

News in brief

COP 21: “time to protect our common security and advance our common humanity.”

Intensified Government response to the El Nino drought and food shortages

Prime Minister Hailemariam on the drought, good governance and the economy

The International Labor Organization’s African Regional Meeting in Addis Ababa

Ethio-Djibouti Joint Border Commission agrees on cross-border movement and control

The new United Nation Development Assistance Framework and Ethiopia

News in Brief

Africa and African Union

More than 150 Heads of State and Government had arrived at the Paris Climate Change Conference by Monday (November 30), a conference expected to reach a new and long-term global agreement on climate change. “This is a historic day that we are living in. France hosts 150 Heads of State and Government” said French President Francois Hollande. **(See article)**

The Sixth Ministerial meeting of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in Pretoria, South Africa on Thursday (December 3) ahead of the two-day China-Africa FOCAC Summit in Johannesburg which opened Friday (December 4). China’s Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, presented an account of the implementation of follow-up actions on the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing Action Plan (2013-2015) adopted at the 5th FOCAC ministerial conference in Beijing in July 2012. Ministers appreciated the strong commitment and willingness of China to work with Africa and discussed on the content of Johannesburg Declaration and Action Plan to be adopted at the FOCAC Summit in Johannesburg.

International Labor Organization’s 13th African Regional Meeting was held in Addis Ababa this week (November 30 to December 3) under the theme of “Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Africa through Decent work”. **(See article)**

Ambassador Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira formally assumed office on Friday (December 4) as the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, taking over from Ambassador Maman Sidikou. He said he took at a critical point in the history of Somalia, with the country entering a rigorous political phase, with elections planned next year; and his priority would be to ensure a secure environment for state-building.

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn told the Conference of Parties (COP 21) in Paris on Tuesday (December 1) that he came to Paris “at this defining moment, to tell you of the struggles and hopes of my people; the stories of a hundred million people, who are working hard to

eradicate poverty and establish a fair, prosperous and sustainable economy.” He noted that “We have not caused climate change, nor can we solve it on our own.” **(See article)**

Prime Minister Hailemariam participated in a high-level panel on carbon pricing organized on the sidelines of the Climate Summit in Paris with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Françoise Hollande and World Bank President Dr Jim Kim. The Prime Minister emphasized there was unprecedented evidence that pricing could stimulate reduction of carbon emissions and be a significant source of finance and technology for supporting adaptation. **(See article).**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn left on Friday (November 27) for Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE). He held talks on bilateral issues with the Emir of Dubai and other senior officials before travelling to Paris to attend the 21st Conference of Parties on Climate Change (COP21) which opened on Monday (November 30).

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn opened the Forum for Launching Good Governance Movement on Wednesday (December 2). He told senior government officials, religious leaders, elders and representatives of civic societies that Ethiopia’s rapid growth could not be sustained unless there was strong involvement of the public, private and civic society. He stressed development, democracy and good governance could not be separated, and he emphasized the need to fight rent seeking and lack of good governance by identifying root causes.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn spoke to the Reporter newspaper last week on a wide range of topics including the current drought situation, the problems of good governance problems and the economy as well as other areas. **(See article)**

Ethiopia was elected to serve as President of the Climate Vulnerable Forum for one year at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris on Tuesday (December 1). The Climate Vulnerable Forum, which focuses on improving responses to climate change, has 30 member states.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie met with the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Ethiopia, Ambassador Vsevolod Tkachenko on Wednesday (December 2). Discussions focused on bilateral relations, security issues and collaboration to fight terrorism.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, met with the Special Envoy of the Swedish Prime Minister, Ambassador Marika Fahlen, on Tuesday (December 1). Ambassador Fahlen proposed the signing of a bilateral agreement between the two countries to cover the operation of international companies in Ethiopia.

The Joint Saudi-Ethiopian Committee met on Friday (December 4) in Riyadh with delegations led by the Saudi Minister of Agriculture, Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen Al-Fadhli, and Ethiopia’s Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources Tefera Deribew. They agreed to form three committees for ‘Foreign, Security and Labor Cooperation’; ‘Economic and Technical Cooperation’; and for ‘Educational and Cultural Cooperation, Religious Affairs, Media, Youth and Sports’, to provide recommendations for future development.

The 22nd Ethiopia-Djibouti Joint Border Commission Meeting was held on Thursday and Friday last week (November 26-27) in Dire-Dawa, Ethiopia. **(See article).**

A Sudanese delegation in Addis Ababa, taking part in a workshop to share Ethiopia's experiences on the federal system of governance, have commended Ethiopia's constitution and its federal system, describing it as having guaranteed sustainable peace, economic development and the rule of law. The delegation told reporters that the federal system was the foundation for stability and socio-economic development and had played a significant role in reconciling different interests within the nation.

A South Korean-Ethiopia Business Forum was held yesterday in Addis Ababa, attended by a 37-person delegation of South Korean government officials and businessmen on a visit to Ethiopia. The Korean Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said the delegation will "help lay the basis for more trade and industrial cooperation."

Djibouti

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior, Mr. Sirag Omar Abdoukader, led the Djibouti delegation to the 22nd Ethiopia-Djibouti Joint Border Commission Meeting on November 26-27 last week in Dire Dawa. **(See article)**

The Djiboutian troops serving with AMISOM and based in Belet Weyne rotated back to Djibouti this week after a year's service. They have been replaced in Somalia's Hiiraan region by new units from Djibouti.

Eritrea

Notre Dame University's Global Adaptation Index has identified Eritrea as the second most vulnerable country in the world to the impact of climate change after Somalia with Sudan listed third. The Index assesses 177 economies on how well they can adapt to climate change, including their readiness and vulnerability of food, water, health, ecosystems, human habitats and infrastructure as well as exposure, sensitivity and ability to react to climate change. It says food supply problems in Eritrea, already common, are likely to be made worse.

