

News in Brief

Two days of National Mourning for the atrocity in Gambella Regional State
Prime Minister Hailemariam underlines the importance of peace for regional development
Dr. Tedros speaks at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs
Economic forecast: Ethiopia to continue its “rapid growth” trajectory
IGAD and the Troika insist Machar must return to Juba by Saturday
UN Security Council briefed on Somalia’s security situation
The 5th Tana High Level Forum on Security held in Bahr Dar

News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The African Union in a statement on Tuesday (April 19) condemned the attack on civilians in Gambella Regional State of last Friday and expressed support for a military action to contain the “criminals” responsible for killing 182 people and abducting 102, mostly children. **(See article)**

The UNHCR said on Wednesday (April 20) that up to 500 migrants might have drowned in the Mediterranean last week when human traffickers crammed people onto an already overcrowded ship, causing it to sink. 41 people survived. The Somali government said on Monday that 200 or more might have been Somalis. Many others were reported to be from Eritrea as well as from Ethiopia.

Ethiopia

The Ethiopian House of Peoples Representatives declared (April 19) two days national mourning on Wednesday and Thursday this week for the victims of the attacks on unarmed civilians in the western area of Gambella by Murle tribesmen from South Sudan on Friday last week (April 15). 182 people were killed and over a hundred children seized. **(See article)**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn arrived in New York on Wednesday (April 20) to attend two milestone events in New York: the High Level Thematic Debate on Achieving Sustainable Development (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement Signing Ceremony, taking place on Friday and Saturday this week (April 21 and 22) .

In an interview with The Worldfolio Prime Minister Hailemariam detailed Ethiopia’s policies towards regional integration and the importance of regional peace and stability, as well as highlighting its emphasis on sustainable development, the plans to shift from an agrarian-based to an industrial-based economy, and the opportunities available for investors. **(See article)**

The 5th Tana Forum on security in Africa wrapped up its two-day session on Sunday (April 17, 2016). Speaking at the conclusion of the forum, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn recognized the great works of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS-Addis), which he noted was instrumental in promoting peace and security in Ethiopia and Africa at large through education. **(See article)**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and Somali President Mohamud met on the side-lines of the 5th Tana High Level Security Forum and agreed to advance cooperation economically and politically to institutional levels. The Prime Minister reiterated Ethiopia's support to Somalia for the elections later this year.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom started a three day official visit to Sweden on Tuesday (April 19), attending a roundtable discussion at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs). Dr. Tedros briefed the participants on current developments in Ethiopia and regional security challenges in the Horn of Africa. **(See article)**

During his visit, Dr. Tedros held talks with Foreign Minister, Margot Wallstrom on Wednesday. (April 20) He also held discussions with Ms. Angeta Karlsson, State Secretary for Health Care, Public Health and Sport of Sweden, Mr. Mikael Damberg, Sweden's Minister for Enterprise and Innovation and with Ms. Isabella Lovin, Minister for International Development Cooperation of Sweden. After the meeting with Ms. Lovin, Sweden announced it had launched a US\$25 million program of development cooperation with Ethiopia for 2016-2020.

Dr. Tedros visited the Riksdagen, the Swedish Parliament on Thursday (April 21) and held talks with Kenneth G. Forslund, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on a range of issues, including climate change, drought, and agricultural transformation. He also met with representatives of major Swedish companies as well as with representatives of the Ethiopian Diaspora

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros met with the CEO of Girl Effect, Farah Ramzan Golant, in his office on Monday (April 18). Girl Effect is an organization that reshapes the value of girls and frames new social norms that break the cycle of poverty through an integrated brand approach. One such program is "Yegna", a brand designed to inspire positive change for girls in Ethiopia.

State Minister Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie met with Mr. Elman Abdullayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan (April 19, 2016). Discussions focused on issues of strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Ethiopia and Azerbaijan.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie, and Country Head, Sebastien Frendo from the Africa Governance Initiative (AGI) signed an agreement for the establishment of an AGI regional office in Ethiopia (April 19). The Africa Governance Initiative is a non-profitable organization established by Tony Blair, former UK Prime Minister.

A Framework agreement between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the International committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for ICRC's activities in Ethiopia was signed (April 19, 2016). State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie said ICRC's activities in Ethiopia dates back to 1981 and that their support was highly appreciated.

State Minister Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie is attending the 13th Summit of the Northern Corridor Integrated Projects in Kampala this weekend (April 22 and 23). Countries participating are Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia which is now a full partner of the NCIP.

IHS, a US-based consultancy firm in a study on foreign direct investment (FDI), identified Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda along with Ghana in a list of 15 hotspot investment destinations around the world. It described Ethiopia as “a star on the rise”, with strategic policy reforms to build up its industrial sector, and accelerated infrastructure development.

The Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe, Ambassador Mustafe Dek Abdisalam presented his letter of credence to the Republic of Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe on Thursday last week (April 14).

Djibouti

Djibouti’s Minister of Interior, Hassan Omar Mohammed Burhanuddin, signed a cooperation agreement in the field of security with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior of Saudi Arabia on Sunday (April 17) in Riyadh.

The Djibouti government has donated one thousand tons of food to assist families affected by the severe drought in Somaliland. The aid was handed over to Somaliland’s national emergency drought committee by Djibouti’s Minister of Agriculture, Mohamed Ahmed, on Tuesday (April 19). The Somaliland government said earlier that nearly 200,000 families needed urgent food aid.

