

News in Brief

OCHA and WFP say Ethiopia is responding effectively to the drought

IGAD and the UN sign a Joint Framework for Peace and Security Cooperation

Somali consultations on the 2016 electoral process

The Valetta EU-Africa 2015 Summit on Migration and Action Plan

AfDB' Development Effectiveness Review of Ethiopia

The African Media Leaders Forum in South Africa

Regional conference on the future of Private Military and Security Companies

News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The first High-Level Dialogue between IGAD and the United Nations took place in Djibouti on November 16 and 17, and the two sides signed a Joint Framework for Cooperation on Peace and Security. This provides IGAD and the UN Secretariats to institutionalize a partnership to enhance the region's resilience and its ability to effectively manage conflicts by taking advantage of the complementarities of the two institutions. **(See article)**

The African Union bade farewell to Africa's longest serving diplomat, Ambassador Konjit Sine-Giorgis of Ethiopia, on Monday (November 16). Ambassador Konjit was given a colorful farewell party by the East African Group and the African Union Commission. Ambassador Konjit, who described her career as her life, said "There's no greater honor than serving one's country to the fullest."

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, on behalf of the Government and People of Ethiopia, unreservedly condemning the horrific terrorist attacks in Paris on Friday November 13, expressed his deepest condolences to all the families of the victims of the appalling tragedy. Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom also expressed "Our sympathies and condolences to the families of the victims of the terror attack in Paris and Our solidarity is with the people and government of France."

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros met Dr. Mark Suzman, the President of the Global Policy and Advocacy and Country programs of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on Monday (November 16).

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros met with Galmudug President Abdikarin Hussein Guled in Addis Ababa on Wednesday (November 18). The Galmudug President welcomed Ethiopia's commitment to support Somalia and the fight against terrorism.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie met with a Bangladesh delegation led by Sikdre Bodiruzzaman, Director General for External Publicity of Ministry of Foreign affairs of Bangladesh on Thursday (November 19).

The State Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation, Ahmed Shide told the sixth Joint Review and Implementation Support meeting on Monday (November 16) that Ethiopia had registered remarkable achievements in its Promoting Basic Services (PBS) program in health, education, road construction, potable water supply and other sectors. The program had achieved poverty reduction and economic growth as well as Millennium Development Goals.

The State Minister Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Wondyirad Mandefro, launched the 12 billion birr second phase of the Ministry's agriculture action plan at Bishoftu town on Saturday (November 14) to boost agricultural productivity for four million households.

The 1st Ethio-Belgium business and investment conference opened in Addis Ababa on Thursday (November 19) with representatives of more than 60 Belgian companies present. The conference was opened by State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie and Belgium's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Didier Nagant.

Getachew Reda, head of the Government Communication Affairs Office with the rank of Minister said on Monday (November 16) that the Government was increasing the supply of emergency food aid and other support to people living in drought affected areas of the country. The Government was taking every measure possible to avoid any loss of life from the drought. **(See article)**

The African Development Bank Development Effectiveness report on Ethiopia 2015 was launched on Wednesday (November 18) in Addis Ababa. **(See article)**

The World Food Program (WFP) announced on Thursday (November 19) that thanks to timely contributions from donors, that it is able to continue food distributions later this month for more than 1.5 million people in the Somali region of Ethiopia, and can scale up nutritional help to more than 700,000 children and nursing mothers in the most seriously drought-affected areas.

Ethiopian Airlines was named Airline of the Year last week by the African Airlines Association at the Association's 47th Annual General Assembly for the fourth year in a row.

Eritrea

The Governor of Sudan's Kassala state has recently finished a ten day visit to Eritrea during which he and his delegation held meetings with president Isaias and with the governors of the Eritrean regions neighboring to Kassala state. A number of bilateral agreements were reached over services and in security areas.

Kenya

President Uhuru Kenyatta criticized the International Criminal Court on Sunday (November 15), saying Kenya was "tired of interference" in its internal affairs.

The International Crisis Group (ICG) produced a report on Devolution and Security in the Somali speaking areas of Kenya's North East this week. It said devolved government had been undermined by clan disputes and corruption, allowing Al-Shabaab to operate relatively easily. The ICG suggested more resources should be allocated to increase development and aid to support successful devolution and enhance Kenyan and regional security.

The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation officially launched Iftiin FM radio this week. Iftiin broadcasts in the Somali language and the launch was attended by leaders especially from the north east of the country, including National Assembly majority leader Adan Duale.

Somalia

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud attended the African Global Business Forum in Dubai November 17-18. He told the Forum in Dubai that his government wanted a political solution in addition to military action to end the conflict with Al-Shabaab. He also said all necessary institutions were now in place in Somalia to transform the economy, including a functioning central bank. The President met with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, on November 19.

The two day regional consultations focusing on the proposed electoral process for next year's election were launched on Monday (November 16) across the country. The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Somalia, Nicholas Kay, described it as a major step forward to facilitate the electoral process for 2016. **(See article)**

Foreign Affairs Minister Abdusalam Omer and the Somali Ambassador to the U.S. Ambassador Ahmed Issa Awad joined US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield on Wednesday (November 18) at the re-opening of the Somali embassy in Washington for the first time in 25 years.

The Somali Government has submitted its Intended National Determined Contribution (INDC) to the UN on Tuesday (November 17). It includes proposals for a charcoal export ban as well as promoting alternative energy sources like clean cooking stoves and greener livelihoods as well as cleaning up the country's coastline, restoring mangroves and stopping illegal fishing.

The UN's Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović, who ended a five day visit to Mogadishu on Tuesday (November 18) said that the country's progress was "at risk" without increased support from international partners to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights. He called on the Government and all security forces to take measures to prevent and address violations of international human rights and humanitarian law

Two hundred Somali Police recruits celebrated the completion of three months of training in Baidoa on Tuesday (November 17). They are the first group of trained police officers to be posted in police stations in the Interim South West Administration.

