Dr. Tedros emphasized the need to put in place a regular review mechanism to scale up the framework for strategic cooperation. The Minister said Africa was grateful for India’s support as demonstrated in the free market access extended to the exports of Least Developed Countries. Touching on the Ethio-India partnership in particular, Dr. Tedros emphasized that India was one of Ethiopia’s key partners. Ethiopia highly valued and welcomed India’s support for Ethiopia’s development endeavors.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros also addressed a Plenary Session on “Collaborating to Address Africa’s Infrastructure Needs” at the India-Africa Business Forum in New Delhi, on Wednesday (October 28). Noting that Africa was currently the continent with the fastest growing economy, with average economic growth of five percent, Dr. Tedros said that this impressive growth needed to be complemented “by the right policies geared to sustainability”. On the need to foster intra-regional links in Africa, he emphasized that Regional Economic Communities should play a vital role in realizing goals and pave the way for gradual integration as laid down in the African Union agenda 2063. Notwithstanding Africa’s weak infrastructure links and financial difficulties, the Minister reminded his listeners that Africa “should value the support of the many bilateral and multilateral financial institutions in which the Indian Government also participates.” The Minister pointed out that Africa has enormous untapped renewable energy potential with similar potential for development. He urged the need to stand together to make use of these important resources for “our social and economic growth targets”. Africa’s renewable energy potential, he said, “not only supports our massive needs for industrialization and infrastructure development but also nurtures the future of our continent.” Equally, Africa should make sure that the right infrastructure backbone is properly laid down, the Minister said, adding: “in an information age, Africa can’t achieve its development objectives without efficient and effective telecommunications networks”. Dr. Tedros noted that Ethiopia was a strong advocate of both national and regional infrastructure development, and that it was now connected by highways with all its neighbors. It was planning to double up its road expansion to 200,000 kilometers by

the end of its Second Growth and Transformation Plan in 2020. It had made significant strides in energy generation, focusing on both rural electrification and regional integration projects. Dr. Tedros pointed out that Ethiopia was endowed with more than 60,000 MW of potential sustainable resource in hydro-, wind, solar and geothermal energy. It had also embarked on a railway expansion project which he said was “in tandem with keeping down the cost of doing business and bringing about efficiency for thriving import and export needs”. The Minister disclosed that the construction of the major railway project connecting the Addis Ababa to the country’s main outlet at Djibouti port would be completed before mid 2016. This, he pointed out, would “revolutionize the transit corridor logistics and make Ethiopia a land-linked rather than a land-locked nation”. Touching on air transport development, Dr. Tedros noted that the Ethiopian Airlines, nearly 70 years old, has now become an excellent example of a leading corporate entity as the most profitable airline in Africa and with a world renowned safety record.

On October 28, Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros also opened an Ethio-India Business Forum on the sidelines of the Summit. He said Ethiopia and India enjoyed rich, long-lasting and historic relations, but despite this the investment flow and trade volume between the two countries was not what it should be. The two countries should, he said, make efforts to regularly nurture their relationship. The Minister stressed that both Ethiopia and India had huge potential for moving ahead with a strong partnership. Ethiopia, he said, had significant untapped resources. The Minister underlined major reasons for investing and doing business in Ethiopia, including the fact that Ethiopia is one of the fast growing economies in the world. In addition, its credit ratings were two Bs and a B+, it was pressing ahead with the construction of industrial parks, there was enhanced market accesses availability for exports through AGOA, EBA and Indian duty free tariff preferences, an Investment Promotion and Protection framework as well as avoidance of double taxation, expansion of roads and railway network and very low energy costs. Ethiopia is on the road to transformation, Dr. Tedros said, adding “Come and join us! And when you do, come for a long-term partnership.” Following Dr. Tedros’ address, Mr. Fitsum Arega, Commissioner of the Ethiopian Investment Commission also dealt at length with the investment opportunities, policies and incentives in Ethiopia. During the event, Government-to-business and business-to-business sessions were held between members of the Ethiopian business community and their Indian counterparts.

“Driving Continued Growth”: the Economist Ethiopia Summit 2015

The Economist ‘Ethiopia Summit’ under the theme “Driving Continued Growth” took place this week in Addis Ababa, on Wednesday and Thursday (October 28-29), with the attendance of more than 300 participants including senior government officials, industry and business leaders, policy makers and company executives. Discussion sessions covered ‘An overview of the Second Growth and Transformation Plan’; Ethiopia’s Economic Horizons-Future Prospects for growth’; ‘Investment opportunities in one of Africa’s Top Performing Economies’; ‘Financing Ethiopia’s Ambitious Plans’; ‘Regional Insights: Ethiopia and the Wider region – Growth Through Collaboration’; Back to the Basics – Doing Business in Ethiopia’; ‘The Prospects for oil and Gas in Ethiopia’ and ‘Energy: A realm of possibilities’; ‘The telecom Sector- Can you Play a

Part'; 'Innovation – Key to socio-economic development' and 'a Panel on 'Building Ethiopia's Agricultural roots.'

Opening the Summit, Xan Smiley, the Economist Magazine's Editor at Large, delivered a message from the United Kingdom's Prime Minister, David Cameron, to Prime Minister Hailemariam and participants, praising Ethiopia's achievements in development and its efforts in pacifying and stabilizing the Horn of Africa Region. He said UK commended Ethiopia's efforts in hosting refugees from Somalia, Eritrea and other regional countries, adding that he believed Ethiopia would be successful in curbing current challenges related to climate change or vulnerability to weather. He stressed that the UK government was a friend and close partner to Ethiopia.

In a keynote address, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn said the Summit was being held at a particularly appropriate time as Ethiopia had just successfully completed its First five year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP1), and was launching the second Growth and Transformation Plan. The Prime Minister elaborated detailed the key elements underlying Ethiopia's development including the "the importance of the war on poverty; creation of a carbon-free economy within the next decade on the basis of producing sustainable power; the development of a democratic developmental state and neighborhood policy of robust, sustained and proactive promotion of collective peace and security."