Amnesty International issued a new report on conscription in Eritrea on Wednesday (December 2). "Just Deserters: Why indefinite national service in Eritrea has created a generation of refugees" is based on dozens of interviews with recent refugees from Eritrea. It makes clear the continued indefinite conscription in Eritrea and that this is the main reason cited by the majority of the thousands who flee the country each year. The report details why the situation facing conscripts in Eritrea is "desperate" and "exposes the lie behind claims made by certain host countries [in Europe] that most Eritreans arriving at their borders are economic refugees."

Eritrea was admitted as a member of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the 106th session of the IOM Council last week in Geneva, following its request for membership.

Kenya

The United Nations refunded US\$22.5 million to Kenya last month to cover expenditure for activities in AMISOM. This follows earlier reimbursements, bring the total this year US\$62.7 million. Kenya troops entered Somalia on October 2011 and a year later the UN Security Council authorized its joining of AMISOM which meant the Kenyan Treasury did not have to bear the full costs of the country's involvement.

Somalia

President Mohamud responded to further clashes in Galkayo on Thursday despite the ceasefire agreement with a warning that "the shedding of the blood of the people of Somalia will be met with consequences. This impunity must end." A day earlier, the president had welcomed the peace agreement signed on Wednesday as instrumental in the restoration of peace in Galkayo.

The Special Envoy of IGAD to Somalia, Mohamed Abdi Affey, called on Somali leaders to adhere to international law, and "make good" on their commitment to peace. He said: "Massacre will not stop without accountability – there's no way we can allow the impunity to continue."

President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gas of Puntland and President Abdikarim Hussein Guled of Galmudug, along with regional officials, signed a peace agreement on Wednesday (November 2). This provides for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops from the front lines in Galkayo town, the scene of violent clashes over the last two weeks.

Notre Dame University's Global Adaptation Index identified Somalia as the country most vulnerable in the world to the impact of climate change. It says that both food and water supplies in Somalia are likely to be hit, with changing weather patterns causing drought and famine.

Brigadier Sam Okiring, the new commander of Ugandan peacekeeping troops serving in AMISOM, replaced Brigadier Sam Kavuma, who returned to Uganda from Mogadishu on Tuesday (December 1). Uganda was the first country to send peacekeeping troops to Somalia under AMISOM in 2008 and has over 6,000 troops currently serving there.

South Sudan

Pope Francis on a visit to Uganda on Saturday (November 28) met briefly with South Sudan President Salva Kiir. A Catholic Church spokesperson said Pope Francis had accepted the brief meeting because South Sudan is "a land in need of peace and reconciliation." Pope Francis visited Kenya last week and spent three days in Uganda before moving on to the Central African Republic.

Five senior political figures returned to Juba on Friday (November 27). They were: Rebecca Garang, the widow of John Garang de Mabior; Oyai Deng, former national security minister; Majak d'Agoot, former defense minister; John Luk, former justice minister; and Deng Alor,

former Cabinet minister. South Sudan's Information Minister Michael Makuei Lueth said "the Government of the Republic of South Sudan was happy to receive them back"

UN Under-Secretary-General for UN Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefing the UN Security Council on Wednesday (December 2) called for another 1,100 UN peacekeepers for the UN Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS) to help monitor the peace agreement in South Sudan. He said UNMISS would help set up the Joint Integrated Police, Joint Operations Centre and Joint Military Command in Juba and called for a year's extension for UNMISS.

Dr. Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, warned against the collapse of South Sudan's peace deal on Saturday (November 28), urging the two conflicting parties to fulfill their commitments to the agreement. Dr. Zuma called on the SPLM-IO to attend meetings of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), established by IGAD. The SPLM-IO failed to attend the JMEC meeting in Juba earlier in the week.

Two top military commanders of the South Sudanese opposition forces (SPLA-IO) are reported to have been killed by attacks from helicopter gunships at a designated cantonment area for the opposition forces last week. The SPLM-IO claimed there had been other helicopter attacks on SPLM-IO forces assembling in cantonments. Under the peace deal signed in August, the two parties are required to assemble their forces in designated cantonment areas.

Sudan

President Omar al-Bashir arrived in the UAE Saturday (November 28) on an official visit and held talks with the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Discussions focused on bilateral ties as well as regional and international issues of common concern. They emphasized the need to develop an Arab strategy to maintain regional security and stability in face of extremism and terrorism and the necessity to eradicate terrorist groups. At the end of his visit, President al-Bashir extended his visit for a further week to take 'some rest'.

The U N Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and International Sanctions, Idriss Jazairy, addressing a press conference at the end of an eight day visit to Sudan on Monday (November 30) called on the United States to determine a timeframe to lift its economic sanctions on Sudan.

The Sudan Government and Sudan People's Liberation Movement - North (SPLM-N) have accused each other for responsibility of the failure of the tenth round of their talks, held under the auspices of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) in Addis Ababa last week.

COP 21: "time to protect our common security and advance our common humanity."

The two week long Conference of Parties (COP 21) on Climate Change opened in Paris on Monday this week (November 30). The first two days were taken up with speeches by Heads of

State and Government, the largest assembly of the world leaders gathered ever recorded in the history of climate change agreements. The more than 150 leaders present were each given three-minutes to outline their vision for the future of the planet; and the conference is expected to reach a new and long-term global agreement on climate change. French President Francois Hollande set the tone at the opening of the Conference: “C'est un jour historique que nous vivons. La France accueille 150 chefs d'états et de gouvernements”, (“This is a historic day in which we are living. France hosts 150 Heads of State and Government”), said Francois Hollande at the opening of the Conference. He said: “No conference has ever gathered so many leaders from so many countries ... but never before have the international stakes been so high.” This, he said, concerns the future of the planet, the future of life, adding “the hope of all of humanity rests on all of your shoulders”.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn spoke on Tuesday to emphasize that “I have come to Paris, at this defining moment, to tell you of the struggles and hopes of my people; the stories of a hundred million people, who are working hard, to eradicate poverty and establish a fair, prosperous and sustainable economy.” The Prime Minister, after mentioning the efforts made by the government to reduce the number of people living in poverty, added, “Yet climate change, weather variability and related disasters threaten our lives, livelihoods, and hard-fought development gains.” Speaking about the severity of climate change that is creating havoc especially by the late 20th century and the early 21st century he explained, “We have seen average temperatures rise, within half a century, by one degree centigrade. The rains have become unpredictable, unreliable. Extreme droughts and floods have become more frequent and severe. At the moment, the El Nino-triggered drought is affecting millions of my people.” The Prime Minister, who has repeatedly said his Government is doing everything possible to help people withstand the effects of the drought, stressed: “We have not caused climate change. We cannot solve it on our own. We find ourselves in a situation which justifies surrender, hopelessness and bitterness. But we choose to be hopeful and proactive.”