South Sudan

President Salva Kiir said on Wednesday (November 18) that implementation of the peace process “comes with challenges and high costs” and that South Sudan will struggle to resettle thousands of refugees and those displaced during the conflict because low world oil prices.

Parliament has amended the current transitional constitution of 2011, giving President Salva Kiir power to create more states and appoint governors but it also delayed implementation of the recent controversial presidential order raising the number of states from 10 to 28.

The UK’s International Development Minister Grant Shapps made a three day visit to South Sudan this week for talks with the South Sudanese officials on peace implementation and the humanitarian situation. He said he aimed to discuss ways to face post conflict challenges.

A planned summit of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development leaders in Juba has been rescheduled to November 23, because of previous commitments.

The UNHCR office in Addis Ababa said on Saturday (November 14) that the number of South Sudan refugees crossing the border into Ethiopia has shown a significant decline during the recent weeks, with no more than an average of six refugees a day arriving at the border. Last year up to 2,000 people a day were crossing to escape the fighting.

Sudan

Sudanese government and rebel groups met this week in Addis Ababa under auspices of the AU High-Level Panel to discuss security arrangements in the states of Blue Nile, South Kordofan and the Darfur region, as well as for separate talks on the Two Areas. The Government and armed groups pledged to exert the necessary efforts to reach a humanitarian cessation of hostilities and work for peace and stability in the whole country on Thursday (November 19).

AUHIP held a separate meeting on Thursday (November 19) on the conflict in Darfur region and extended proposals for a cessation of hostilities to the delegations of the Sudanese government and armed groups.

The new head of the African Union-United Nations mission in Darfur (UNAMID), Martin Ihoeghian Uhomobhi, visited Khartoum on Thursday (November 19) to introduce himself to government officials to facilitate interaction between UNAMID and the Government. He met with the Foreign Minister, the Minister of Defense and the Director of the National Intelligence and Security Services.

USAID has extended the International Organisation for Migration IOM-USAID Abyei Rehabilitation Initiative funding until 2018. The program started in 2013 originally focused on reconstructing infrastructure in Abyei town. Subsequently it has been involved in vocational and livelihood training and engaging students in peace-building and conflict mitigation activities with strong emphasis on supporting women and youth.

OCHA and WFP say Ethiopia is responding effectively to the drought

The United Nation’s Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in a report on November 10 indicated that the Ethiopian Government’s response to the El Nino-induced phenomenon, and to the related drought and food shortages, had been impressive. Indeed, Paul Handley, head of UNOCHA said “the leadership and commitment of the government in driving this response has been exceptional.” He added that it had “already allocated more than US\$200 million of its own funds to procure relief items and conduct emergency livestock and water interventions.” This appreciation was shared by Mr. Samir Wanmali, Acting Country Director for the UN’s World Food Programme who also noted that: “Ethiopia today is far different from the Ethiopia of the past. Ethiopia has a robust disaster risk management system in place to respond to the needs of its people. With the Government’s leadership and support from the international community, we will mitigate the worst of El Nino’s effect.” He added that “We need to ensure that this natural disaster does not affect the remarkable progress that Ethiopia has made over the past decade.”

The latest joint assessment of the impact and effect of the drought, made jointly last month by partners and the Government, showed that 8.2 million people were in need of food aid. Getachew Reda, Head of the Government Communications Affairs Office with the rank of Minister, said that the government would delay development projects if necessary to ensure that no lives were lost as a result of the El Nino- induced drought. He noted, however, that the risks from the drought were not the kind that warranted closing down of development projects. He pointed out that the number of people needing aid would increase or decrease depending on the assessments being made, and said that the Ethiopian Government had no appetite to debate numbers of those at risk given out by different sources and different partners. He said it was customary for international aid partners and NGOs to come up with bigger numbers in order to encourage increased amounts of aid. The Ethiopian Government, he said, was well aware of the real facts on the ground and it had little interest in passing moral judgments on whether such a practice, of giving higher figures of those at risk, was right or not. The central principle for the Government, he said, was that its efforts should leave no stone unturned in order to save lives. The Ethiopian Government, he emphasized, would continue to take the lion’s share in the efforts to mitigate the effects of the drought. Equally, he stressed it would also partner with all local and international partners to help reverse the impact of the El Nino.

In fact, the Government, despite any claims by some Diaspora-based media critics, has been taking every possible measure to ensure that the drought should not be accompanied by heavy loss of either human life or animal deaths. As soon as it became clear that the El Nino effect was going to be serious, it established a National Drought Coordination Committee, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, to coordinate emergency relief action. It has already allocated close to 6 billion birr for the purchase of extra food items. The Deputy Prime Minister said in a recent interview that the government purchased some 600,000 metric tons of food. So far 200,000 tons have arrived Djibouti port. According to Ato Getachew, the Government is now working on the option of using the new Ethio-Djibouti railway line to ensure the speedy transport of this food aid from Djibouti. The nearly complete railway will be used to transport

food up as far as Mojo or Adama and it will then be transported to the areas where it is needed by lorry. The Deputy Prime Minister said that towns to act as centers for food distribution had been selected across the most drought affected areas. Responding to local media questions, he said that “no single victim of the drought had been forced to leave their locality because of a delay in the arrival of food aid nor had anyone died due to hunger”.

To help lessen the effect of the El Nino phenomenon, a series of other measures are also being put into operation. Many of these focus on early collection of the harvest particularly in areas where there had been the threat of untimely rain threatening to spoil the harvest. According to Ato Getachew this has involved organizing and hiring of large numbers of people, or using members of the armed forces, to support farmers in harvesting as soon and as quickly as possible. Another element in the Government precautions has been the provision of fodder to save the lives of animals, and this is well underway. In some areas where there is a serious shortage of water, the drilling of extra wells is being undertaken, and where necessary the Government is also providing for the vehicular distribution of water. Last week, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources announced that the country was implementing further drought management mechanisms with district level command posts, coupled with a system put in place by the Ministry to provide information for the streamlining of measures and priorities.