Dr. Arkebe Oqubay, Minister and Special Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, presented the achievements and challenges of the Growth and Transformation Plan I and outlined the main priorities of GTP II. He detailed Ethiopia's development policies and the strategies of implementation, noting that although agriculture would stay a major driver of the economy, Ethiopia was fast shifting its focus to the manufacturing sector. Among the key strategies to make Ethiopia a manufacturing hub during the GTP II, he mentioned directing investment to manufacturing and value addition, establishing industrial parks, improving the quality of infrastructure and increasing skill training and the competitiveness.

During the second day of the Summit, the Ambassadors of the UK, the US, The Netherlands and Japan participated in a panel discussion. Ambassador Kazuhiro Suzuki, Japan's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, noted similarities between Ethiopia's developmental model and that of South East Asia, though he said it appeared to be progressing more quickly. Similarities included the emphasis on the industrial parks that are being established and the high population density of the two regions. He recommended the importance of focusing on skills' development of human resources. Greg Dorey, British Ambassador to Ethiopia and British Permanent Representative to the AU, noted the socio-economic changes he had seen in the past four years. He underlined the importance of institutional reforms, hoped for strengthened Ethiopia-UK bilateral relations and said development should continue. He noted the privatization taking place in some sectors and encouraged the government to further liberalization of the economy. Ambassador Patricia Haslash, United States Ambassador to Ethiopia, praised Ethiopia in a number of areas and hoped its sustained developments would continue. She commended the sound economic transformation taking place including the increase in the foreign investments inflow, and praised Ethiopia's role in peace and security in the region and its peacekeeping role. She spoke of the need to focus on

enhanced and diversified job creation, increased export competitiveness and human development. The Ambassador of Netherlands to Ethiopia, Ambassador Remmelzwaal, underlined the business climate and recommended further improvement in the ease of investment to encourage and enhance further foreign direct investment.

There were also sessions on ‘Manufacturing in Focus’; ‘Textiles and garments’; ‘Other consumer goods’; and ‘Meeting the new consumer’s needs. In these and earlier sessions, participants noted that Ethiopia could be described as a transition economy. Participants agreed that Ethiopia offered policy continuity, a stable macro-economy, peace and security, and a business friendly environment. There was no doubt that the state-led development would continue in the process of industrialization but there would be steadily increasing involvement of the private sector. There was general agreement that opening up of closed sectors to outside interests would take place but at the Government’s own choice of time and subject. Certainly, the Government wanted and welcomed investment but it wanted long-term investment and commitment to Ethiopia’s development. Everyone agreed the opportunities and the potential were present in one of the world’s fastest growing economies and that investors were welcome. They needed to think ‘long-term’ and to have patience.

Dr. Carlos Lopez, Executive Secretary of the UNECA made a closing keynote speech. Dr. Lopez noted that the economy was being liberalized and there was greater adherence to the rule of law. He underlined the dynamic trajectory for Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular, pointing out the continent, and Ethiopia were becoming a destination of choice for investment. Equally, he said, economic growth was not enough; Africa needed structural growth and constructive relations between governments and the private sector. It was important that the state provided ease of operations for the private sector. Dr. Lopez said the sort of industrialization that was developed was important. The state needed to provide leadership for the transformation and a strategy. Africa 2063 could provide a framework. He spoke of the need for sufficient revenue to support the changes, and underlined the importance of considering the impacts of climate change. Government planning for agriculture and food security was important. He reminded his listeners that by 2050, African youth would provide a quarter of the world’s labor force. Dr. Lopez said Africa offered incredible opportunity to investors in many areas, including energy. Stable, reliable policies, predictability allowed for gradual change. He underlined the importance of mobilizing domestic savings as well as increasing FDI. There were of course challenges ahead. China’s slow down, the falling oil prices, and other commodities also falling. This underlined the importance of diversification and the importance of regional integration.

Answering questions, Dr. Lopez said Ethiopia’s progress had been remarkable and its Growth and Transformation Plans were managing its acceleration successfully. He noted the importance of the expansion of education and its decentralization into the regional states, with notable universities in Jimma and Hawassa, and elsewhere. He believed key areas for the future should be the opening up of the service sector, the development of agriculture because of the importance of food security with a growing population. This was also critical for poverty reduction. Social factors were important in transformation of the country. Striking the right balance with the private sector was another important area. Ethiopia was in “a bad neighborhood” with many problems around. It had put a lot of resources into trying to resolve problems. This was admirable but it remained a challenge and an expensive one. Overall, Dr. Lopez believed that

with its huge potential energy development, Ethiopia's growth could launch a new process of industrialization, on the basis of commodity industrialization, value added and cheap labor.

In conclusion, the Co-chair Pratibha Thaker of the Economist Intelligence Unit summed up the conclusions of the Summit as a way forward for driving continued growth in Ethiopia. Ethiopia was now a 'transitional' economy and this would continue to advance its economic development, trade and investment. The GTP II was providing ambitious targets and regulation for state-led industrialization, but there was a strong desire for liberalization. FDI could be expected to expand. It was important for reforms of problems to continue. There was a business friendly environment with an emphasis on long-term planning and practices. The outlook remained promising.