The Prime Minister mentioned Ethiopia’s hard work on producing clean electric power from renewable resources, on increasing resilience to climate change, on modernizing livestock production and on conducting climate smart agriculture. He underlined Ethiopia’s ambitious Intended National Determined Contribution (INDC) commitment to reduce emissions by 64% by 2030. Now, he said, we need to see matching actions and support from our partners. He noted that COP 21 would focus on 3 major issues, fairness, finance and emission limits. He said it was fair that industrialized countries should do more to cut emissions, having polluted for much longer than any developing countries. At Copenhagen in 2008, the rich economies pledged to provide \$100 billion a year in financial support for poor countries from 2020 to develop technology and build infrastructure to cut emissions. The Prime Minister called firmly for “the global partnership and cooperation should provide for adequate support for low-carbon development and the creation of resilient societies and ecosystems”.

With regard to the limits on global warming, the Prime Minister said “let us not pretend that a future of around 3 degrees of warming is something to celebrate.” Indeed rather than aiming at no more than a 2C increase over pre-industrial levels by the end of the century, he said it was necessary for the world to keep the temperature rise to below 1.5 degrees. It was imperative to

peak global emissions as soon as possible, and then decrease them in a time frame and scale consistent with the temperature goal. Every nation, he said, “has to contribute. Of course, national contributions need to be differentiated, reflecting responsibility, need and capacity.” Global partnership and cooperation should provide adequate support for low-carbon development and the creation of resilient societies and ecosystems. The Prime Minister also added another important suggestion: There must be regular meetings to measure progress in mobilizing the required actions and to support and encourage each other to top up contributions. The Prime Minister emphasized that this was no time for shirking responsibility and he concluded by calling for Paris to produce a legally binding, ambitious, durable, fair and effective agreement on the basis of partnership and cooperation that will “protect our common security and advance our common humanity.”

On both of the first two days, the leaders of the countries from the smallest island state of Tuvalu to the major powers of India, the United States and China, all strongly urged the importance of taking meaningful actions towards tackling the effects of climate change. President Obama said, “We are the first generation to feel climate change and the last that can do something about it;” Enele Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, said “Like other nations in the Pacific, our survival depends on the decisions we take here in Paris. We stand on a cliff edge. Either we stand united and agree to combat climate change, or we all stumble and fall.”

President Obama said the Conference was a turning point to address the growing threat of climate change and that the US, as the world's second biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, recognized its role in creating the problem of global warming and embraced its responsibility to help fix it. He said: "Nearly 200 nations have assembled here this week. A declaration that for all the challenges we face, the growing threat of climate change could define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other. And what should give us hope? That this is a turning point. That this is the moment we finally determine we would save our planet. It's the fact that our nations share a sense of urgency about this challenge and a growing realization that it's within our power to do something about it. The President said that: “as the leader of the world's largest economy and the second largest emitter... the United States of America not only recognizes our role in creating this problem, we embrace our responsibility to do something about it." He called on all leaders gathered there to secure an agreement paving the way for regularly updated targets that would help "lift people from poverty without condemning the next generation to a planet that's beyond its capacity to repair", and he urged negotiators to deliver a meaningful deal, because the "next generation is watching", stressing that "climate change could define the contours of this century more than any other (challenge).”

Chinese President Xi Jinping told the conference he did not see the Paris talks as a "finish line, but a new starting point". The Paris Agreement, he said, should chart a course for green development and help galvanize global efforts, encourage broad participation, increase resources to ensure action and accommodate the national conditions of various countries. We should, he said, create a future of win-win cooperation, an inclusive future for the rule of law, fairness and justice. China, said President Jinping, would work hard to implement the vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and inclusive development. He pledged to peak CO2 emissions by around 2030 and increase the share of non-fossil fuels in energy consumption to about 20% as

well as increase forest stock significantly. President Jinping said China would launch cooperation projects to set up 10 low carbon industrial parks next year, and start a hundred mitigation and adaptation programs in other developing countries. The President said climate change went beyond national borders and that it was "a shared mission for all mankind", and tackling climate change was a shared mission of mankind. He called for the joining of hands to establish an equitable and effective global mechanism on climate change and work for global sustainable development at a higher level.

COP 21 has indeed grabbed the attention of the world. However the question that whether or not the COP 21 can provide a proper way through to successfully tackle the complex issues of climate change will not be easily answered. India has made it clear that "Democratic India must grow rapidly, to meet the aspirations of 1.25 billion people, 300 million of whom are without access to energy. We are determined to do so". India had therefore set ambitious targets, to reduce emissions by 33-35% of the 2005 levels, increase non-fossil fuel and enlarge forest cover. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he hoped advanced nations would also assume ambitious targets, and pursue them sincerely. He wanted to see aggressive mitigation action and developed countries fulfilling their responsibilities to make clean energy available, affordable and accessible to all in the developing world. Mr. Modi emphasized the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities – the necessary bedrock of "our collective enterprise across all areas, mitigation, adaptation and implementation. Anything else will be morally wrong." He said that the developed countries must mobilize the US\$100billion by 2020 for mitigation and adaptation and fulfill this commitment in a credible, transparent and meaningful way. Prime Minister Modi called for the scaling up of the Green Climate Fund, for stocktaking that is both transparent and based on differentiation. Ultimately, he said, for success we have to moderate our lifestyles, and the presence of 196 countries here in Paris "tells us we have a chance to unite behind a common purpose."