Eritrea

Foreign Minister Osman Saleh Mohammed and Presidential Adviser Yemane Ghebreab visited Finn Church Aid offices last week during a visit to Helsinki. Finn Church Aid began to support Eritrean education sector development in early 2015.

IHS Jane's Defence Weekly reported last week that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) appears to be constructing a new port next to Assab International Airport in Eritrea. It published satellite imagery showing a new military camp and the construction of a new port facility which could become the UAE’s first permanent military base in a foreign country. The work apparently began after September last year.

Thursday last week (April 14) was “Eritrean Prisoners’ Day”, on which Eritreans around the world commemorated the thousands of Eritrean prisoners of conscience in hundreds of prisons in Eritrea. Some have been held for more than two decades without charge or trial. They include teachers, religious leaders, professionals, artists, traders, sheikhs and priests, as well as veteran combatants and leaders of the EPLF, among them are ministers and army commanders and other senior members of the ruling party and the government who were once President Isaias’ closest associates.

Kenya

President Kenyatta declared at the weekend that the country had closed the chapter on the post-election violence, and said that the Kenyan judicial system would deal with the three Kenyans wanted by ICC over claims of witness tampering.

International Criminal Court said this week that Kenya must cooperate with the court to hand over three suspects it wanted and had the legal obligation to fully cooperate with the ICC including the implementation of arrest warrants. In case of non-cooperation, the legal procedure before the ICC is for the Judges to make a finding of non-compliance and to refer it to the Assembly of States Parties to take any measure it deems appropriate.

President Kenyatta said on Wednesday (April 20) that corruption and wastage, mismanagement and infighting were the major threats to the success of devolution. He added that the government would deal ruthlessly with any governors who engaged in corruption and warned that those caught on the wrong side of the law would be dealt with like common criminals. His warning came at the start of the 2016 Devolution Conference being held in Meru. The President's speech was read on his behalf by the Devolution Cabinet Secretary, MrMwangiKiunjuri,

Somalia

President Mohamud told the Voice of America's Somali service on Wednesday (April 20) that he would seek re-election in this year's presidential elections, due to be held in September after the election of a new Parliament. He said "I will be a candidate for the upcoming elections in 2016 and will come up with new agenda and strategy to lead the nation if I get re-elected."

President Mohamud speaking at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington, this week said Somalia's "nascent institutions" needed years of financial and security support to become effective. The forthcoming election was a compromise under which clans choose a total of nearly 14,000 people to form an electoral college to select a new parliament. He stressed Somalia needed further improvements in security and mistrust among clans remained high. He also noted concern over the dumping of toxic waste along Somalia's coasts.

During his visit to Sudan last week, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and President Al-Bashir agreed to step up cooperation in the economy, trade, security, culture, education and governance. They also agreed to form a strategic cooperation council at ministerial level.

At a briefing of the UN Security Council on Tuesday this week (April 19), the AU Representative to the United Nations called for the deployment of operational enablers and force multipliers to rejuvenate AMISOM operations and recommended the renewal of AMISOM's mandate which runs out on May 30. **(See article)**

Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Sharmarke held talks with Algerian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ramtane Lamamra, on Friday last week (April 15) in Istanbul, Turkey on the sidelines of the 13th Summit Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to discuss cooperation between the two countries.

Prime Minister Sharmarke visiting Russia has asked Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov for help to equip its armed forces to fight terrorism as well assistance to strengthen its economy. At a meeting on Tuesday (April 19), Mr. Lavrov said Russia is ready to consider military cooperation.

Minister of Trade and Industry, Abdul Rashid Mohamed Ahmed, met Egyptian Prime Minister Sherif Ismail on Thursday (April 21). They agreed on the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation and signed a MoU to promote trade. A statement said the two countries intend to cooperate in industrial production and livestock, and promote trade in the fishery sector. A trade delegation is to visit Somalia to study implementation of the proposed cooperation initiatives.

The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, met Independent Expert (IE) on the Human Rights Situation in Somalia, Mr. Bahame Tom Nyanduga in Mogadishu on Wednesday (April 20). Discussions covered a wide range of issues including AMISOM's conduct of military operations. Mr. Nyanduga also met with Somali Government representatives. He is expected to report his findings to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, in September

The President of Somalia's Puntland State Government, President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali met with the Egyptian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Aboubakr Hefny, during a visit to Addis Ababa on Monday (April 18). President Ali earlier attended the Tana High-Level forum on Security in Bahr Dar.

Efforts are being made to revive the stalled Somalia/Somaliland talks. A Somali team led by the Minister of the Interior, Abdirahman Hussein Adowaa, is in Istanbul for talks with a Somaliland team led by Foreign minister Dr. Saad Ali Shire. The last round of talks ended when Somaliland rejected the inclusion of Somaliland citizens in the team of Somalia negotiators.

Somaliland Vice president, Abdirahman Abdillahi Ismail 'Sayli', said this week that Somaliland planned to establish a special police unit to prevent illegal migration of Somaliland youth. The announcement came after reports that more than a hundred Somaliland citizens might be among those who died in the Mediterranean last week.