An official visit of Swiss President Simonetta Sammaruga to Ethiopia

The President of the Swiss Federation, President Simonetta Sammaruga made a three day official working visit to Ethiopia at the weekend (October 25-27), heading a delegation of senior government officials and business leaders. Arriving on Saturday at Bole International Airport, President Sommaruga was received by President Mulatu Teshome and other high-level Ethiopian government officials. During her visit, the President met and held talks with the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Dr. Mulatu Teshome and Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. She discussed the crisis of migration that Europe and Switzerland are currently facing, the conditions of refugees in Ethiopia, and exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues of common interest. President Sommaruga visited the Somali Regional State, meeting President Abdi Mahmoud Omar, and going to the Shelder refugee camp in Jigjiga. President Sommaruga met with members of the business sector and civil society representatives and visited a project near Addis Ababa funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration that provides employment opportunities to Eritrean refugees. During her visit President Sommaruga also addressed a joint session of House of People Representatives and the House of Federation.

President Dr. Mulatu Teshome met with President Sommaruga, on Monday, (October 26), welcoming the President and her delegation to Ethiopia, and noting that the visit was very significant for the strengthening of relations between the Swiss Federation and Ethiopia. Dr. Mulatu referred to the long lasting and historic relationship between Ethiopia and Switzerland. He briefed President Sommaruga on current Ethiopian developments. Underlining the Government's determination to set up environmentally friendly manufacturing industry, President Mulatu called on Swiss government and investors to share their experience and invest in the development of clean energy sources. President Sommaruga said there were many Swiss companies that were keen to bring new technologies to Ethiopia and engage in clean energy development. She stressed the importance of civil society and human rights institutions, and emphasized that a strong federal structure needed a strong civil society. She said the cooperation between Switzerland and Ethiopia had major importance in addressing a broad range of issues related to refugees and migration.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn also met with President Sammaruga on Monday. A joint communiqué released after the talks said the two countries agreed to strengthen bilateral relations covering various regional and global issues of common interest. The two leaders also agreed to expedite the process of finalizing draft agreements on Avoidance of Double Taxation and Air Services. Their discussions also focused on investment and trade relations. Several of the companies represented in the talks are involved in aspects of ‘clean’ technology and the Prime Minister briefed them on Ethiopia’s vision of a carbon-free economy.

At a joint press, Prime Minister Hailemariam noted over a century of government-to-government and people-to-people relation existed between Ethiopia and Switzerland, pointing out that Alfred Ilg, an engineer from Swiss, had been an advisor to the Ethiopian emperor, Menelik II at the end of the 19th century. “His contribution in building the railway from Addis Ababa to Djibouti was tremendous,” he added. Prime Minister explained that Ethiopia was hosting over 700,000 refugees from neighboring countries, and with the help of the international community, was doing its best to provide every support and protection to the refugees. Noting trade and investment ties between the two countries, the Prime Minister called on Swiss investors to invest in Ethiopia and take advantage of the investment opportunities available. He said Ethiopia’s cooperation with Switzerland in areas of migration, trade, investment, tourism, environmental protection, peace and security and technical support were important for its efforts to achieve its ambitious transformation agenda as well as lessen the migration crisis facing Switzerland and Europe. The Prime Minister also briefed Ms. Sommaruga and Swiss delegation on Ethiopia’s activities with regard to internal as well as regional developments, and regional peace and stability.

President Sommaruga said she appreciated Ethiopia's vital role in hosting and protecting a huge number of refugees. She praised Ethiopia as a refuge of peace and stability in the region often associated with endless crisis and conflicts. She said Ethiopia was a priority country for Switzerland in terms of migration as this involved assistance on the ground and protection for refugees in their region of origin. In September, the Swiss government decided to allocate an additional CHF19 million for aiding refugees in the Horn of Africa region with US\$6.1 million pledged for refugee protection in Ethiopia. President Sommaruga explained the government’s decision to donate another USD6 million to support the ongoing relief effort for those affected by drought and the impact of the El Nino phenomenon. She also noted that the Swiss government was involved in a 12 year development plan to provide for capacity for Ethiopia’s pastoral communities.

On Tuesday (October 27), President Sommaruga addressed a joint session of the members of the House of People’s Representatives and the House of Federation. She spoke of the 150 year old experience of federalism in Switzerland which had led to its current stability and prosperity. She stressed that accepting difference and being prepared to compromise were not only values of Switzerland’s federalism but were also a central feature of federalism as a system as a whole. As in any democratic system, federalism, particularly in the initial stages, could encounter challenges and weaknesses. These must be addressed through patience and over time. Equitable resource distribution among regions could help the creation of a strong federal system, President Sommaruga underlined, noting that Ethiopia had a budget distribution and allocation formula for regional states. She described Ethiopia as a country with promising growth potential and good

policies, and said her Government was ready to provide technological and financial support for Ethiopia's renewable energy development activities. In addition to the crucial role Ethiopia played in keeping and building peace in the region, President Sommaruga praised it for being a safe haven for East African refugees.

President Sommaruga visited the Shelder refugee camp in Jigjiga on Sunday and during her visit to the Somali Regional State, she held a joint press conference with Regional President Abdi Mahmoud Omar at Jigjiga's Garad Wilwal Airport. President Abdi said that the Somali Regional State in collaboration with United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the Administration for Returnee Affairs currently hosted around 12,300 refugees from East Africa, most of them from Somalia. He said the regional state was working tirelessly to address the infrastructural, socio-economic and other related problems that the refugees face. He said the visit of the Swiss Federation President would enhance existing bilateral relation between Ethiopia and Switzerland, and thanked President Sommaruga for her visit to assess the conditions of refugees in the region. President Sommaruga appreciated the support and cooperation that the people and Government of the Regional State provided to refugees. She announced the start of a new refugee empowerment program, the "Jigjiga One Health Initiative", to be implemented by Jigjiga University and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute in Basel, and supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Dr. Tedros talks on Ethiopia's Foreign Policy priorities at Chatham House

Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia addressed members of the Royal Institute for International Affairs at Chatham House in London on Friday last week (October 23). He spoke on Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Priorities, Partnerships and Regional Position.