Ato Getachew noted that the Government was using its food reserve to respond to the food shortage. Of course, he said, was not a sustainable response. The reserve was sufficient to deal with the failure of the *belg* rains but with addition of the insufficient *meher* season rains, the number of aid seekers had risen sharply. The Government had, therefore, resorted to massive food purchases and had appealed for international support. He firmly denied the allegation that purchases of food had caused a shortage of foreign currency. The shortage of foreign currency, he said, was an old problem related to low performance in the export sector. It had nothing to do with food purchases.

The UN OCHA report indicated that international donors were beginning to respond to the Government’s appeal. The report said: “International donors have also been mobilizing resources to fill critical funding gaps and support the Government’s response efforts.” It said that since September 30, new donor commitments to the emergency exceeded US\$120 million, but added that “While this is impressive, much more is urgently needed.” Thanks to the early warning and careful tracking of the progression of the effects of El Niño in the Horn of Africa, USAID food assistance contributions have been early and robust. USAID’s Office of Food for Peace has now provided more than 154,000 tons of emergency food assistance to address “the food needs of approximately 3.5 million Ethiopians as well as refugees from Somalia, South Sudan and Eritrea who have fled conflict in their own countries.” The USAID is also contributing US\$58 million to its partner Catholic Relief Services for 105,700 tons of U.S. food; providing US\$19 million to the UN World Food Program for its drought relief operations, and US\$20 million for its refugee assistance. The United States has also pre-positioned relief commodities in Ethiopia to meet anticipated increased needs from El Niño. The Government’s active and consistent communication with donors has meant that donors are aware of the problem and Sweden, Norway, Canada, Switzerland, Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States either have made pledges of contributions in response to the emergency or will do so. Others are looking to re-program development budgets for emergency response. Among other donations has

been the release of US\$17 million from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund to support people affected by the drought; and, this week, China's agreement to provide 163 million Birr of emergency food aid.

The command posts under the National Drought Coordinating Committee are ensuring that the food aid reaches the drought affected areas. As the Deputy Prime Minister told local journalists last week the situation is under the continuous surveillance of the Committee. The Committee meets every week to review the situation and provide for responses as extensively as necessary to specific areas. Overall, as Ato Getachew underlined, the relief effort is well underway and while the situation remains serious, the Government, with the assistance of its international partners, is taking the necessary measures to meet it.

IGAD and the UN sign a Joint Framework for Peace and Security Cooperation

A two day High-Level Dialogue in Djibouti between IGAD and the United Nations (November 16 and 17) resulted in the signing of a Joint Framework for Cooperation on Peace and Security between IGAD and the UN Department for Political Affairs. The agreement was signed on Tuesday (November 17) in the presence of IGAD Member States, the Secretariats of IGAD and the UN, UN Agencies and the African Union in Djibouti City. Under this Framework, IGAD and the UN Secretariats will institutionalize their partnership to enhance the region's resilience and its ability to effectively manage conflicts by taking advantage of the complementarities of the two institutions.

Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking on behalf of the Government of Ethiopia and of the Chair of IGAD, opened the meeting. He noted that the agenda for the dialogue included peace and security threats, peace processes and mediation in the IGAD region, and natural resource management. He noted that the fragile peace in Sudan, Al-Shabaab activities in Somalia and the region, and Eritrea's continued support to insurgents and terrorists, and the unexpected and substantial impact of the El Nino phenomenon made up a formidable list of problems. This required cooperation and coordination not just between IGAD member states but also between IGAD and other regional and international agencies including the United Nations. He emphasized that IGAD and its leaders were committed and determined to address the peace and security challenges of the region, but they were constrained by limited human, technical and financial capacity. This was why it constrained to rely so heavily on the support of friendly countries and international donors.

He underlined the United Nations' long history of cooperation with IGAD states and with IGAD itself and he urged the High Level Dialogue to consider further possible areas of cooperation to enhance IGAD's resilience and capacity to predict and respond to conflicts. Ambassador Taye added that this was not to say that IGAD should depend upon donors to address conflict problems but rather that the IGAD-UN partnership should focus on building up IGAD's capacity to respond effectively to the challenges. In other words, he said, to support IGAD enhance its resilience and broaden its institutional mandate.

Ambassador Taye also reaffirmed Ethiopia's determined commitment to stand by the ideals of IGAD to promote the resilience and development of the region. Ethiopia, he said, was very clear that peace and security were pre-requisites for the economic development and regional integration IGAD envisages. It sees IGAD as an organization that can work effectively to meet the challenges of peace and security and promote sustained economic growth and regional integration. He added that it was in this spirit of regional cooperation that Ethiopia contributed to peace keeping missions in neighboring countries and it was actively engaged in major infrastructure projects for regional economic development and integration. He concluded: "A region interconnected by economic benefits will help stimulate peace, security and stability, promote democracy and good governance and eventually regional integration."

During the two day High-Level Dialogue, the two sides discussed options for strengthening their cooperation in the field of peace and security, particularly in consolidating their partnership in conflict prevention, conflict management, peace making and peace building and counter-terrorism. The Dialogue also provided an occasion to explore opportunities for cooperation in mitigating the effects and addressing the root causes of instability in the IGAD region and outline joint strategies for action.

The two sides agreed that the rising violent extremism in the IGAD region was one of the most serious threats to regional peace and security and could undermine efforts to foster sustainable development. They agreed on the need for a comprehensive approach to involve security-based counter-terrorism measures and multi-pronged prevention-based approaches to address the drivers of violent extremism. They stressed the promotion and protection of human rights must be central to this and emphasized the need for a stronger and more integrated capacity-building focus.

With regard to peace processes and mediation, they underlined the primacy of political solutions as well as the importance of prevention and mediation. They stressed the importance of meaningful participation of women and local communities and noted that enhancing partnerships remained critical to making mediation more effective. Clarity of roles and responsibilities based on comparative advantages, the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity of efforts was therefore essential.