South Sudan

Following several delays by Dr, Reik Machar this week, IGAD and the Troika countries of the USA, Norway and the UK, issued a statement that Dr, Machar must return to Juba to take up his post as Frist Vice President by Saturday (April 23) at the latest. The statement was endorsed by Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan, African Union, China, European Union, Norway, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Netherlands and UNMISS. **(See article)**

South Sudan's Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Peter Bashir Gbandi, said on Wednesday that preparations were underway for joint South Sudan/Ethiopian military operations to free the children abducted during the attack.

Sudan

The Egyptian government on Sunday (April 17) refused a request from Sudan to engage in direct talks or resort to international arbitration on the dispute between the two countries over Halayeb triangle. A foreign ministry spokesperson said that “Halayeb and Shalateen are Egyptian territory and they fall under Egyptian sovereignty”. The Sudan Foreign Ministry’s latest request came after the Egyptian government declared on April 9 that Tiran and Sanafir Islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba fall within the territorial waters of Saudi Arabia.

Two days of National Mourning for the atrocity in Gambella Regional State

The Ethiopian House of Peoples Representatives this week declared two days national mourning on Wednesday and Thursday (April 20-21), for the victims of Friday's heinous attack committed on innocent civilians in Gambella Regional State. Ethiopian flags in all regional states and the two city administrations and in all Ethiopian Embassies and on Ethiopian-owned ships were flown half-mast to commemorate the victims of the attack which took place overnight on Friday last week. At dawn on April 16, armed militants of South Sudan's Murle tribe infiltrated into Ethiopia and attacked 13 *kebeles* in the Anuak and Nuer Zones of the Gambella Regional State, killing 182, abducting 102 people, mostly children and carrying off over 2000 cattle.

Addressing the nation on the National Television, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn said the Government of Ethiopia extended its deepest sorrow over the killings of innocent civilians and the abductions. He expressed the Government’s profound sympathy and condolences to the bereaved families, the residents of Gambella Regional State and peoples of Ethiopia. Such attacks deserved and met with complete national, regional and international condemnation. There have been occasional abduction of children or cattle raiding across the border before, but this massive attack was unprecedented. Some of the gunmen involved in the attack had been killed and the Prime Minister said efforts to find and free the abducted children were being intensified. People would be kept informed about these efforts.

The Prime Minister confirmed that perpetrators of this atrocity were neither members of the forces of the South Sudanese government or of the South Sudan opposition SPLM-IO. He said the Government was now working with the South Sudanese government with a view to taking all the necessary measure against the attackers. It was in consultation with the Government of South Sudan in order to carry out a joint operation to locate the hideout of those responsible.

The South Sudan Government said on Wednesday this week (April 20) that it would be cooperating with the Ethiopian authorities in the hunt for the gunmen. Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Peter Bashir Gbandi, told reporters that Juba was coordinating with Addis Ababa to locate the armed militia responsible who, he said, were believed to have been Murle men from the newly created Boma state. He said, “We are very sad because of this incident and we will not entertain any such behavior even if it comes from South Sudan. These are people who are terrorizing our people. They have even abducted thousands and thousands of cattle and children.” He said that South Sudanese forces were coordinating

activities with Ethiopian forces at the border, adding that the joint operations will help rescue the abducted children.

South Sudan's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Akuei Bona, also condemned the attack, describing it as “totally unacceptable and inhuman”. He said his country fully supported Ethiopia’s efforts to free the abducted children. On behalf of the people and Government of South Sudan, Ambassador Akuei Bona also expressed his condolences to the families of the victims of the attack and to all Ethiopians. He emphasized that the two countries should collaborate closely and exchange information in order to put a stop to any similar barbaric attacks.

The Chief Administrator of Gambella Regional State, Gatluak Tut, said on Wednesday that units of the Ethiopian Defense Forces were currently undertaking large scale military operations. They had, he said, identified the whereabouts of the abducted children and surrounded the area after entering into the districts of Jior and Kok. He said the abducted children would be reunited with their families when the operation ended.

The Prime Minister Hailemariam also noted that the Government was providing support to the victims of the attack. A medical team had been dispatched to the region and started to provide assistance to those injured and other victims. On Tuesday this week (April 19) the Minister of Federal and Pastoral Area Development, Kassa Teklebirhan, and the Government Communication Affairs Office Minister, Getachew Reda, visited the villages which had been attacked. During a meeting with victims of the attack in Lare *woreda*, Mr. Kassa Teklebirhan underlined that efforts to assist and help the victims will continue. The Minister said Ethiopia was a peace-loving country and a nation which can maintain its peace. He also noted it provided shelter for hundreds of thousands of people fleeing conflict from neighboring countries.

Ethiopia’s relations with its neighbors are deeply rooted in the principles of promoting peace, cooperation and economic diplomacy. It has been closely engaged in constructing the architecture for the new economic and political integration of the Horn of Africa, and this has led to strategic engagement with neighboring countries, with an emphasis on the economic and infrastructural integration of the region, particularly in terms of transport, communications, and energy.

Acknowledging that peaceful neighbors are good trade partners and regional stability enables a country to focus resources on addressing poverty, Ethiopia has persistently used multilateral institutions like IGAD, COMESA, the AU, the UN and other institutions to pursue shared interests. It has been a key player in deterring cross-border conflicts in pastoral areas through IGAD’s Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism (CEWARN). There have been numerous instances of conflicts among the cross-border pastoral societies themselves, often leading to violence and cross-border raids. Border conflicts are often related to increased demands for water, pasture and theft of livestock. Ethiopia believes cross-border conflicts could be settled peacefully when countries establish increased trade and business exchanges across those borders. It has been encouraging increased border trade to end cross-border raids and conflicts. Ensuring easy access to basic commodities through legal business transactions and expansion of road infrastructure are other ways of facilitating peaceful exchanges in border areas. It has, in fact,

signed a number of cross-border agreements with Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia to facilitate trade exchange and try to balance the gap in supply and demand in border areas, encouraging the distribution of commodities to improve people's lives. This is all part of the initiatives aiming to reduce poverty, inequality and conflict among the peoples of the region.