Dr. Tedros noted that Ethiopia's national interests have been completely redefined since 1991 and the overthrow of the military dictatorship. They have been redrawn to focus on the country's internal vulnerabilities and problems, political and economic. The result was systematically laid out in the Foreign Policy and National Security Strategy drawn up some years ago. This identified the major threats to Ethiopia and to its survival: economic backwardness and the desperate poverty of a large majority of the population, the need for the establishment of a functional democratic structure and good governance throughout the country. Without these, Ethiopia would have been unable to survive as a country. Its very existence would have been in doubt.

Dr. Tedros emphasized that diplomatic activity should serve the country's agenda to provide rapid economic development together with the equally important objective of advancing democracy. Both goals were, he said, an imperative necessity for the country's survival. Ethiopia's foreign policy therefore had to serve these twin objectives: rapid economic development for the benefit of all members of society and democratization to ensure the complete participation of people in administering their own affairs. Ethiopia's national security was bound up inextricably with these factors. Indeed it was not too much to say that the

commitment to democracy and the war on poverty were the two central pillars of national security.

The Minister said Ethiopia was now dedicating all its capacities, and resources to reversing the impact of poverty and to building up the institutions of democracy and good governance in a manner taking into account the realities of Ethiopia, recognizing the vital principle of unity in diversity, and the need for tolerance and accommodation in light of the diversity of languages, cultures and faiths. Ethiopia had therefore been able to build a constitutional system and institutions that recognized and accommodated the country's diversity. Like other governance and democratic policies this was still a work in progress.

Guided by these policies, Ethiopia had registered remarkable economic achievements during the past 12 years, with annual double digit growth to become one of the fastest growing economies in the world. It had reduced poverty by 33% and been able to meet nearly all the Millennium Development Goals. Net enrollment rates in primary education increased more than fourfold from less than 20 percent in the 1990s to over 95 percent in recent years with close to parity in enrolment of girls and boys. Dr. Tedros noted that Ethiopia was consciously pursuing structural economic transformation by improving the productivity and competitiveness of small-holder agriculture as well as promoting industrialization, value addition and development of exports. Ethiopia deploys 70 per cent of its budget, the largest proportion in Africa, for pro-poor activities including education, health, agriculture and food security. In the course of developing its renewable energy sources, annual energy output has gone from 360 megawatts to 4200 megawatts. Dr. Tedros added the total renewable energy output that will be produced from sustainable hydro, wind, geo-thermal and solar resources is expected to reach 12,000 megawatts in the next few years. This was a central element in Ethiopia's vigorous efforts to pursue an economy strategy whose goal was to achieve a carbon-neutral economy by 2030.

Dr. Tedros also underlined that Ethiopia had fully realized that its own development would be all the more sustainable if there was a shared vision and support for peace and development in the whole of the sub-region. Ethiopia, he said, attached the utmost importance to its relations with its neighbors. It believed that creating the economic conditions for regional integration was vital, and it was, therefore, taking concrete action to promote regional integration using infrastructure as the major approach to link the countries in the sub-region. This involved road and rail links as well as power supplies. Ethiopia was also promoting equitable water sharing and had, for example, embarked upon the environmentally sound hydro-power project that would provide a win-win situation for all the interested countries: the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, he emphasized, would benefit Ethiopia with the production of 6000 MW of power but also the downstream countries of Sudan and Egypt and contribute to the East African power pool. It would help to realize regional integration.

In terms of security, Dr. Tedros said Ethiopia had been able to decrease its vulnerabilities to external threats significantly. Ethiopia, he said, firmly believed that its peace and security was the peace and security of its neighbors and vice versa. This explained Ethiopia's commitment to peace and security as demonstrated by participation in peacekeeping operations in the Horn of Africa and more generally in Africa. Ethiopia is currently the second largest troop contributing

country to UN peacekeeping missions; and if you add its involvement in African Union peace keeping missions, Ethiopia is the largest contributor of peace keeping troops in the world.

Dr. Tedros also looked at the efforts of IGAD, along with the African Union and other partners, to end the tragic conflict in South Sudan. As the collective efforts towards the next phase of talks continued, he was hopeful that the international community would continue to assist implementations of the mechanisms established to ensure implementation of the Agreement finally signed in August. On Somalia, he explained that the gains made both on the political and military fronts in Somalia over the last two years had created encouraging conditions for a successful political transition in Somalia. For the first time in two decades, he stressed, Somalia had a real chance of emerging from its quagmire of conflict and attain sustainable peace. He mentioned the progress achieved in formation and strengthening of regional administrations and the measures taken to establish the institutions necessary to consolidate the gains made so far. He underlined the importance of the international community's support to the people and leadership of Somalia in the journey to stability, reconciliation and development by realizing Vision 2016.

Dr. Tedros underlined that in this fast changing world the prevalence of poverty and inequality, the spread of pandemic diseases, the impact of climate change and other socio-economic challenges also had serious implications for the survival of humanity. We needed, he said, principled global partnerships more than ever before. These cannot be achieved without the full cooperation of all countries, developed and developing, on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. He noted that it was in the enlightened self-interest of all, developed and developing countries, to work towards the realization of a just, harmonious and peaceful global order.

Ethiopia, he said, was very well aware that international partnerships were critical for the success of its transformational and ambitious objectives. This was why Ethiopia continued to strengthen partnerships with traditional partners as well as create new partnerships with friends from the South. South-South cooperation had, in fact, become hugely critical for Ethiopia's development. Dr. Tedros noted that international terrorism was a global threat that affected all parts of the world. Ethiopian troops, as part of AMISOM together with the active involvement of the Somali National Defense Forces, were currently engaged in a successful regional effort to defeat Al-Shabaab. Equally, this required more extensive international cooperation. Another area in which partnership was required was in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Effective partnership would, in fact, make a real difference in addressing the most pressing issues of our time such as poverty, hunger, disease, income disparities, climate change and other similar challenges.