Participants discussed potential areas of future cooperation, including joint analyses of problems, sharing information and expertise and exploring further opportunities for capacity development. IGAD shared examples from its engagements in conflict mediation in the region. They also underscored the need to promote conflict-sensitive management of natural resources and agreed to work together to share experiences and good practices. Natural resources, including fresh water, rivers, oil, gas and mineral reserves, agricultural land and marine resources, could all play a part on promoting social development and economic growth. They could also become triggers for conflict if not managed in a conflict-sensitive manner. The two parties expressed their determination to continue to strengthen the existing IGAD implementation and mediation capacities and further work on early warning indicators to monitor emerging natural resource and environmental challenges in the region.

IGAD and the UN Secretariats also stressed their willingness to strengthen partnership in the areas noted in the framework, and in particular conflict analysis and research; addressing existing and emerging security threats; conflict early warning and response; conflict management and resolution; promoting democracy and good governance; and resource mobilization. Participants welcomed the Joint Framework of Cooperation as an important step to further strengthen their cooperation and the commitment to sustainable solutions to peace and security challenges. They emphasized that a joint approach by all, political, humanitarian and development actors, remained essential for achieving sustainable solutions for peace and security in the IGAD region.

In his closing remarks, IGAD Executive Secretary, Mahboub Maalim, said the Joint Framework was a great opportunity for both organizations to offer the region great support. Mr. Taye-Brook Zerihoun, UN Assistant –Secretary General for Political Affairs, said the Joint Framework would provide mutual benefit to IGAD, the UN and IGAD Member States and the results would be seen by all stakeholders.

Somali consultations on the 2016 electoral process

Two days of regional consultations on the electoral process to be conducted in 2016 began in locations across Somalia on Monday (November 16). Several of the regions, including the Interim Administrations in South West, Jubaland, and Galmudug states, launched welcoming ceremonies for the consultations, coupled with civic education events, the day before, on November 15. In Baidoa, South West President Sharif Hassan noted that the occasion was a major step forward for Somalia to be able to hold consultative meetings simultaneously in many parts of the country. He encouraged delegates to openly debate their ideas and agree on the best way forward for the 2016 elections. In Kismayo, more than 200 people attended the pre-consultation opening, at which the Interim Jubaland Administration Minister of Interior and National Security, Mohamed Warsame ‘Darwiish,’ underlined the importance of the consultations and urged delegates to contribute actively to the discussions. There were similar pre-consultation meetings in Dhobley (Lower Juba) and Garbahaarrey (Gedo). In Adaado in Galmudug state, President Abdikarim Hussein Guled welcomed more than 150 participants and stressed the need to identify the most realistic electoral model for 2016.

The regional consultations formally opened across the country on Monday, in Adaado, Baidoa, Kismayo, Dhobely and Garbaharey, as well as in Garowe and five other locations in Puntland, and in Mogadishu. The only consultation that did not start was the one planned for Somalilanders in Mogadishu. In Kismayo, the regional consultation was opened by the second Vice-President of the Interim Jubaland Administration, Ahmed Abdikadir ‘Lugadhere.’ After an opening ceremony, at which ‘Lugadhere’ acknowledged that women’s participation in the process of forming the regional assembly had been insufficient, delegates divided into eight groups of 25 participants to begin discussing the four options contained in the facilitation guide. The consultations were well-organised. Over 260 delegates attended the Kismayo consultation, with good representation of women. In Dhobley and Garbaharey, more than 150 delegates took part in the discussions. Overall, the consensus in Jubaland appeared to favour a district-level model quite strongly, although some representatives expressed reservations and there was also some

support for the possible combination of a district-based system with the 4.5 formula. The Swedish Ambassador Mikael Lindvall represented the international community in Kismayo.

In Garowe, Puntland President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali ‘Gaas’ officially opened the regional consultations across Puntland. He noted the importance of the process and stressed that the Government could and should not impose its views on delegates. There were also opening remarks from the Speaker of Parliament, the Deputy Governor of Nugaal, the Mayor of Garowe, a women’s representative and a traditional leader. Ethiopia represented the diplomatic community. The Puntland Non-State Actors Association, which had taken the lead in selecting the facilitators and identifying civil society representatives, also spoke. Following an introductory overview of the options by a member of the Task Force, participants met in working groups. All over Puntland, there were approximately 100 delegates per location, including a 30% quota for women, 20% government representatives, 18% intellectuals, 17% youth, and 15% elders and religious leaders. There were five facilitators per location and at least one MP and a minister from the relevant constituencies.

In Baidoa, the Interim South West State Administration deliberations began and concluded on 16 November. The formal welcoming ceremony, attended by President Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden on November 15, was also attended by at least 300 representatives from the regional administration, civil society, elders and religious leaders, as well as women and youth from Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle regions. The Federal Minister of Women and Human Rights Development, Zahra Samatar was present as was Halima Ismail Ibrahim, Chair of the National Independent Electoral Commission as an observer. Minister Zahra Samatar formally closed the consultation on 16 November after open discussion in the breakout groups which expressed a strong preference for a 4.5-based electoral model.

In Adaado, in Galmudug, the opening plenary session as well as subsequent discussions in six breakout groups proceeded smoothly. There was good female representation, and the facilitators did a good job. Deliberations within the working groups appeared to indicate a general preference for a 4.5-based option.

In Mogadishu, 150 participants gathered at the City Palace Hotel, representing Benadir and Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle states. The Governor of Benadir opened the proceedings, followed by the Deputy Governors of Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle. There was representation from the indigenous Benadiri community, and over 30 women present. After welcoming remarks, participants divided into eight breakout groups and discussed the options. An EU representative was present at the proceedings.