The fundamental premises of foreign policy remain firm: "Our policy in the Horn of Africa should, like all other policies, be free of different sentiments and proceed from a sober analysis of the situation, keeping in constant view our development and democracy agenda. It should understand that the success of our development and democratization has a positive contribution not only to Ethiopia but to all neighbors as well; and that a policy that is free of arrogance and greed would contribute to changing the entire region." It is in this light that Ethiopia's new Growth and Transformation Plan is prioritizing the efforts to boost economic cooperation with its neighbors.

Prime Minister Hailemariam underlines the importance of peace for regional development

In an interview last week with The Worldfolio, a global content provider, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn detailed Ethiopia's policies towards regional integration and the importance of peace and stability, as well as highlighting how the country was leading by example with its emphasis on sustainable development, its plans to shift from an agrarian-based to an industrial-based economy, and the opportunities for investors as the Government looks to the private sector to maximize the potential opening up throughout the entire value chain, from agriculture and infrastructure to energy and tourism.

The Prime Minister underlined that peace is a pre-requisite for any kind of engagement in development. As far as developing countries were concerned, it was necessary for people to mobilize around the development agenda and democratization of the country. To do so, they needed peace and stability. Peace, the Prime Minister underlined, was the most important issue that has to be addressed. In places where there is no peace, economies were dwindling and people suffering. "Ultimately," he said, "we all live in the hope of having an enjoyable life, if peace doesn't exist it reduces your existence." In addition to conflicts within a country, the Prime Minister added, there is today the issue of extremism, which uses religion as a shield. Actually, religion has nothing to do with extremism, he said, and "I think this religious-based or camouflaged kind of terrorism, which affects the whole globe and is killing innocent people and focusing on soft targets, is something that we have to address very quickly, otherwise, human existence is threatened." The recent incidents in Paris, Nigeria, Mali and in Cameroon, all at the same period of time, emphasized that this was a global problem and needed global partnership and coordination to deal with it.

The Prime Minister said Ethiopia championed all efforts to bring peace and tranquility to Africa and beyond, adding "We have a limited capacity, but we are trying our best, looking into the fact that peace is a pre-requisite for any kind of development and democratization. "In fact, "peace is a pillar issue and fighting terrorism is an existential issue for us". These must be worked on with the global community. The Prime Minister hoped the global community now

understood this, and that it could set aside their differences and come together to fight terrorism. He pointed out that with the advance in communications and information technology and social media networks, so much information was available. Even the terrorists were using these opportunities to destabilize. We need, he said, to come together and use the opportunities these tools bring for the betterment and positive growth and engagement of our people.

Touching on the area of climate change the Prime Minister stressed that the issue of global warming and climate change was a reality not just theory. If we continue at this pace, “it means we are going to disappear from the globe within the coming years.” He continued saying Ethiopia wants to demonstrate its responsibility in this regard even though the country’s contribution to global greenhouse emissions is minimal and the impact of our contribution is very small. He said “We have to demonstrate that if a country like Ethiopia, a less developed country, can contribute this much, then how much more can big countries, like the United States, European countries, China, Mexico, India and Brazil contribute.” The Prime Minister underlined that the global community must see the reality on the ground and realize that if global warming goes up 1.5 degrees centigrade, Africa is going to suffer. He also noted the impact of El Niño and how much Ethiopia was being affected by the drought and suffering from this disaster caused by climate change. Although governments try their best to improve these matters, there is a limit, because this is a global issue that individual governments cannot face by themselves. The Prime Minister emphasized that “We need to take climate change seriously; the ice is melting in the Arctic, the ocean levels are rising, droughts are visible in Australia and California; people are suffering. This has to be taken care of... every one of us should feel responsible. He said Ethiopia would speak in one voice with “our African brothers and sisters to show that Africa is the most vulnerable continent as far as climate change is concerned and that the global community has a responsibility to act and act quickly.”

In answer to a question on Ethiopia’s regional integration efforts, the Prime Minister said that if you looked at the global order it was clear that larger the size of a community, the better their economy performed. Look at China or India, or Russia and Brazil. They all have large populations and their size allows them to compete globally. So, he said, competition now is not within Africa, it is with the global community. This means that Africa must integrate very quickly in terms of trade, investment and infrastructure. This is essential for the mobility of people as well as goods and services and for fast movement in terms of logistics. He said Ethiopia would like to expedite people-to-people relations, because Africa is important for Ethiopia. African integration is high on Ethiopia’s agenda for the next 50 years and in our short-term 10-year plan. He said that plan could be a roadmap to integrate all the regional blocks or regional economic communities. There were five regional economic communities in Africa now, and one of these was COMESA, which he himself currently chaired.