COP 21, being held in the wake of the recent shocking terror attack in Paris, is providing a demonstration of global solidarity. President Hollande told a joint session of the French parliament that the conference would go ahead, to "show that the world must stay united against terrorism." Prime Minister Hailemariam, like other leaders, expressed his strong unity and solidarity with France as a country battling and defeating terrorism, and expressed his condolences to the families of the victims. With this kind of political momentum, the window is now open for a more ambitious climate change agreement that might now be possible.

Whether or not Paris produces a deal that is "worthy both of the moment and of the climate challenge that faces us all" may remain a matter of leadership, public pressure and not a little luck, but the commitment that all countries have shown through their leaders and through the Global Climate March that broke records as the largest climate mobilization in history, calling for a 100% clean energy future to save the planet, underlined that this could be "the movement for which our world is waiting." With the leaders departed, COP 21 is expected to take its real shape as lower-level negotiators have the task of creating agreement by December 11, working from a 54-page draft text that contains many different, even opposing, positions. French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius told the negotiators they had until Saturday (December 6) to iron out as many differences as they can, before environmental ministers take over to try to resolve the most

intractable of the disputes. Major points of contention include agreeing on a systematic review of emissions-curbing pledges, increasing the climate funding for poor countries so that it reaches the promised US\$100 billion a year by 2020 and fairness.

Poorer countries are pushing hard for rich nations to transfer clean technology to help them avoid taking the path of carbon pollution. Many of the developed nations appear to be prepared to accept limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius, even though that is a long way from being achieved. Most of the dozens of more vulnerable countries, including the small island states and poorer countries in Africa want to see an optional target of 1.5 C. They point out that their combined population of more than one billion people will otherwise be in real danger. Nearly all countries have submitted voluntary carbon-curbing pledges. These account for 95% of greenhouse gases currently being emitted, but according to UN climate chief Christiana Figueres, this still only means limiting warming to between 2.7 to 3.5 degrees Celsius. While this may create the basis for more ambitious plans in the years ahead, what is required is a framework to keep the level of global warming at least below 2 C and preferably 1.5 degrees.

Meanwhile, alongside the opening two days of the conference, there were a number of other sideline events for the world leaders to attend. At a High-Level Panel on Carbon Pricing, with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Francois Hollande and World Bank President Dr Jim Kim, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn emphasized that Ethiopia was promoting carbon pricing because of its interest in seeing climate change properly addressed since it is suffering from climate change and its impacts. It supported global initiatives and policy instruments that could help to reduce emissions; and carbon pricing was one such instrument. The Prime Minister said "There is already unprecedented evidence that pricing can provide incentives and market signal efficient utilization, and production of energy and development of technologies in cost effective manner." Apart from stimulating reduction of carbon emission, pricing of carbon could potentially be a significant source of finance and technology for supporting climate actions in countries such as Ethiopia. He said Ethiopia had already initiated some pilot programs in carbon pricing. Another panelist, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, said carbon pricing was the right means to curb climate change, adding that "As more governments put a price on carbon, the more we will realize efficiencies and the more we create the right market incentives to catalyze the transition to low carbon economy". French President Francois Hollande said that while setting one single price globally for carbon would not difficult for now, modifying things step by step was important. He said there was a need to share the best existing carbon pricing schemes from across the world to serve as a good example to promote the issue. World Bank President Dr Jim Kim stressed that unless carbon emissions were cut drastically and more countries adapted, the effects of climate change could push 100 million people into poverty by 2030, and 43 million of these would be in Sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Kim noted that more people have become impoverished from higher food prices, lower crop production yields and adverse health effects and added "The most direct and certain path to zero net carbon emissions before the end of the century is carbon pricing." He said the world was making progress in this direction with some 40 national governments, 23 states and regions now putting a price on carbon. He said a price on carbon helped shift the burden for the damage back to those who are responsible and who can reduce it.

Intensified Government response to the EL Nino drought and food shortages

The onset of the El Nino climatic phenomenon, in which a rise in temperature in the eastern Pacific and then the Indian Ocean, causes widespread erratic rainfall patterns in eastern, and southern, Africa, has been expanding in Ethiopia. A major drought in many areas has exposed millions to serious food shortages. The numbers of people needing for assistance has grown from 200,000 last January to 4.5 million in June and in the assessment of the multi-agency mission in October to 8.2 million. It may rise further.

The 8.2 million are not all in need of assistance specifically because of the El Nino. 4.4 million of the recipients of assistance are already receiving assistance under the safety net program. This is a multi stakeholder program that aims to alleviate chronic food shortage problems through food for work programs. Peasant farmers are given food in exchange for labor in development works, including rural road construction and water and soil conservation projects. The safety net food program operates between January and June. The recipients have to be included in the assessment now because of their need to obtain aid from July to December as the rains are faltering and there is no way that they will be able to grow food this year. The other 3.7 million people need food aid as a direct result of the impact of the drought caused by El Nino and the resulting crop failures.

The Commissioner of the Federal Risk Management Commission, Mitiku Kassa, says a new multi-agency assessment will be announced soon and this, he believes, may increase the number of people who need aid as the dry season “bega” commences in many El Nino-affected areas shortly. In an interview with local media, Mitiku Kassa said the Government and its partners were providing food and other humanitarian aid to the 8.2 million people in need of aid. He noted the Government was also preparing an extreme case scenario for assistance to ensure that citizens’ lives would not be put at risk. The Government has allocated 10 billion birr from its funds to ensure that there is a sufficient food reserve for distribution. The Commissioner said two rounds of wheat purchase had already been carried out. The first round was for 220,000 metric tons, of which 45, 000 metric ton had already arrived Djibouti port. The second purchase was for a further 405,000 metric tons. The Government has also tendered to purchase 20,000 metric tons of edible oil from local suppliers.

The Commissioner said the Government was also undertaking purchases of maize and sorghum locally as there had been high production over the past year. He explained purchases of wheat were being made from abroad rather than from within the country in order to prevent any upset of the local market conditions. He said the “the purchase of wheat has a dual purpose, that is providing to drought victims and stabilizing wheat market”. He noted that the Government was ready to carry out a third round of wheat purchase if the problem worsened and if responses from the donor community fail to meet demand.