Overall, the regional consultations appear to have been successful, well-organised and well-attended, meeting the primary objective of focussing on the question of the implications, advantages and disadvantages of the various electoral options and less on individual preferences. There were some clear preferences expressed with an expected divergence between those favouring a district-level model and those supporting of a 4.5 system preserving the existing clan balance. It appears that a model combining elements of more than one option might represent a workable and widely acceptable way forward.

The regional consultations proceeded without major obstacles despite some difficulties over the logistics of getting federal ministers and members of the task force to some of the locations for the discussions. The training organized by the Technical Support Team for the facilitators of discussions worked well. 32 of the facilitators were trained in Mogadishu, another 8 in Garowe. Facilitators were generally well-prepared, demonstrated a good understanding of the process and the four electoral models, and managed to guide discussions in accordance with the prescribed focus on advantages and disadvantages of all the options.

The Valetta EU-Africa 2015 Summit on Migration and Action Plan

The High-Level Summit on Migration that took place in Valletta, Malta, last week (November 11 and 12) with the attendance of Heads of States from Africa and the EU countries was intended primarily to build on the existing partnership processes between Europe and Africa concerning the EU-Africa dialogue on migration and mobility and come up with common solutions to the challenge migration and refugees was posing to both Africa and Europe. The Summit essentially placed on the table five agenda items related to addressing “the push and pull factors” of current migration movements and mobility concerns as well as protection of migrants. The areas covered included the aim of creating a cooperation agreement and funding between the EU and Africa to provide a common solution particularly in areas of improving the promotion and organization of legal migration channels; helping to create peace, stability and economic development in countries of origin by addressing root causes of migration; enhancing the protection of migrants and asylum seekers, particularly members of vulnerable groups; producing mechanisms to tackle the exploitation and trafficking of migrants; and working more closely to improve cooperation on readmission and return. Overall the Summit aimed to put in place agreements on an Action Plan and produce a joint final declaration to address the mutual challenges faced by Europe and Africa over migration and mobility.

At the end of the two days of high level discussion, the EU-Africa Summit on Migration 2015, issued a political declaration and an action plan. The final political declaration began by stating that it recalled the joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development of 2006, the Africa-EU declaration on Migration and Mobility of 2014, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the respective Declarations of the Ministerial Conferences of the Rabat Process and of the Khartoum Process on November 27 and November 28 last year. Participants stated they were deeply concerned by the sharp increase in flows of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The Summit leaders agreed to respond decisively and together manage these movements and flows in all their aspects, guided by the principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. They declared that the high degree of interdependence between Africa and Europe was a common challenge that had an impact on migration, and promoting democracy, human rights, stability and security, eradicating poverty, supporting socio-economic development, including rural development, mitigation and adaptation to the effects of climate change were also challenges that affected all. They underlined the need for a comprehensive approach to boost sustainable economic, social and environmental development and ensure that human being can fulfil their potential to live in dignity and equality. They fully recognized the benefits of well-managed migration and mobility between and within

the continents. They emphasized the need to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. They identified some causes as being short-term and requiring immediate measures; other causes were structural, relating to state fragility and insecurity, as well as to long-term demographic and economic trends.

The leaders specified that the core problems related to reducing poverty, promoting peace, good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights, supporting the creation of decent jobs and investment opportunities, improving the delivery of basic services such as education, health and security, must be at the core of any common action. In this context, they therefore agreed to launch a number of priority initiatives before the end of 2016 as a response to some of the challenges both continents were currently facing and agreed to implement these through the existing dialogue provided for in the joint Action Plan

The Action Plan of the Migration Summit presented what were classified as major and quick solution delivery mechanisms to deal with the challenges of migration and mobility. A central element was the implementation of the recently announced EU Emergency Trust Fund for Stability. This addresses root causes of irregular migration and displacement in Africa, providing additional funding to contribute to the flexible, speedy and efficient delivery of support to foster stability and provide jobs in countries of origin and contribute to better migration management. The Action Plan clarifies the areas where actions should be taken on migration and mobility, addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, and boosting socio-economic development, particularly by creating job opportunities, especially for young women and men, and enhancing sustainable livelihoods and self-reliance opportunities for displaced persons with countries of origin as well as in host communities. The Plan also calls for including the areas of mainstreaming migration in development cooperation and covers support for promoting the development benefits of migration including the promotion of cheaper, safer, legally-compliant and faster transfers of remittances. It includes the intention of facilitating productive domestic investment, and promoting Diaspora engagement with countries of origin. The Action Plan also addresses the problems of instability and crisis and the intention of taking action with regard to conflict and related aspects. It decided that a special focus should be given to the situation in individual countries, notably in the region of the Sahel, Lake Chad and the Horn of Africa. It also planned to strengthen EU-Africa partnerships to help prevent new conflicts, support state building, the rule of law and good governance and to reinforce state capacity to ensure security and fight terrorist threats.

The Action Plan specifically commits the EU-Africa Summit to implement a number of initiatives by the end of 2016. These include projects to enhance employment opportunities and revenue-generating activities in regions of origin and transit of migrants and projects linking relief, rehabilitation and development in peripheral and most vulnerable areas characterised by instability, forced displacement and irregular migration. This is intended to provide a targeted response to tackle the main determinants of vulnerability such as poverty, marginalisation, exclusion and destitution. Operationalization of the African Institute on Remittances to serve as a focal point for all stakeholders in African remittances, and as a hub through which technical assistance and capacity building would be provided to AU states and ministries, banks, and other financial institutions. The proposed measures doubling the number of scholarships for students, launching pilot projects that pool offers for legal migration organise, in the framework

of the Rabat and Khartoum processes and the Migration and Mobility Dialogue, workshops on visa facilitation. It says Regional Development and Protection Programs in the Horn of Africa and North Africa to address the protection and developmental needs of people suffering long-term displacement and their host communities should be running by mid 2016. These will focus on durable solutions, enhancing protection capacities of hosting countries, and creating development and livelihood opportunities for displaced populations as well as improving the quality of the asylum process, in close cooperation with UNHCR, in countries of origin, transit and destination. Develop targeted projects to improve resilience, safety and self-reliance of refugees in camps; establish or upgrade national and regional anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking legislation; identify single national contact points for anti-smuggling and trafficking activities; implement projects focused on strengthening institutional capacities to fight against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings; and organize information campaigns in countries of origin, transit and destination, to raise awareness of the dangers of trafficking; to organize missions by immigration officials from Africa to European countries in order to identify nationalities of irregular migrants to strengthen the logistical and operational capacity of the authorities of countries of origin to respond to readmission applications; and finally to launch projects in countries of origin to support the reintegration of returnees into their communities.