In response to questions on the strategic pillars of the Growth and Transformation Plan II and the way the country was creating the necessary conditions for industry to play a key role in the economy, the Prime Minister said the country focused on boosting agriculture production and productivity, taking agriculture as an agent of growth, because of the huge potential. It was modernizing the sector, moving from subsistence to commercial agriculture. He noted that around half of the smallholder farmers had now become commercial. In addition, private sector investment in agriculture would be encouraged. Young people, graduates from universities and

technical and educational colleges must get involved in agriculture-based investment, he said. They would have the support of the government and be offered facilitation to move into modern, intensified agriculture. This would involve a dual track approach: continuing the modernization of smallholder farming and enhancing private involvement in agriculture production, especially for agro-processing.

All this involved creating the necessary conditions for industry to play a key role in the country's economy. The infrastructure gap needed to be filled as quickly as possible. Industrialization required reliable power, and power generated from renewable sources. Another area that needed focus was trade facilitation and logistics, both essential. To reduce the cost of transportation, the country has constructed the new railway from Addis Ababa to Djibouti, the main corridor for exports. Another area of development, learnt from the Asian Tigers, was industrial park development to help provide one-stop service to investors. He said the federal government as now in the process of establishing eight large industrial parks, and in addition the regional states would also be developing their own industrial parks. The Prime Minister underlined that the Government had a huge responsibility to fill the gap when the private sector was not ready or willing to become involved. He said "Some say this is a state-led economic growth. We say: it is a private-led economic growth, but the private sector was not able to go there so we had to intervene and fill the gap. But", he added, "we are not the engine of growth, that role belongs to the private sector."

The Prime Minister also noted Ethiopia's excellent relations with the United Kingdom which is the country's largest donor and supporter in development cooperation. He said one reason for this was that Ethiopia effectively utilizes every penny; it is channeled into development with a wastage rate of almost zero. He emphasized that Ethiopia's future strategy was to move away from aid into trade and it wanted more trading investment from UK. He pointed out that investors would find that Ethiopia was a country where they could do business easily. Investors wanted macroeconomic stability, and Ethiopia had a stable macroeconomic system under prudent management, both at fiscal and monetary levels. The country was peaceful and had friendly relations with the region. It strongly supported peace beyond its borders, notably in South Sudan and Somalia. The Prime Minister emphasized again that the private sector must be an engine of growth and it should be very active in the African context. Today, infrastructure investment was where the private sector needed to come forward, especially in energy, so necessary for African industrialization not only in manufacturing industries, but also in construction, mining and tourism.

The Prime Minister also spoke of the future he wants to create for the country. It is "one where people live in peaceful coexistence, where they have a decent job." He said this could happen in many ways but Ethiopia believed the way forward was to go for a renaissance that would help it reach a middle-income level by 2025. That, he said, was the short-term future. However, in the longer run, in 50 years time, I want to see my country become an advanced economy; I want to see everybody here living in peace and prosperity and leading decent lives," and this, he added, required democratic development to help the country move forward to reach prosperity.

Dr. Tedros speaks at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom made a three day official visit to Sweden this week. He began his visit on Tuesday (April 19) by attending a roundtable discussion at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on “Developments in Ethiopia and regional Security Challenges in the Horn of Africa.” The Swedish Institute of International Affairs is a public-service organization that was founded in 1938 as a politically independent institute supporting research and education in international political issues.

Dr. Tedros spoke on Ethiopia’s role and on the challenges and opportunities in the Horn of Africa. He noted that Ethiopia finds itself at the epicenter of one of the most volatile regions in Africa with complex and multiple security and development challenges. Two of the key challenges in the region, the growing interest of traditional and emerging powers towards the region and the longstanding problem in Somalia, helped make the security dynamics more complex and difficult. Nevertheless, he insisted: “the Horn of Africa also has tremendous potential for common development and prosperity, provided that there is durable peace and stability.”

The bigger challenges, according to Dr. Tedros, revolved around how to minimize the pitfalls and capitalize on the opportunities available to transform the region into a zone of peace and prosperity. This, he said, is what Ethiopia is trying to address together with countries of the region. Speaking on strategies that Ethiopia had deployed over the last two and a half decades, he said the country had focused on addressing its own internal vulnerabilities. He offered statistical evidence how this strategy had added to the robust and sustained growth the country had shown. "Since 2000, poverty in Ethiopia fell from 55% to 26% by 2014 according to the World Bank."

Dr. Tedros also recalled how the road, railway, electricity, telecom, air and sea port links that the country had established with its neighbors had not only contributed to creating good neighborly relations but also boosted trade and economic ties and created better understanding between and among the peoples of the horn. He also mentioned that the country was very aware of the challenges facing the region that sprang from climate change. Had it not been for the resilience that Ethiopia has built up over the past two decades, he said, the current El-Nino-induced drought would have created a serious disaster for the people.

Along with development and the war on poverty, the country’s second strategy was the Government’s clear understanding, as demonstrated in its foreign policy, that “our peace and development cannot be thought out in isolation to what is happening around our region.” Dr. Tedros noted “That is why our forces are in Somalia under the auspices of the African Union to rid the country of the *Al-Shabaab* menace and support its governance and security institutions.” The Foreign Minister noted the encouraging progress Somalia has made over the past couple of years. At the same time, he warned about the importance of diverting attention at this critical juncture when Somalia was making a very important transition. He assured participants at the roundtable that Ethiopia would continue to work with the Government, the countries of the region and international partners to keep Somalia on the agenda.