He explained that each member of a drought-affected household were receiving 15 kilos of maize or wheat, 1.5 kilos of cereals and 0.45 kilos edible oil with 4.5 kilos of supplementary

food for children and pregnant women, for a month. This, he said, meets the average 2,100 calories-per-day international aid standards. He said claims that the distribution was insufficient came from a misunderstanding: the assistance provided was for the single member of a household not for the household as a whole.

In relation of the supply of water, Commissioner Mitiku said the Government was responding in various ways as appropriate, ranging from supplying water through water tanker vehicles to drilling extra wells. In the Afar Regional State, he noted, over 40 lorries were delivering water at household level. The Commissioner underlined that the response strategy was based on the categorization of the level of emergency to ensure that those that who were in the worst situation obtained aid first. With the use of health and agricultural extension workers operating at local level to assess household situation, this allowed for appropriate and quick response and for an optimal use of resources.

In response to questions over distribution, the Commissioner said the Government was floating tenders for transport companies to increase the capacity for the delivery of aid in order to ensure that hiccups in the delivery of assistance were removed. He said three tiers of administrative bodies were working to make the delivery of aid seamless. A National Committee, led by Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonen is at the top of pyramid, with a committee of directors chaired by the Federal Risk Management Commission established to implement the decisions of the National Committee. At a regional level, Disaster Prevention Committees, chaired by regional presidents, are coordinating aid efforts.

Commissioner Mitiku said the initial response of the international community had been “cold”. He added that subsequently there had been a steady increase in pledges from different countries including the US and China. Pledges had currently reached 167 million dollar. He urged countries to keep their promises on time in order to allow for adequate replenishment of the food that is currently being distributed.

In conclusion, Commissioner Mitiku stressed that although it was getting harder by the day to fully predict the effects of the El Nino phenomenon, the Government was preparing for a worst case scenario. One possible problem could be the outbreak of various different epidemics and the Government was making preparations to deal with this situation if it arose. There were regular rains in the South and South Western parts of the country. These could be used to provide for animal foodstuffs and save animal lives as well as allow for the harvesting of rapidly maturing food items. Water harvesting would also be conducted in areas where there was some irregular rainfalls to provide for animal feed. The Government would use all these elements as they became available. In the longer term, the Government was also working to increase the food reserve capacity as it now appeared the El Nino cycle was becoming shorter and its impact stronger. He said the lesson we are already taking from this drought is that those who are doing best are those who are either farming through irrigation or using better techniques of water harvesting. The Government will, therefore, work more on scaling up water harvesting and irrigation. The Commissioner also noted the need to work on increasing animal feed production capacity, one example of which was the efforts to produce animal fodder on 700 hectares in the Afar Regional State.

Prime Minister Hailemariam on the drought, good governance and the economy

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn last week gave his first exclusive interview to a local newspaper, the Reporter, on Thursday last week (November 26). He addressed a wide range of issues including the current drought situation, the problems of good governance and the economy as well as other matters..

The Prime Minister underlined that the current drought was caused by the El Nino climatic phenomenon. The root of this therefore lay in the irresponsible emission of “greenhouse gases” by the world’s most advanced economies over many years. The impact of this had eventually produced the rise of temperature levels of the Pacific Ocean and thus resulted in disruption of the usual rainfall cycles by the El Nino phenomenon. The Prime Minister underlined that this was the most severe El Nino impact ever to hit the country and the Government had responded immediately to its impact. He said the Government has been working intensively to address the drought in the affected regions by providing food assistance, water and other support to those affected. In this regard the Prime Minister stressed the fact that the Government was not so much concerned about the numbers of those affected but rather with the condition of each and every household in the widespread drought affected areas. He pointed out that the Government had now developed the capacity, through health and agricultural extension workers, to screen almost all the households in affected areas and had the ability to address the actual condition of these households. It was doing everything possible to respond to the situation and address the problems as quickly as possible and ensure that the right responses were properly planned and carried out. The Prime Minister emphasized that the Government “will do what is necessary to avert this crisis without a single loss of life”. He also noted that the Government would, if necessary, shift funds from other projects to fund food and other assistance, but he stressed that this would have no impact on the major development projects which were largely funded by loans from foreign and local creditors.

In the matter of good governance, the Prime Minister stated the Government has put forward a very clear and unreserved effort to be more transparent and demonstrate that it was determined to address the problems of governance. It had chosen to be honest and straightforward in admitting the existence and the magnitude of the problem. He repeated what he had said at the recent high-level government meeting to consider the deficiencies of governance: “there cannot be an improvement in governance without the determination of the political leadership and the involvement of the public at large.” And the political leadership was reaffirming its determination as political leaders. That, he said, was not a false promise. The meeting provided a platform to define the nature and extent of the problem and now the next step was for the Government to locate the source of the problem and decide on what the remedy should be. Activities had to be evaluated on a regular basis, and the public had to be involved. The solution also needed a shift in the “overall mindset of the public in general”, he said. If the public was complaisant when it came to a lack of good governance, then the leadership might also nurture such attitudes. The Prime Minister noted the recent World Bank study which identified that it was petty corruption that was rampant in Ethiopia rather than ‘grand corruption’, but said this, in

the government service provision sector, was what was frustrating to the public. The prime Minister reiterated that a significant core element in dealing with this was the fact that good governance was not something that trickled down from the top to the bottom. It was not something merely handed out by politicians. It was specifically improved by the active involvement of the public at large.

The Prime Minister underlined the point a few days later when he opened the Forum for Launching Good Governance Movement on Wednesday (December 2). He told senior government officials, religious leaders, elders and representatives of civil societies that the government was ready to further strengthen efforts to solve the lack of good governance. He pointed out that the country's rapid growth could not be sustained unless there was strong involvement of the public, private and civic society in working for good governance; and he stressed development, democracy and good governance could not be separated. He also emphasized the need to fight rent seeking and lack of good governance by identifying root causes and then dealing specifically with these.