Some concerns have been expressed over the details of the Action Plan and over the practicalities of implementation not least over whether the financing of it through the EU Emergency Trust Fund will be sufficient. The US\$1.9bn Emergency Trust Fund is in addition to the \$20bn the EU already spends on development assistance in Africa every year, and it is supposed to be boosted by contributions from individual member states, but only a small amount had been pledged so far. Senegal's President Macky Sall, expressed doubt whether the money pledged was "enough for the whole of Africa" and said later he would like to see it "more generously financed". Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou echoed these sentiments. Somalia's Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Sharmarke told the BBC that what Africa needed today was not charity, but investment. A meeting at Senior Officials level is to take place no later than January 2017 to look at the overall progress in the implementation of the Action Plan.

There has also been concern that the EU is placing too much emphasis on "containment and return policies" and, equally, considerable skepticism over whether it is possible to provide effective development assistance in some areas, notably Eritrea, a major source of refugees to Europe. As we pointed out last week, those fleeing Eritrea claim they are leaving because of the actions of the Government of Eritrea and in particular its human rights abuse as the catalogue of evidence assembled by experts from the UN Monitoring Group and the UN Human Rights Commission of Enquiry demonstrates. The record of the Eritrean Government in its relations with the EU does not inspire confidence in the possibility of initiating an effective policy of political re-engagement with Eritrea. The United Nations Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights in Eritrea said in its report earlier this year: "The Government of Eritrea is responsible for systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations that have created a climate of fear in which dissent is stifled, a large proportion of the population is subjected to forced labor and imprisonment, and hundreds of thousands of refugees have fled the country. Some of these violations may constitute crimes against humanity." Commentators have repeatedly pointed out there is no positive evidence that President Isaias and his government have any intention of moving away from current policies and engaging with Eritrea without

visible, concrete changes in the regime’s policies and practices is pointless. Equally, there is “every likelihood” that any aid provided to Eritrea would be diverted into Eritrea’s military, thereby threatening further destabilization in the region and given the lack of transparency in Eritrean finances, “the EU would be in no position to prevent diversion.”

AfDB’ Development Effectiveness Review of Ethiopia

The African Development Bank (AfDB), one of the most trustworthy partners of Ethiopia for half a century, officially launched its “Development Effectiveness Review on Ethiopia” on Wednesday (November 18). The Review examines Ethiopia’s recent development challenges and assesses the African Development Bank’s contribution to these. The Review also looks at how effectively the Bank has managed its operations and its organization in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is one of the largest recipients of African Development Fund resources with an active Bank portfolio of US\$1.7 Billion at the end of 2014. According to the AfDB’s Vice-President of Operations, in charge of country and regional programs, Janvier Litse, “Ethiopia’s strong economic growth provides an excellent platform for tackling the country’s many development challenges. Its ambitious public investment program is equal to one-third of its GDP, well above the regional average.” The Vice-President in his note in the Review disclosed that the country’s pro-poor budgets and investments had helped to ensure that its growth was inclusive. He noted that 2.5 million Ethiopians had been lifted out of poverty over the past eight years. However, Mr. Litse added, as one of Africa’s largest and most populous countries, Ethiopia also faced some daunting challenges. He noted that agriculture, a sector which provided nearly half of Ethiopia’s economic output, was still largely rain-fed and therefore vulnerable to drought. He emphasized that shifting more of the workforce into agro-processing and other light manufacturing was the key to linking Ethiopia into global value chains and creating lasting prosperity.

The overview of the effectiveness report was presented by Dr. Victoria Chisala, Division Manager in the Quality Assurance and Results Department. The Review was carried out with a performance scorecard in which four major measurement frameworks were the main assessment pillars: development in Ethiopia; how the AfDB contributed to Ethiopia’s development; how well the AfDB managed its operations in Ethiopia; and how efficient the Bank was as an organization in the country. Each of these was expressed in terms of color ranging from green to red to indicate the degree to which performance hit its target or not as the case might be.

Ethiopia’s relative performance was measured by comparing its progress with that of its peers in other countries receiving African Development Fund assistance. Its development progress between 2005 and 2013 was largely given a green light underlining that this was strong and indeed better than most of its peers. Ethiopia’s GDP growth, total investment, unemployment, paved roads, access to improved water source, access to electricity, mobile cellular subscribers, life expectancy, infant mortality rate, enrolment in primary education, global hunger index, corruption perception score, time required for start-up and commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults and other performance indicators all earned green status. However, Ethiopia also earned yellow status for a number of issues related to sustaining growth. These included time to

export, cost of trading across borders and global competitiveness. Here, progress was seen as positive as but less than that of other countries. Two areas in which Ethiopia's relative performance earned a red light were income inequality and the cost of business start up. Income inequality, measured by the Gini-coefficient has increased from 30 to 30.4 though the Review said this could still be favorably compared with the average of 42.5 in low income countries in Africa. Equally, much remained to be done. The cost of business start-up has increased from 65% of income per capita in 2005 to 100%.

The second performance measurement was how the AfDB had contributed to Ethiopia's development. This identified Bank operations as achieving 95% or more of its targets in infrastructure development and skills and technology. However, the Bank's contribution on private sector development was not so impressive with reference to improved water management and reforestation. The Bank provided 10,340 hectares of land with improved water management compared to its target of nearly 22,000 hectares; and the amount of land which had been improved through replanting or reforestation was only 36% of the target.