This strategy is also why Ethiopia is closely involved with IGAD in the peace processes in South Sudan. Dr. Tedros mentioned Ethiopia's "exemplary leadership" that played a key role in encouraging the conflicting parties to end the senseless conflict in South Sudan. Again, progress was being made. In fact, the only exception to emerging peace in the region, Dr. Tedros said, was Eritrea. The Minister said "Sweden and other development partners should give due thought to deceitful pretenses of Asmara with which it tries to hoodwink the world with a façade that it has abandoned its destabilization policy." Dr. Tedros went on: "The truth is Eritrea is now more belligerent and determined to support rebels and terrorist of all stripes more than ever with millions of dollars flowing into its coffers from various sources."

The Foreign Minister commended Sweden for its generous humanitarian and development assistance over the years. He expressed his belief that since both Ethiopia and Sweden aspire to join the United Nations Security Council as non-permanent members for the years 2017/18, the election would provide the two countries with the opportunity to continue working together on many issues of common interest and concern. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Mats Karlsson, Director at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. Later in the day, Dr. Tedros held meetings with Sweden's Minister for Enterprise and Innovation, Mikael Damberg and Ms. Angeta Karlsson, State Secretary for Health Care, Public Health and Sport. He also held talks with representatives of a number of major Swedish companies.

Economic forecast: Ethiopia to continue its "rapid growth" trajectory

The future trajectory of Ethiopia's economic growth vis-a-vis current challenges, including the present drought, and the way ahead have been the subject of analysis from a number of different directions recently. One of the most authoritative came from Ahmed Shide, State Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation who gave a detailed account to the Chinese news agency Xinhua last week why he expects Ethiopia to keep up the momentum of the rapid economic growth over the last decade during the years ahead.

State Minister Ahmed emphasized that Ethiopia expected to register double-digit growth for the coming year despite the impact of the drought locally and the wider global economic problems. Speaking about the fast growth during the previous 12 years and forecasting the current year's growth, he said Ethiopia was still sustaining its rapid double-digit economic growth, and this year "we also expect a similar growth even though there might be a little impact from the drought situation as well as from the world economic situation." The State Minister Ahmed identified the reasons for expecting the country to keep up this rate of growth. He pointed out that the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II), the implementation of which had already started, was designed to sustain growth and further transforming the structure of the economy. Among other factors he listed contributions from the smallholder agriculture sector, the Government's commitment to job creation and service delivery expansion and its public and other infrastructural investment, increasing industrialization and human skill development. This would ensure Ethiopia would keep its "momentum of growth", he stressed. Indeed, as a result of all those dimensions of development, he said "we expect similar rapid economic growth." He noted that the Government also planned to expand infrastructure investment further as well as

concentrate on human skill development and institution building in order to attract foreign direct investment as well as unleash the potential of the domestic private sector.

Concerning the challenges facing the economy, the State Minister said that on the domestic front the main problem was the current drought. It was, however, being addressed through the capacity the country had built over the past two decades as well as with the significant support provided by development partners. With regard to the global challenges, he said, for Ethiopia the decline of commodity prices had both positive and negative effects. Ethiopia was, of course, a significant beneficiary of falling oil prices. However, it would also be affected negatively when the global price of some agricultural exports like sesame declined. Overall, however, because of the diversified nature of the sources of recent growth as well as the comprehensive development approach that the Government was following the expectation was that the current global impact would be minimal.

Others agree with the State Minister. Dr. Martyn Davies, Managing Director for Emerging Markets and Africa at Deloitte Frontier Advisory, South Africa recently wrote an analysis of Ethiopia “Economic growth, Ethiopian Style” in *Business Day*. It was also published in the newspaper *Fortune*. His analysis looks at Ethiopia’s economic policies and its approach to growth and offers insights into how the country became one of Africa’s top performers among the world’s fastest-growing economies. Dr. Davies emphasizes that Ethiopia had been among Africa’s most impressive performers over the past decade, “averaging 10.9pc annual growth during the period 2004-2014, despite not producing any oil”. He underlines that Ethiopia’s economic sector growth is not just a fickle growth rate, driven by an over-inflated commodities market. As a result, a number of major companies are beginning to sit up and take notice of the potential that the country has to offer. Among the major elements driving investment opportunities in Ethiopia, he notes, is the significant spending on infrastructure, a nascent consumer market, a stable economy, and competitive labor costs. Commenting on improvements in regulatory hurdles, Dr. Davis recognizes that significant changes are beginning to make the country increasingly attractive. Real opportunities are becoming apparent for investors and businesses looking to expand into the yet untapped investment opportunities in Eastern Africa. He notes that Ethiopia is the last sizeable country in the world that has not had sweeping telecommunications liberalization.

Dr. Davies says that Ethiopia’s political economy suggests that while the country was arguably seeking to mimic the Chinese growth model, it was not in fact copying a particular country’s economic model in its entirety. It is following its own developmental state approach. Equally, there is massive expenditure on infrastructure and a growth mentality that is not driven by any “big bang” liberalization, but rather a more gradualist approach. Ethiopia is home to the continent’s second-largest population, with more than 90 million people and the population was forecast to top 100 million by 2020. Because of the socialist past, market entry can be difficult, he says, noting that there are often significant regulatory hurdles to overcome. Any business case should be carefully planned, preferably in partnership with experts with deep sectoral expertise in frontier markets. Equally, he adds, significant changes are beginning to make the country increasingly attractive and turning that old picture on its head.