Turning to economic issues in his interview, Prime Minister Hailemariam underlined that the Government had properly evaluated the performance of the recently concluded Growth and transformation Plan I, by sector as well as at the macro level. He expressed his view that the results of the Growth and Transformation Plan I had been substantive. As a case in point he cited the steady and continuous improvement in the growth rate, of over 10% for more than a decade now. The Prime Minister said no other country in recent years had achieved these figures, attested as they were by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. At the same time, he admitted that growth of the agriculture sector, at 6.6%, had been lower than the targeted 8%. The Prime Minister said this not been the result of failures of crop productivity in which the Government had attained the baseline target. It had failed, however, to meet the targets set for livestock, fruits and vegetables, spices and coffee.

At the macro level, the Prime Minister said, the baseline target growth rate of 11% would have been attained had the Government succeeded in meeting agricultural targets. The other failure was in the industry sector. Overall, the industry sector had grown 20% on average but the growth was not balanced. The mining sector growth was less than zero, while the manufacturing sector grew by 13%. Even so, the target there had been 18%, so the target had not been reached. In fact, the construction sector had been the main driver for growth in the industry sector and this had exceeded the target. The other issue at the macro level had been inflation. Inflation was very high during the first two years of the Growth and Transformation Plan (2010/11-2011/12), but since then the Government had managed to keep it in single digits. He said it was now showing a rise and the Government would need to carry out macroeconomic stabilization to curb it. The Prime Minister said the biggest failure during the Growth and Transformation Plan had been the export sector where the Government had failed to meet targets. It had evaluated the reasons for this and now identified the problems. Overall, the Prime Minister said, the Government had more or less met the growth targets but it had not fully succeeded in transformational aspects at sector level. Equally, he noted that the economy had doubled since the start of the Growth and Transformation Plan in 2010/2011. In 2010, the GDP was around 600 billion birr; now it exceeded a trillion birr. That, he said, was "a huge success."

The International Labor Organization's African Regional Meeting in Addis Ababa

The 13th African Regional Meeting of the International Labor Organization (ILO) was held at the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa this week from November 30 to December 3. The theme of the meeting was “Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Africa through Decent Work.” African countries adopted the “Decent Work Agenda 2007-2015” at the 11th African Regional Meeting held in April 2007 in Addis Ababa. Adapting the global “Decent Work” concept to the realities prevailing in different parts of the world and providing a conceptual framework for the formulation of “Decent Work Country Programs” in various regions were the two objectives of the “Decent Work Agenda 2007 to 2015”. For the ILO, the “Decent Work Agenda” was implemented through the promotion of jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending work protection, and promoting social dialogue in line with gender equality and other universal instruments that protect the rights of workers.

The 13th African Regional Meeting specifically aimed to discuss the progress made by the countries in the region towards achieving the targets set by the “Decent Work Agenda” 2007-2015. It also planned to set out future priority actions for the region to achieve the “Decent Work Agenda” of Africa. Addressing the opening session of the meeting on Monday (November 30), the President of Ethiopia, Dr. Mulatu Teshome, welcomed the participants to the meeting and to the diplomatic capital of Africa. He underlined the essential role of “decent work” in implementing Africa’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Noting the fast economic growth the continent has been registering, the President urged the need to have effective and efficient policies, adequate financing and effective utilization of scarce resources. He stressed that “the fight against poverty and unemployment is one of the Ethiopia’s transformation agenda priorities.” Ethiopia, he added, also showed significant improvement in ensuring decent work, poverty reduction, inclusion of women and micro- enterprise development.

The Chairperson of the Meeting, Ethiopia’s Labor and Social Affairs Minister, Mr. Abdulfetah Abdulahi Hassan noted that ILO “decent work” theme was a priority and a crucial element for achieving all global, regional and country level programs, strategies and plans. Ethiopia, he stressed, had given a special place for the “Decent Work Agenda” in its Growth and Transformation Plan, and in other areas. Mr. Guy Ryder, Director General of the International Labor Office noted that lack of resources, administrative and technological deficiency and of a common purpose were drawbacks that threatened the promotion of employment and decent work creation in Africa. Robust economic growth, regional poverty eradication agendas such as Agenda 2063 that coincided with ILO priorities, and the common stand of Africans on post 2015 development agenda were, however, the factors that could create viable opportunities to realize “decent work” in Africa.

Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Employers’ Vice-Chairperson and Executive Director of Kenyan Employers, said “Africa needs to bring more Foreign Direct Investment into areas where it can have a competitive advantage such as agriculture.” Noting the successes in Ethiopia and Senegal in agricultural investment, she underlined that effective and efficient agricultural investment in Africa creates more decent work for the youths of the continent. Adopting minimum social

protection, elimination of child and forced labor, and formalization of informal economy could be the responsibility of employers, she emphasized. She also stressed that workers and employers had a number of common interests in national development agendas, and they should, therefore, should work together in the context of social partner's fora. The Workers' Vice-Chairperson and Secretary General of the Senegal Workers Federation, Mr. Mody Guiro, said mobilizing resources, formalization of informal economy, focusing inclusive economic growth and enhancing the role of dialogue in work places would help workers to enjoy decent work. He urged full and proper implementation of the "Decent Work Agenda", of the Sustainable Development Goals and of Agenda 2063 at the regional and national level. He also called for more social justice, inclusive growth and the realization of "decent work" for all workers throughout Africa.

On Tuesday (December 1), ILO Assistant Director General and Regional Director for Africa, Aeana Charming Chuma, presented a report on inclusive and sustainable development in Africa through "decent work". Africa, he emphasized in his report, had made tremendous progress in advancing and extending social dialogue and tripartism. Most African countries had made progresses in eliminating child labor and forced labor, domesticating labor standards to improve worker's protection and many "Decent Work" Agenda targets had been achieved. However, the Assistant Director General's report noted a number of factors hindered the full realization of "Decent Work Agenda" in the continent. These included youth unemployment, informal economy expansion, growing inequalities, social protection lagging behind international standards, low institutional capacity to implement legislation and fragmented social dialogue in several African countries. Other new challenges encountered since the adoption of the "Decent Work Agenda" in Africa 2007-2015" included the outbreak of Ebola, state fragility, Boko Haram assaults on communities in Nigeria and neighboring countries, Al-Shabaab's efforts to destabilize the Horn of Africa, Al-Qaeda threats in North Africa and the Sahel, and the terrorist groups' alliance with the Islamic State, as well as mass African migration to the developed countries.