Following his speech, participants raised questions on Ethiopia's foreign policy towards Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan as well as on the fight against terrorism. The Minister stressed that Ethiopia's policy towards its neighbors was one based on non-interference, respect for sovereignty and the commitment to cooperate. He noted Ethiopia's involvement in AMISOM was part of the successful regional effort to defeat Al-Shabaab. Ethiopia, as chair of IGAD, was striving to resolve South Sudan's problems by engaging all stakeholders in an all-inclusive attempt to find a solution. He said Ethiopia believed that Ethiopia and Eritrea were two countries but one people. Ethiopia, he said had repeatedly shown its readiness to hold a dialogue and negotiations with Eritrea to normalize relations. Eritrea consistently refused. Dr.

Tedros concluded by emphasizing the importance of addressing the root causes of terrorism, including the poverty, widening income disparities, lack of employment and educational opportunities, the absence of democracy and good governance. It was also important to pay special attention to propagating counter-radicalism and to the drying up sources of finance for terror groups.

The Security Council extends the arms embargo on Somalia

The United Nations Security Council extended the arms embargo on Somalia until November 15 2016 at a meeting on Friday (October 23) when resolution 2244 (2015) was passed by fourteen votes with one abstention. The arms embargo on Somalia was imposed in 1992 following the descent of Somalia into civil war following the removal Siad Barre's Government. The sanctions were relaxed in 2014, with IGAD and the AU offering their full support to help the Federal Government of Somalia re-build a national army and help it rebuild to fight Al-Shabaab on its own, but still remain in place in order to limit the amount of arms reaching the country. The Security Council also extended the embargo against the export of charcoal from Somalia and expressed serious concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Somalia and condemned in the strongest terms increased attacks against humanitarian actors. It expressed concern about continued reports of corruption, diversion of public resources and financial impropriety involving members of the Federal Government Administrations and the Federal Parliament, underlining that individuals engaged in acts that threatened Somalia's peace and reconciliation process might be listed for targeted sanctions.

The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (SEMG) had earlier released a report on Somalia and Eritrea's observance of the sanction regime. On Somalia, the report indicated that despite the partial lifting of the arms embargo, the Somali National Army remained ill-equipped to fight Al-Shabaab. On the positive side, the SEMG report noted that there had been better reporting import of weapons, saying "the commencement of the marking and registration of Federal Government of Somalia imports and of weapons held by private security companies represented the most significant development." However, it noted that "significant gaps remain, however, in ensuring tracking of weaponry and equipment, particularly after their initial distribution to the security forces." The report indicated that some member states and international organizations failed to report to the UN Committee in charge of oversight of arms embargo on Somalia. It also noted the exemptions granted to import arms for AMISOM, UNSOM and EU anti-piracy operations. Overall, the report noted that "Violations of the arms embargo continue to be committed in Somalia, whether through the illegal sale or unauthorized distribution of weapons from Federal Government of Somalia stocks or through illegal imports.

The report noted that the environment for illegal weapons flows had been exacerbated by the market created by the conflict in Yemen and increased militarization in parts of Somalia during the course of its mandate. Similarly, it documented the continuing export of charcoal from

southern Somalia during the period of its mandate, pointing out that the charcoal trade was a major source of terror finance in Somalia and a major element of the sanction regime. It noted that the implementation of the ban, the displacement of Al-Shabaab from export sites along the southern coast of Somalia from Barawe to Kamboni on the Kenyan border and the emergence of new political and business arrangements in the region have affected the political economy of the trade. Some vessels carrying charcoal had been intercepted and the cumulative effect had been an overall reduction in exports of charcoal from southern Somalia and a decline in the revenue gained from the trade by Al-Shabaab. The SEMG report also said that there was a flourishing illicit sugar trade operating out of the Jubaland Administration into Kenya which was providing a financial lifeline and source of revenue for Al-Shabaab and for Somalia-based militias.

The Security Council, taking note of the final reports of the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, and the Monitoring Group's conclusions on the situation in both Somalia and Eritrea, "reaffirmed its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea respectively", condemned any flows of weapons and ammunition supplies to and through Somalia in violation of the arms embargo on Somali. It expressed concern that Al-Shabaab continued to pose a serious threat to the peace and stability of Somalia and the region and welcomed "the improved relationship between the Federal Government of Somalia and the SEMG, underlining the importance of this relationship improving further and strengthening in the future. " It also welcomed "the efforts of the FGS to improve its notifications to the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea." It looked forward "to further needed progress in the future, particularly in relation to post-delivery notifications, [recalling] that improved arms and ammunition management in Somalia is a fundamental component of greater peace and stability for the region".

The resolution also underlined "the importance of financial propriety in the run up to, and conduct of, elections in Somalia in 2016" It stressed the need for further efforts to fight corruption, promote transparency and increase mutual accountability in Somalia, "expressing serious concern at reports of illegal fishing in waters where Somalia has jurisdiction, underlining the importance of refraining from illegal fishing, and encouraging the FGS, with the support of the international community, to ensure that fishing licenses are issued in a responsible manner and in line with the appropriate Somali legal framework" It expressed concern over the increasing difficulties in delivering humanitarian aid in Somalia, and condemned in the strongest terms any party obstructing the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as the misappropriation or diversion of any humanitarian funds.

The Representative of Somalia Government in his statement noted that the Federal Government had "worked tirelessly over the last year to reduce threats to peace and security, and had shown its commitment to compliance with the Council's resolutions." He said in 1992 Somalia had faced civil unrest and later, during a nascent Transitional Government, had lacked federal and regional institutions and financial oversight mechanisms. Today, by contrast, he said, the country had functioning institutions, including the Board of Directors of the Central Bank and the Parliamentary Oversight Committees. There were four legislative instruments relating to public finance management reform pending before Parliament: the audit bill; the public finance management bill; the public procurement, concession and disposal bill; and the anti-money

laundering bill and counter-terrorist financing bill. Three years into its Vision 2016, Somalia was revising its constitution and supporting the formation of three interim regional administrations. The latest, for Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle regions, would proceed soon and complete the federalized map of Somalia. That very week, he said, the process to complete the third strand of statehood had begun with the National Consultation Forum aiming to facilitate a citizen-led State-building process.