Indeed, noting that Ethiopia is now open for investments from any area, he points out that a number of multinational companies, such as Heineken, the Blackstone Group, KKR, General Electric, Orange, Etur Textile, the BDL Group, Diageo, SABMiller, PPC and Starwood Hotels, have made significant investments in Ethiopia in recent years. Dr. Davies lists some of the reasons that had attracted them. One is the implementation of tax incentives for investment in high-priority sectors, including tourism, agro-processing, leather and leather goods, manufacturing, textiles, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, and mineral and metal processing. More broadly, the Government is revising its Commercial Code to facilitate private investment and enhance the business-operating environment. This is intended to simplify regulations for potential investors, standardize accounting practices to assess operating liabilities, including tax, accurately, increase the protection of shareholders, and modernize trade and registration procedures and processes.

In addition, the Government, again replicating the Chinese model, has in the last four years been establishing state-run and private industrial zones. Indeed, these are a central element in the recently launched Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTPII). These special economic zones include a range of investment, tax and infrastructure investment incentives. In July last year China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation signed a 246 million dollar deal to construct the first of these new parks, the Hawassa Industrial Park, with another four being planned. Ethiopia also has five privately owned industrial zones, and Dr. Davies says firmly “of all the talk of industrialization in Africa, I would argue that Ethiopia presents the greatest potential for low-end but high-employment-generating manufacturing.” He notes that as the cost of production in China’s eastern provinces is rising, placing production off-shore provides real potential for Ethiopia. Indeed, he says, the largest investors in Ethiopia’s manufacturing sector are Chinese companies in the automotive, textile and garments industries. Dr. Davies also underlines that Ethiopia, in addition to its local market, is a member of COMESA, offering preferential access to 19 countries with a combined population of 390 million. COMESA, of course, aims to create a common market with the free movement of capital and labor, and with no tariffs levied on goods for the whole of Eastern and Southern Africa.

He notes that agriculture remains an important contributor to Ethiopia's economy but its share of GDP has been steadily decreasing, down to 42% in 2014 from 52% in 1990. Services now make up 42% and industry 15%. Industry, he says, includes a “small but growing” manufacturing sector (4%). Certainly, despite a declining share of GDP, agriculture still remains the backbone of the country's economy, accounting for almost 80% of employment and up to 70% of export earnings.

Overall, Dr. Davies underlines that African growth has been fundamentally changing in the last two years with the collapse in oil and commodity prices. Among other effects, this means a shift in the center of gravity of growth, from West to East Africa. Investors are becoming less enthusiastic about West African economies, and are looking towards East Africa for the high-growth that capital requires. Ethiopia, he says, was still viewed through the lens of its traumatic past, but this is “now obsolete.” Ethiopia is forecast to be the world's best-performing economy this year, and that is an impressive feat considering the global economic slowdown, the changed Africa narrative and neighboring instability. Dr. Davies concludes that Ethiopia is “a true frontier

economy that presents long-term opportunities for capital seeking to invest in one of Africa's newest growth prospects.”

IGAD and the Troika insist Machar must return to Juba by Saturday

It has been proving harder than expected to get the leaders of South Sudan’s opposition, SPLM-IO, Dr. Riek Machar, to return to Juba. He was supposed to fly there to take up his post as First Vice President on Monday this week (April 18). The flight was first postponed to Tuesday and then again. Dr. Machar claimed that the government had failed to grant flight and landing clearance to his top military leader, the chief of general staff of the SPLM-IO, General Simon Gatwech Dual, and another 195 soldiers. The Government claimed these extra troops were bringing in heavy weapons including laser-guided missiles.

The two sides accused each other of being responsible for the delay. A government official said Machar was held up because he had wanted to bring equipment and troops into Juba in excess of what was agreed earlier. Machar told Al Jazeera that the government was creating "obstacles" to his return. The argument led the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) chairman, Festus Mogae, to warn that the delay in Dr. Machar’s return was putting the agreement at risk. A JMEC statement said Mr. Mogae expressed disappointment at Machar's failure to fly to Juba, from Pagak near the Ethiopian border, despite a chartered flight arranged for Monday and Tuesday. He hoped the flight could be rapidly rescheduled.

On Thursday, IGAD and the Troika countries of the USA, Norway and the UK, took a hand, issuing a statement insisting that Dr. Machar should return to Juba by Saturday (April 23) at the latest. The statement, which was endorsed by Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan, African Union, China, European Union, Norway, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Netherlands and UNMISS, said that “adequate security arrangements for Riek Machar's return have already been in place since 10 April”. The statement said the partners were “profoundly disappointed” by the decision of Dr. Machar on 17 April to impose new conditions on his return to Juba. These included a demand that his Chief of the General Staff, General Simon Gatwech Dual, as well as additional forces and light and heavy weapons, should precede his own arrival. The statement said this decision placed the country at risk of further conflict. It also caused inconvenience to the Government, which had scheduled Dr. Machar’s reception and inauguration. He is supposed to take an oath of office immediately after arriving in Juba.

In their statement, IGAD and the Troika noted that the Government had “overwhelming military force and superiority in Juba,” and they encouraged it “to show flexibility in regard to the size and composition of Machar's delegation.” They requested the JMEC Chairman, Festus Mogae, to propose to the Government and to the SPLM-IO that the composition of forces accompanying Machar on arrival should be limited to 195 men, 20 PKMs, and 20 RPG-7s. Ceasefire monitors should verify these weapons in Gambella and on arrival in Juba.