The third measurement dealt with the way the AfDB managed its operations in the country. This assessment covered the Bank's progress on selection, design and supervision of its operations. In other words it looked at how well the AfDB worked with the Ethiopian Government and other development partners to increase the effectiveness of its assistance. The main features in this evaluation included supervision of operations, the substantial decrease in projects at risk and projects with satisfactory gender equality outcome. The Review noted that the Bank was working in close partnership with the Ethiopian Government and other development partners, and in recent years the Bank had been doing this more effectively in designing high quality projects, maximizing the development impact and focusing more on implementation challenges as well as other areas.

The final element in these framework measures was consideration of the AfDB's efficiency as an organization in Ethiopia. The AfDB used 14 indicators to assess its progress, among the most important ones being moving closer to its clients, engaging and mobilizing staff as well as improving business processes and cost efficiency. In this respect, almost all the indicators earned a green light. The Review identified the Bank as an organization which was effectively and efficiently functioning in the country. According to the data provided in the Review, this was largely as result of the effectiveness of the recently introduced policy of decentralization in the Bank. This had increased its visibility and made it better placed to participate in country-led development processes.

Overall, the Development Effectiveness Review of Ethiopia showed the impressive progress the country has made in recent years. It identified the AfDB's programs as one among relatively few reliable approaches that fuelled the progress of the country by having financing some 118 projects with a total value of US\$4 billion. These also provided a particular emphasis on expanding road infrastructure to improve access to market services and support to energy generation. The Review strongly commended Ethiopia's architecture of aid coordination, paying special attention to the annual High Level Forum which provides a platform for the formal dialogue between the Government and development partners.

The Review also made specific mention of Ethiopia's agricultural production which it considered among the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this context, the Bank recommended helping farmers to move from subsistence agriculture to commercial farming, scaling up the use of modern farming practices, providing access to credit and producing high level crops for export. Josephine Ngure, resident representative of the AfDB, in her closing remarks at the launch of the Review commented that the AfDB had provided relatively smaller assistance to the agriculture sector in the past. It would focus more on that in the future, she said. Ms. Ngure underlined the lack of available data in preparing the Development Effectiveness Review, and also emphasized the importance of moving away from aid to internal resource mobilization for Ethiopia and for the countries of the continent in the future. This was, she said, eventually inevitable.

The African Media Leaders Forum in South Africa

The 7th African Media Leaders Forum held its annual Summit last week (November 11-13) in Johannesburg. Under the theme of "Shaping Development Conversations in Africa: The Role of Media in a Digital Environment", the meeting aimed to foster ideas and action that will bring positive change to the continent's media landscape and industry agendas. The African Media Leader's Forum is the flagship of the African Media Initiative and has met every year since 2008 with the exception of last year when the Ebola crisis led to difficulties in inter-regional and intra-continental travel. The Forum is the largest gathering of African media leaders and operators and offers a unique space to network, showcase innovative projects and share commitments towards making media more effective in promoting good governance. It also offers the opportunity to reflect on continental realities, aspirations and priorities as well as Africa's position in the world. The African Media Initiative itself is focused on improving media content, ethics, and professionalism, and its CEO, Eric Chinje underlined the point when he noted that: "Media must view its challenges through the greater prism of Africa's challenges and work to build stronger societies. Media cannot grow if the societies and economies in which they operate do not grow."

The Forum was formally opened by President Jacob Zuma of South Africa and in a keynote speech at the opening session the President of Mauritius, Dr. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, told the audience of experts in media, technology, development, and policy formulation that "Media owners and practitioners must be active, not passive in tackling development topics, generating local solutions while nurturing citizen engagement and development debate." She encouraged the media to "become activists, not pacifists in the search for Africa-centric development solutions that are economically viable, socially relevant and environmentally benign". The opening session also heard speeches from Dr Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa; Mr. Jeff Radebe, Minister for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, South African Presidency; and the AU Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, Bineta Dio, President of Femmes Africa Solidarité, who called on the media to "serve as a catalyst for change by shifting the narrative on women and bringing hidden stories into the light". She noted that "Africa contributes the highest number of female peacekeepers, and women were at the forefront in the fight against Ebola. These and many more stories remain untold". Dr Lopes made a strong appeal for media in Africa to use African-generated data

instead of relying on Western produced information when telling the African story, noting that it is “the data that informs the narrative, dictates the story”.

This year’s theme (“Shaping Development Conversations in Africa: The Role of Media in a Digital Environment”) underlined one of the African Media Initiative’s major concerns, that the media in Africa does not contribute effectively to the continent’s development agenda. The Forum also considered other related issues. Transformation in Africa is taking place in a global context that is largely defined by new, digital and other technologies, so how effective has the media been in tapping into these new technologies to improve media performance in Africa? How competent has the media been in engaging citizens in conversations about the challenges and opportunities of these technologies? Are African media leaders effectively exploiting the enormous potential market on the continent? Are the media acting as observers or active players in Africa’s development? All this raised questions over the media’s place and role in the social, political and economic development of Africa, and the part it is playing, and should play in enabling the continent’s transformation in line with the AU’s vision of “the Africa We Want.”