On the security front, he drew attention to the “sweeping” reforms that committed the Government to building a more integrated and accountable security sector. An upcoming review would include a national threat assessment that would streamline roles, missions and resource allocations. He also said Somalia had significantly improved its compliance with the requirements of weapons and ammunition management notification, reporting and control. Somalia, he said, would like to see further relaxation of the arms embargo. The Somali Representative said that while the Government did not agree with all the Monitoring Group’s findings, it would continue to work with the Group during its next mandate and seek to strengthen their relationship. Indeed, the Government would be pleased to welcome visits of the Group to Somalia on a more frequent basis.

...and on Eritrea following the Monitoring Group report

UN resolution 2244 (2015), which was adopted on Friday last week (October 23), in addition to extending the arms embargo on Somalia for another year, also reaffirmed the arms embargo on Eritrea and specifically welcomes “the SEMG’s ongoing and significant efforts to engage with the Government of Eritrea”. It reiterates that the Security Council expects the Government of Eritrea to facilitate the entry of the SEMG to Eritrea and allow regular visits, in line with its repeated earlier requests, including resolution 2182 (2014). It makes the point that “deepened cooperation will help the Security Council be better informed about Eritrea’s compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions”. The resolution also calls on Eritrea to cooperate with the SEMG on public finance issues, in accordance with the SEMG’s mandate, in order to demonstrate that Eritrea is not violating the terms of the relevant Security Council resolutions. It stresses its demand that the Government of Eritrea to allow access or provide information on the Djiboutian prisoners of war missing in action since the clashes of 2008, and expresses its hope that the mediation efforts led by the State of Qatar will help lead to the resolution of this issue and the dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti. It determines that the dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea, as well as the situation in Somalia, continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region. The resolution takes note of the SEMG reports “of ongoing Eritrean support for certain regional armed groups,” and calls for the SEMG to provide further evidence on this.

As the resolution indicates, the SEMG’s 90 page report raises a number of concerns over areas where it believes the Government of Eritrea is or may be violating the UN Security Council resolutions. One of these is its refusal to allow the SEMG into Eritrea thus denying the requirement for “full cooperation”. This is contrary to resolution 2182 (2014). Another is these is Eritrea’s new strategic military relationship with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates allowing the Arab coalition to use Eritrean land, airspace and territorial waters in its anti-Houthi military campaign in Yemen. The Monitoring Group says it has received credible information

that Eritrean soldiers were embedded with the United Arab Emirates contingent of the forces fighting in Yemen. This would put Eritrea in violation of resolution of 1907 (2009). It also raises concern over a shipment from the United Arab Emirates to a government/military company, the Red Sea Corporation, in January 2015.

The SEMG found Eritrea was continuing to support and harbor some regional armed groups, including a newly formed unified front of armed Ethiopian opposition groups including the Tigray People's Democratic Movement and of Ginbot 7. This violates resolution 1907 (2009). Similarly, the SEMG also notes the failure of the Government of Eritrea to allow access or provides any information on the Djiboutian prisoners of war missing in action since the clashes of 2008. This refusal to "engage or provide information" it defines as "an obstruction of resolution 1862 (2009)". It adds that those responsible should be "considered for targeted measures under resolution 1907 (2009)." The Eritrean Government argues that as the Government of Qatar is mediating this dispute it cannot be considered a threat to peace, though it might be noted that the arbitration has been going on for five year with nothing to show for it. By contrast, the Government of Djibouti has provided a list of names of Eritrean prisoners that it claims to be holding, as well as those Djiboutian troops whom it claims are missing in action as a result of the clashes in 2008. The SEMG says the "the Government of Eritrea has yet to acknowledge that it holds combatants from Djibouti or to provide any information on their current condition." The SEMG report also noted the incident of the kidnapping of a Djiboutian soldier in the territory separating Djibouti and Eritrea in July last year and the allegations of the Djibouti Government that Eritrea is supporting and arming a Djiboutian armed opposition group.

The report also draws attention to the informal economy controlled by the PFDJ which it says involves hard currency transactions through an obscure, non-transparent network of business entities that are owned by the State and managed by senior officials of the Government, PFDJ and the military, just as most companies are in Eritrea. This, it says limits the Monitoring Group's ability to assess the country's compliance with resolution 1907 (2009). The SEMG was especially concerned at the overall lack of public financial transparency at a time when international and multinational organizations are pledging monetary aid to the Government. The report notes that the SEMG received multiple testimonies that the Government continued to impose extraterritorial taxation requirements on Eritrean citizens living abroad and as noted previously, a refusal to pay the tax often results in a denial of the services offered at consulates and embassies.

The Monitoring Group also notes the Government continues "to maintain a complete lack of transparency with regard to mining revenue". It notes the court case filed in Canada over the alleged use of forced labor and inhumane treatment at the Bisha mine operated by the Canadian company, Nevsun Resources Limited. The SEMG says Nevsun hired Segen and Mereb [two government companies] to provide labour in an arrangement where they paid workers far less than the amount that they were charging Nevsun for the labour.