Over the four days of the meeting, there were high level debates, dialogues and discussions on such topics as: "Decent Work in Africa in the Post- 2015 Context: Rights and Social dialogue for inclusive and sustainable growth"; "Transition from the Informal to the Economy: the way forward"; "Employment and new technologies: opportunities for Africa's youth"; and "Promotion of the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational enterprises and Social policy in Africa." Informal sessions were held on the engagement of fragile states in the Africa region, and joint labor migration programs and other subjects, organized by the African Union, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the East African Community, the ILO and the International Organization for Migration.

The meeting concluded on Thursday (December 3) adopting the Addis Ababa Declaration on Transforming Africa through Decent Work for sustainable Development. The Declaration contains frameworks and prospects for inclusive and sustainable development, world for work priorities, and the ILO role in promoting "decent work" and inclusive development. The declaration sets out priorities for creating decent jobs for all, accelerating the transition from the informal to the formal economy, promoting conducive business and investment environments, extending social protection, promoting employability and productivity, gender equality,

enhancing labor migration governance and similar areas. The declaration requests the ILO to align its program to the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development as well as to the African Union Agenda 2063, to work with international, regional and national institutions and employers and workers' organizations for the achievement of the "Decent Work Agenda" in Africa.

Concluding the meeting, Chairperson Abdulfetah Abdulahi said mutual understanding and cooperation of Africans can help them to achieve all these goals for sustainable and inclusive development and the "Decent Work Agenda". Mr. Guy Ryder, Director General of the International Labor Office appreciated the strong consensus displayed on the "Decent Work Agenda" among African countries and possible alignment of national, regional and international agenda shown during the meeting. Government Group Vice-Chairperson, Gregoire Owona, said there was a political will and firmness of African countries keen to achieve sustainable and inclusive "decent work" across Africa. Employers' Vice-Chairperson, Jacqueline Mugo, through her representative stressed that effective and efficient participation of employer's organizations was crucial in realizing all ILO "decent work" commitments. She also urged ILO support to enhance the role of employers' national programs for drafting, in social dialogue, for workers rights protection and for "decent work". Workers' Vice-Chairperson, Mody Guiro, noted the support of employers' groups for the Addis Ababa Declaration on Transforming Africa through Decent Work for Sustainable Development. He also called for firm implementation of framework strategies on Sustainable Development Goals and for engagement in fragile states.

Ethio-Djibouti Joint Border Commission agrees on cross-border movement and control

A meeting of the Ethiopia-Djibouti Joint Border Commission was held on Thursday and Friday last week (November 26-27) in Dire-Dawa, Ethiopia. Mr. Ibrahim Osman, Mayor of the Dire-Dawa City Administration, opened the meeting stressing the readiness of the Ethiopian delegation to have candid and fruitful deliberations for the mutual benefit of both countries. He emphasized that Ethiopia attached particular importance to the longstanding ties of brotherhood, understanding and cooperation with Djibouti. It was particularly keen to further enhance these "exemplary relations". He noted that the "ever growing infrastructural integration [between Ethiopia and Djibouti] is an indication of the level of economic interdependence and can be taken as a model for the regional integration in the IGAD region."

The Ethiopian Delegation was led by Ambassador Solomon Abebe, Director General of African Affairs at Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Djiboutian delegation was led by Sirag Omar Abdoukader, Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior of Djibouti. Overall, the two-day Joint Border Meeting focused on seven major areas: the activities of the Joint Border Sub-Committees, movement of peoples and goods, cross border bus transport, illegal migration and human trafficking, security issues, human and animal health, culture and youth affairs and agriculture.

On the activities of the Joint Border Sub-Committees, both sides agreed that these committee meetings were not being conducted as agreed during the previous meetings of the Joint Border

Commission. Both sides agreed to instruct the sub-committees to conduct their meeting every 15 days and submit their reports regularly to their respective authorities.

The second major issue was movement of peoples and goods. This revolved around four elements: pastoralists, tourists, cross border trade and illicit or contraband trades. The agreed minutes of the discussions revealed that the spirit of cooperation on the movement of pastoralists was without problem and encouraging. There was also agreement on the need to give due attention and remain vigilant to fight terrorists and extremists together as well as exchange information regularly. Equally, both sides agreed that the participation of community elders was pivotal to resolve local incidents harmoniously. The agreement also incorporated a decision that these elders should attend the next meeting of the Commission. Referring to tourist movements the Joint Border Commission agreed that there has been a “smooth movement of Djiboutian tourists according to the mutual understanding reached during the previous meetings of this commission.”

During the First Ethio-Djibouti Joint Ministerial Commission Meeting held in February this year in Djibouti, the two sides exchanged officially signed lists of export and import products acceptable for cross-border trade. The Joint Border Commission, on the basis of this agreement, stressed the importance of the implementation of the trade protocol. This, it said, was necessary to meet the expectations of the people residing in adjacent areas of the common border. Both sides have also agreed to establish a Joint Border Trade Committee to oversee this activity. With reference to contraband trade the Ethiopian side recognized the impact on both countries’ of such crimes as the “siphoning” off of a few illegal fuel trucks from Ethiopia and the sale of the fuel in Djibouti markets. The Joint Border Commission agreed to redouble controlling mechanisms to prevent this. Concerning cross-border public transport, the Joint Border Commission called for continued implementation of policy and agreed to report on the issue to the next High Level Joint Commission meeting. Workneh Gebeyehu, Ethiopian Minister of Transport signed an agreement with Djibouti’s Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Moussa Ahmed Hassan, in February to commence a public transport service between the two countries. The agreement was one of a number signed during Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn’s official visit to Djibouti in February this year.