A special symposium was held on ‘Overcoming Hate Speech in the Media’, moderated by Al-Jazeera’s senior correspondent, Mohamed Addow. A keynote speech at the symposium was given by Cemalettin Hasimi, the Director General of Press and Information, in the Prime Minister of Turkey’s Office who noted the media was often tempted to choose sensationalism, easy stereotyping and derogatory language when writing about or reporting on events, individuals or groups of people. This can and does amplify the impact of hate speech and makes the likelihood of conflict, religious intolerance or other bigoted action more likely. The media has a role and responsibility to protect citizens, report fairly and, when necessary, to provide a moral compass for society as well as support free speech.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Summit, Mohammed Addow noted that media freedom in Africa is struggling and in some countries “there is absolutely no freedom of the media.” He said there was still a lot of media censorship in many African countries and critical journalists in these countries are often taken to court on apparently trumped-up charges, using ambiguous media laws. He noted that anti-terrorism laws had now become “very fashionable for African governments to use against journalists.” Anton Harber, a former journalist and now an academic at the University of Witwatersrand, said “The function of the media in any democracy is to hold leaders accountable which make them uncomfortable.” As a result, he said, journalists were being harassed, prosecuted, jailed and at times killed because of their work. He stressed: “Journalists should support each other in the endless fight for a free media. We in South Africa defend our freedom all the time and stop the government when it wants to interfere and limit our freedom.”

The first plenary session of the Forum covered “Media and development: Shaping conversations in Africa” and Dr. Lopes gave the keynote speech. The session considered the role of the way the media should be active or passive in an emerging Africa in which societies were being transformed by rapidly growing economies, changing political landscapes and technological innovations. Should the journalist take an active or a passive role and what exactly should that role be? This was followed by a second plenary which considered “Africa’s moment: The emergence of a new digital culture” and looked at the necessity of demystifying the new

technology and at the way technology can accelerate Africa’s development and transform the lives of ordinary people.

One session was devoted to “Audience data – The missing link to sustainable media investments”, underlining the point that investors still remained cautious about investment in Africa despite the fact that some African economies were among the fastest growing in the world today. The Forum felt that one strong reason was the lack of accurate information and data, particularly in the information, communication and media sectors. A panel looked at “New players: New opportunities or threats”, new foreign entrants interested into Africa’s media landscape, and considered what their intentions might be and how far they were altering the information and distribution and circulation and the ways that digital technology could assist in resolving the problems of production costs, distribution systems and unreliable circulation data. In addition participants considered best practices and innovative business models, as well as ways to make technology work for people with successful examples being showcased.

The interaction of radio and social media and the ways the radio landscape is changing under the influence of the social, cultural and technological wishes and needs of its users were explored. There was a consensus on the importance of engaging with counterparts from around the world. Despite considerable progress, not least in social media, the conclusion was that African media remains relatively undeveloped, largely due to financial constraints and the impact of the digital changes. The Forum addressed practical solutions and questions facing owners, editors and journalists in the face of dwindling sales, falls in circulation in the print market, costs, the problems of adopting technologies and attacks on editorial independence. It particularly considered ways of enhancing the quality of media content in order to influence governance and build stronger, more economically viable and informed societies.

Regional conference on the future of Private Military and Security Companies

A regional conference to discuss the place and role of Private Security and Military Companies in Africa, was held in Addis Ababa last week (November 11 and 12). The conference also considered what these companies might be able to contribute to the stability and the strengthening of the security efforts in the face of the continuing threat of terrorism and extremism. More than a hundred participants from across Africa attended the conference including representatives of civil society and Regional Economic Communities, as well as academics from peace and security organizations and invited guests. Participants emphasized strongly that African states should push for stronger regulatory frameworks to deal with Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs),

The conference was co-organized by the Addis Ababa University’s Institute for Peace and Security Studies and the Swiss-based Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). This conference is one of seven that the DCAF has organized around the world. The emergence of private security companies in Ethiopia came about in the early 1990s. Currently there are estimated to be around 100 companies, most medium and small sized, but there is no legislation governing their activities and the sector is essentially unregulated. Given

Ethiopia's increasing economic development, there has been a growing trend of outsourcing security provisions to private companies, and the sector is growing rapidly. Indeed, it has become a multi-billion birr industry and the Ethiopian Federal Police Commission has the authority to issue licenses and monitor the sector.

Day one of the conference opened with statements from the representatives of the Swiss Government and the organizing bodies and a keynote address by the African Union. Academics and researchers presented findings on the state of PMSCs in Africa and a panel, consisting of the legal and project research coordinators of the Montreux Document. This is a non-binding document which doesn't introduce new principles about security apparatus but reaffirms existing International Human Rights Law principles and practices for PMSCs. Participants noted the need to adapt the Montreux Document to local concerns especially in countries where the PMSCs are new and susceptible to abuse. There were also presentations by researchers on the legal and practical operations of PMSCs in Africa with case studies from South Africa, Malawi, and Ethiopia. This suggested many of the challenges faced by African countries over PMSCs operations are similar. They are usually owned by ex-military personnel and government oversight tends to be limited to licensing. Staffing is often no professional and companies lack of adequate training, equipment and armament. Currently only seven African countries have a national regulatory framework though three others have draft regulatory laws under consideration

The second day provided more detailed clarification of the Montreux document and was followed by more detailed perspective of regional experiences of PMSCs' activity with representatives from West, South, and East Africa noting challenges and perspectives on PMSC operation and sharing experiences over the operation of PMSCs in extractive industries which are one of largest customers of Private Security companies. This was followed by discussions on continental and international perspectives focusing on the African Union, the United Nations and the International Code of Conduct for PMSCs. The Coded of Conduct was launched in 2010 and had been signed by 700 companies and 70 countries by 2013. It recommends the raising of international standards and minimizing the impact of PMSCs.

The panellists recommended that the AU come up with the continental regulatory framework for the use of PMSCs and emphasized that states must contextualize the definition and operations of PMSCs. It was important to determine when, where, and how to utilize PMSCs. The final session dealt with the need for an international code of conduct for PMSCs and how they can be used to complement the Montreux Document which aims to enhance the protection afforded to people affected by armed conflicts by clarifying and reaffirming existing obligations under international law.

The conference ended by stressing that Private Security and Military Companies, despite their lack of clarity of definition and transparency, were here to stay in Africa. It recommended strengthening support for states to learn good practice from others, limiting any PMSC use of weapons, and updating existing documents and conventions as well as providing for national regulatory frameworks for such organizations.