A statement by Eritrea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed Eritrea had fully cooperated with the SEMG from the outset. It accused the Security Council of opting to extend the sanctions "under pressure from the United States and its usual allies," invoking non-existent facts in its desire to punish Eritrea. It attacked the SEMG for "routinely dwells on issues beyond its

mandate” and using “forged and fabricated information” from countries such as Ethiopia and Djibouti. It said the SEMG did not stick to its mandate which should be confined to investigation of whether Eritrea is supporting Al-Shabaab in Somalia and whether the Eritrea and Djibouti border dispute is a threat to regional and international peace and security. The SEMG had no mandate to monitor Eritrea-Ethiopia relations or, by extension, the presence of armed Ethiopian opposition groups in Eritrea, nor the situation in Yemen, the internal situation of Eritrea or Eritrea’s relationship with international investors and global partners. It also claimed “technical and procedural matters’ should not be used as a pretext to maintain sanctions and the “visit or lack of visit by the Monitoring Group to Eritrea should not be used as an excuse for the continuation of the sanctions, adding “there is no purpose or added value that will be gained from SEMG's visit to Eritrea.”

This statement, of course, largely misrepresents quite substantially much of what the SEMG’s report says, and the evidence it has produced with respect to at least four Security Council resolutions: those of 1862 (2009), 1907 (2009), 2023 (2011) and 2182 (2014). By denying the SEMG permission to enter Eritrea, the Government failed to show “full cooperation”. This is in violation of resolution 2182 (2014). The Government’s continued and open public support to armed Ethiopian opposition groups is in clear violation of resolution 1907 (2009). Indeed, resolution 1907 (2009) and resolution 2023 (2011) are both quite clear in forbidding the Government of Eritrea from “harboring, financing, facilitating, supporting, organizing, training or inciting individuals or groups to perpetrate acts of violence in the region.” Similarly, the refusal to “engage or provide information on the issue of the prisoners of war from Djibouti’ is in obstruction of resolution 1862 (2009). In sum, these three issues are in very clear and open violation of several UN mandates. This explains why Ethiopia has continued to argue that the Security Council resolutions should be strengthened rather than lifted.

In addition, the SEMG raises other questions which it would like investigate more fully. These include the possibility of a least one arms shipment to Massawa and the details of the possible security agreement with Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates to “use Eritrean land, airspace and territorial waters in its anti-Houthi military campaign in Yemen” or the alleged “embedding of Eritrean soldiers in UAE forces’ All these would, if true, would constitute a violation of UN resolutions. So would Djibouti’s claim that Eritrea is supporting a Djibouti armed rebel group. Another area that the SEMG has been unable to document because of the Government’s refusal to allow it into Eritrea is whether funds generated from mining revenues, estimated at \$755 million from 2011 to 2014, might have been diverted to the military or fund activities banned by the UN.

Equally, the failure to cooperate in any of these areas, or allow the SEMG the ability to investigate other possible violations, inevitably raised the suspicions of the SEMG and of members of the Security Council. The UK representative said last week that resolution 2244 reflected two very different approaches to the Monitoring Group. The Federal Government of Somalia, he said, had built a strong and helpful relationship with the Monitoring Group. By contrast, the relationship between the Monitoring Group and the Government of Eritrea was “on the wrong path”. The SEMG had not been able to visit Eritrea since February 2011 and, he said, resolution 2244 (2015) could not be clearer over what Eritrea must do. He said Eritrea could either admit the Monitoring Group and engage in a serious discussion on sanctions, or

choose continued isolation. He added that it was to be hoped that Eritrea would choose the first course of action, but added: “Eritrea is master of its own destiny.”

South Sudan’s SPLM-in–Opposition sign security workshop minutes....

South Sudan’s rebels, the SPLM-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) on Monday (October 25) signed the minutes of the transitional security arrangements agreed at the security workshop in Addis Ababa, though with reservations. They had refused to sign after the first security workshop in September after disagreement over the numbers of troops to be deployed in connection with the demilitarization of Juba. After clarifications from the IGAD mediation on the need to further discuss the sizes and composition of the joint forces, they agreed to sign following the latest five-day security workshop for military commanders.

A Spokesperson for the SPLM-IO said the group signed the minutes to show its commitment to the implementation of the Agreement signed in August. However, it expressed reservations with regard to troops that would remain in Juba and said it signed on the understanding that its reservations will be addressed through further discussion.

Chief mediator of the South Sudan peace process, Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin congratulated the SPLM-IO for taking wise and bold decision to sign the minutes and move the process forward. He said the agreement represented a breakthrough for the implementation of the peace agreement and the transitional arrangements. He confirmed the commitment of the parties to the conflict in South Sudan, saying the government and the opposition are committed to implementing the agreement and resolving all the problems that may arise during the implementation of the agreement through dialogue and discussion.

The “Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan” produced by the IGAD Mediation and signed by both parties in August, left a number of details to be considered further including some security arrangements at the workshop held last month in Addis Ababa. The first Workshop for military commanders in Addis Ababa in September made progress on a number of issues. These included the drawdown of forces, the establishment of demilitarized zones, cantonment areas for troops from both sides, and the size of security forces that can be deployed in four towns, including the capital, Juba, after demilitarization. Demilitarization and the shifting of the army, the SPLA, out of Juba, which officially started on September 24, demonstrated a serious step toward implementing the agreement, though the process of establishing camps for the troops will take some time to finalize. The start of the withdrawal of Ugandan forces earlier this month also marked a significant step forward. Equally, the September workshop failed to reach a consensus over a number of contentious matters.

Last week’s security workshop was a continuation of this and the two sides have now reached agreement that stipulates that the size of the Presidential Guard will be 1000 troops with 300 bodyguards for the first vice president. Under the IGAD Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict, the first vice-president will be Riek Machar. The workshop also provides for all other government and other military forces to be relocated 25 kilometres outside the capital Juba. This

process has already started. In addition to this, the agreement stipulates the number of troops to protect military facilities and other vital institutions in Juba will be 5,000. The workshop also agreed on security arrangements for the transitional period and a permanent ceasefire, besides the formation of a mechanism to monitor implementation of the ceasefire and identify positions of the two forces in order to separate between forces of the two sides.