The Ethiopian side informed the meeting that Ethiopia had set-up a body at the highest level chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister to deal with the problem of illegal emigrants crossing the Djibouti border. It had also set up a Special Task Force under the Ministry of Justice to deal with the matter. The Ethiopian delegation also pointed out that “there are Committees established at the Federal, Regional, Zonal and Woreda levels to tackle the menace and hunt down illegal human traffickers and bring them to justice.” The delegation noted that 35 illegal traffickers had recently been arrested and brought to justice. They had received sentences of between two and twenty-five years imprisonment.” The Djiboutian side agreed to cooperate in tackling the problem.

The Joint Border Commission assessed the on-going and expanding co-operation between the military and security bodies of the two countries as successful. It underlined the importance of this continuing in the same spirit and with the same dedication.

The Commission also considered the importance of closer monitoring of food and drug transactions, and the moves to establish a technical committee on livestock trade. It stressed the value of strengthening the relationship between the two countries in the field of culture and youth in the border regions through the conduct of cultural shows, sport activities and exchanges of experience. It agreed to formulate and forward a draft document on implementation of such activities.

After the signing of the agreed agenda items by the two heads of delegation, the Commission also agreed to hold the 23rd Ethio-Djibouti Joint Border Commission meeting in Nikhil in the Republic of Djibouti.

The new United Nation Development Assistance Framework and Ethiopia

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Sellasie met with Ms. Ahunna Eziakona-Onochie, newly appointed UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative, and UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Ethiopia last week. Ms. Eziakona-Onochie presents her credentials to Ambassador Taye, and the two sides reviewed the wide range of development cooperation between Ethiopia and United Nations Agencies. They also discussed on-going partnerships and considered further the way forward. Ms. Eziakona-Onochie congratulated Ethiopia for its successes in the Millennium Development Goals and noted that this provided a very good base from which to pursue the same efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals. She also mentioned the planned cross-border initiative to build up climate resilient support along the border with Kenya; Ambassador Taye thanked the UNDP for the support provided to the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ms. Eziakona-Onochie also noted that the five year plan of the newly established United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), intended to coordinate the activities of the 28 UN Agencies, was aimed to align with Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan II as well as with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The newly launched United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is a wide-ranging development assistance plan, covering the five year period (2016-2020), and it is essentially in line with Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTPII).

UNDAF conducted a validation workshop in Addis Ababa on November 20. This workshop presented an overview of the planned programs, with expected budget distribution to the different sectoral pillars and demonstrated how these were aligned with the GTP II and with the Sustainable Development Goals. It also covered the 'delivering as one' structure in Ethiopia and structural alignment with National Sector Mechanisms as well as what is new in UNDAF, any challenges UNDAF might encounter when it started operations, possible ways to address these and the overall opportunities that the Framework will offer.

The UN Development Assistance Framework is built on five pillars. These cover: Inclusive Growth and Structural Transformation; Resilience and Green Economy; Investing in Human Capital and Expanded Access to Quality and Equitable Basic Social Services; Governance, Participation and Capacity Development; and Equality and Empowerment. The validation workshop presentation suggested the framework would be allotting a budget totaling close to US\$5 billion for these areas with most going to ‘Investing in Human Capital and Expanded Access to Quality and Equitable Basic Social Services’ (54%) and ‘Resilience and Green Economy’ (40%), US\$ 2.45 billion and US\$1.8 billion respectively. These two pillars are designed to offer the best possibilities for the closest and most enhanced partnership between Ethiopia and UNDAF. The other pillars which make up no more than 6% of the total budget could also present good opportunities for ties between the two sides.

These UN Development Assistance Framework pillars clearly align with some of the Growth and Transformation Plan II pillars and will allow for coordinated and consolidated implementation of development cooperation programs between Ethiopia and UNDAF during the respective five year plan periods. For example, UNDAF’s Pillar I, ‘Inclusive Growth and Structural Transformation’ aligns with several of the pillars of the GTP II - “Sustaining the rapid, broad based and equitable economic growth and development witnessed during the last decade including GTP I” (GTP Pillar 1); “Enhance the transformation of the domestic private sector to enable it to become a capable development force” (GTP Pillar III); and “Proactively manage the on-going rapid urbanization to unlock potential for sustained rapid growth and structural transformation of the economy” (GTP Pillar 5).

The validation workshop presentation also noted that UNDAF’s Pillar 2: ‘Resilience and Green Economy’ could also go hand-in-hand with Ethiopia’s GTP Pillar 9 “Building climate resilient green economy.” UNDAF’s Pillar 3: ‘Investing in Human Capital and Expanded Access to Quality and Equitable Basic Services’ is also essentially similar to the GTP’s Pillar 6 ‘Accelerate human development and technological capacity building and ensure its sustainability’. UNDAF’s Pillar 4 can be aligned with the GTP’s Pillar 7: ‘Continue to build democratic and developmental good governance through enhancing implementation capacity of public institution and actively engaging the citizens.’

Overall, UNDAF offers strong linkage with the SDGs, a new focus on Resilience, Green Growth, Equality and Empowerment and more clearly defined humanitarian programming. It also provides for opportunities to work through the Business Operations Strategy and improved implementation arrangements, with the introduction of UNDAF Results Groups and stronger linkages with national sector working groups.

The validation workshop also suggested that among the advantages that UNDAF would offer would be greater integration between development and humanitarian efforts to build a holistic approach for addressing shocks and building resilience in the areas of humanitarian crisis and vulnerability. It would help provide innovative efforts based on clear and limited sets of joint policy and programmatic themes as well as integrated financing mechanisms for refugee crises. It could also help responses to multi-sectoral development challenges with provision of integrated policy support, including on critical cross-cutting issues, joint programs, cross-border

initiatives, coherent UN system-wide support to the data revolution and allow the UN to facilitate partnerships with all stakeholders in support of the SDGs and national priorities.