Negotiations on the detail of the size and composition of the respective forces involved will continue. The chief negotiator of the SPLM-IO, Taban Deng Gai, said he hoped a high profile advance team of his party would go to Juba in one or two weeks' time. The South Sudan government welcomed the signing of the minutes of the security arrangements, and expressed its own commitment to continue with discussions in Addis Ababa to find lasting solutions to outstanding issues in the agreement.

The agreed document is part of the overall process for the implementation of the deal on security, including the establishment and operation of the Joint Operations Center, and Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism, which will monitor compliance with the Agreement.

....the Report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan

As part of its response to the crisis in South Sudan, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at a Heads of State and Government meeting in Banjul, in December 2013, decided to establish an African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (AUCISS) to investigate human rights violations and other abuses committed during the armed conflict in South Sudan and make recommendations on the best ways and means to ensure accountability, reconciliation and healing among all South Sudanese communities. The two components of the mandate of the AUCISS, investigations and proposed recommendations, were further elaborated in Terms of Reference adopted following the Commission's establishment in March 2014. The Council requested the Commission to submit its report to Council within a maximum period of three months.

The report took somewhat longer than that and it then remained unpublished because of concerns that it might interfere with the IGAD mediation and the peace process. It was not until nearly a year after the AUCISS had completed its investigations and seven months after it had initially tabled one of its reports, that the report was made public. Following a summit level meeting in New York at the end of September, on the sidelines of the 70th meeting of the UN General Assembly, the Peace and Security Council responded to repeated calls from civil society organizations and AU partners for the AUCISS report to be released.

There are in fact two reports: the 315 page 'Final Report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan' published under the authority of the Chairperson of the AUCISS, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo; and 'A Separate Opinion' written by one of the Commissioners, Professor Mahamod Mamdani. Both were released on Tuesday this week (October 27), "for public information purposes only", suggesting that they cannot be used as evidence for legal action.

The AUCISS report details the antecedents of the armed conflict that broke out in South Sudan in mid December to divisions, infighting and violations that emerged among Southern political and armed forces in the course of the North-South civil wars, and particularly to the civil war that broke out in 1983. It also identifies the 1991 split in the SPLM/A as a “defining moment in the life of the movement’ suggesting’ that this laid the seeds of the current violence. It also identifies flaws in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was a major factor that contributed to South Sudan’s eventual descent into civil war as was the SPLM/A monopolization of the peace process to the exclusion of other South Sudanese actors. The report suggests that South Sudan suffered from a lack of accountability and authoritarianism, rampant corruption and the militarization and the ethnicization of politics and the security establishment. The separate opinion of Professor Mamdani went further, saying it is “wrong to think of South Sudan as a failed state – for the simple reason that South Sudan never was a state. There was no bureaucracy, no judiciary, there was nothing to fail,” adding “the simple fact [is] that the very political foundation for the existence of a state – a political compact – has yet to be forged, either within the elite or between the communities that comprise South Sudan.”

The ‘long’ report also identifies immediate precipitating events for the fighting though it also noted the existence of different accounts of what triggered the conflict. It does not, however, believe that evidence suggests there was a coup attempt. It concludes “that the initial fighting within the presidential guard arose out of disagreement and confusion over the alleged order to disarm Nuer members”.

The report demonstrates the level of human rights abuse that had taken place. It notes “reports of people being burnt in places of worship and hospitals, mass burials, women of all ages raped; both elderly and young, women described how they were brutally gang raped, and left unconscious and bleeding, people were not simply shot, they were subjected, for instance, to beatings before being compelled to jump into a lit fire. The Commission heard of some captured people being forced to eat human flesh or forced to drink human blood.” Civilians were the main target of the violations perpetrated in the conflict. The Commission also notes that its investigations “reflect that violations documented were committed in a systematic manner and in most cases with extreme brutality.”

Much of the violence took part in two phases, in Juba between December 16 and 18, and then in the three towns of Bor, Bentiu, and Malakal. In Juba violations were well organized and targeted. Check points were established on the roads in various areas of Juba. The perpetrators of the violations undertook house-to-house searches. This triggered violent response in Jonglei State. The Commission made it clear much the violations involved ethnic mobilization. The main report documents the violations and destruction that took place in Bentui the capital of Unity State, which it describes as “largely destroyed.” Malakal, in Upper Nile, the most contested of the various areas changing hands between the SPLM-IO and Government forces, witnessed the most destruction: ‘the majority of buildings and infrastructure have been destroyed. This includes government buildings and installations, civilian property’”

The Commission concludes that found that war crimes were committed by both sides, in Juba, Bor, Bentiu and Malakal.’ These included unlawful killings of civilians and those believed to be

hors de combat, rape, torture, and forced recruitment of children. Saying that “crimes such as murder, extermination, torture, rape, persecutions on political grounds as well as inhuman and degrading treatment were committed against civilians in various parts of South Sudan” and that these were committed in a widespread or systematic manner, the Commission says it is reasonable to conclude that these crimes amount to crimes against humanity. It said further investigations should be done to identify those responsible.

Overall, the Commission’s report presents a detailed account of the longer term causes and the immediate trigger for the conflict and of the atrocities perpetrated by both sides. It offers an account intended to help South Sudan build a shared memory to fight impunity. It also makes a series of recommendations to set up the processes of transitional justice envisaged in the IGAD sponsored peace agreement, including the proposed Hybrid Court and the Commission on Truth, Healing and Reconciliation. In its recommendations it suggests the future Constitution should establish a well-balanced system of separation of powers with adequate checks and balances. This should be achieved through empowering and strengthening the capacity of the legislatures at both levels of government; subjecting major executive appointments to legislative approval; strengthening the judiciary, (ensuring structural and financial independence from the political branches) and adherence to separation of powers, cultivating a culture of respect for judicial independence and rule of law.