The statement said firmly that the regional and international partners strongly objected to the introduction of any new conditions to the security arrangements in Juba. It went on: “We also share our expectation that Dr. Machar will return as soon as the necessary logistical and security

arrangements can be put in place, but no later than 23 April.” It concluded with the threat that if the parties did not agree to this, then the JMEC's Chairman would request that IGAD hold an emergency summit, at which he would report that the parties have failed to abide by the peace agreement. He would also report to the UN Security Council and “request consideration of an appropriate response.”

UN Security Council briefed on Somalia's security situation

Michael Keating, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), provided an update on the situation in Somalia to the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday this week (April 19). He gave details of the agreement reached last week by Somali leaders on an electoral model that allowed for a choice of candidates, voting in each of the capitals or seats of government for existing and emerging Federal member states, with 30 per cent of parliamentary seats reserved for women. He called for the Somali Federal Parliament to endorse this model quickly. It marked a midway point between the 2012 elections, when only 135 electors selected 275 members of Parliament, and 2020, when all Somalis would be able to vote. This time there would be nearly 14,000 electors. The breakthrough on the electoral process, he said, had also generated momentum on a technical review of the provisional Federal Constitution, which would be the strongest guarantee of Somalia's long-term stability and democracy.

Mr. Keating paid tribute to the bravery of AMISOM troops but noted that there was still great insecurity. Al-Shabaab remained a potent threat and would try to disrupt an electoral process that threatened its agenda. He applauded President Mohamud's commitment to strengthen Somali security capabilities and shared the President's concern about inconsistent salary payments to personnel. Timely and regular pay was necessary, he insisted.

Security and prosperity, Mr. Keating said now depended on reversing Somalia's dependency on aid and addressing the root causes of fragility, conflict and violent extremism. He called, therefore, for a comprehensive political strategy to provide investments in jobs, education, the rule of law, respect for human rights and capable security and counter-terrorism forces. This agenda would require commitment from Somalia's political and traditional leaders, support from neighbors and partners, and strategies to address short-term issues, including drought in Somaliland and Puntland, Somali authorities had set up national and regional drought committees to raise funds and coordinate response. It was not enough. Humanitarian organizations had received only \$145 million out of \$885 million called for in the consolidated appeal for 2016.

Overall, progress in Somalia, he said, depended on the unity of the Security Council and the coherence of the broader international community, including the African Union, IGAD, the European Union and bilateral partners.

The AU Permanent Observer to the UN, Mr. Tete Antonio, underlined the AU's support for the agreed electoral model, but added that other electoral organs have yet to be nominated and the

technical committee must complete the election implementation plan. He also stressed the Government should conclude the process of joining Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle regions into one state.

Mr. Antonio noted that AMISOM forces had made significant gains, but the security situation “remained fluid”. The AU had taken steps to enhance the Mission’s operational efficiency, he said. In February, it had hosted a summit at which Heads of State of troop- and police-contributing countries had addressed the problems of resources, command and control and support to the Somali National Army. They had also signed the Djibouti Declaration on AMISOM. The AU and the UN had also held a working group last week (April 15) to discuss concrete options to enhance AMISOM’s command and control, including establishing a multinational sector headquarters across AMISOM’s areas of operation and bolstering its force capacity. Technical recommendations would be made shortly.

Mr. Antonio said improved effectiveness would be needed to enable AMISOM to meet its priorities from July to December to conduct defensive, offensive and routine operations. Its strategy must be adapted to cope with ongoing security challenges, and embrace more targeted and intelligence-driven operations aimed at recovering territories from Al-Shabaab. The AU Commission had directed AMISOM to begin planning the new strategy. It would welcome the Security Council’s support in carrying it out. Mr. Antonio emphasized that the deployment of operational enablers and force multipliers was pivotal to rejuvenate AMISOM operations. Pledges of helicopters by Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda would ensure greater flexibility and protection. He urged the Council to facilitate this, suggesting that reimbursement for helicopters should be commensurate with the offensive nature of AMISOM operations. He also noted it was important to mobilize resources to ensure the Somali National Security Forces were paid regularly; as well as fill the gap created by the 20 per cent pay cut imposed on AMISOM uniformed personnel in order to raise morale and motivation.

AMISOM’s mandate runs out on May 30 and Mr. Antonio said there was clear justification for renewing it in light of the progress already made in creating an acceptable environment for the political process and the continued security challenges. The African Union Peace and Security Council would be considering the situation in Somalia next week (April 28) with a view to recommending that the United Nations Security Council authorize an extension to AMISOM’s mandate.

President Mohamud of Somalia also briefed the Security Council emphasizing that the forthcoming election would be uniform across the country, with a dispute resolution process and 30 per cent of seats reserved for women. The Government was also working hard at completing the state formation process in Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle and clarifying the status of Benadir. Commending the efforts of the Somali National Army and AMISOM in the fight against Al-Shabaab, he said: “The fight is not yet over,” adding “We will not quit before it is successfully completed.”

The President asked the Council to lift the arms embargo, saying this would make the greatest impact on the development of Somalia’s security forces and the ability to defeat terrorism, protect its people and safeguard its future against violent and radicalized elements. The

embargo, he said, was “outdated and restrictive at best and misleading and undermining at worst.” He also requested a review of the mandate of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group to reflect that Somalia was no longer at war with itself, but fighting alongside other Member States to make the world safer.

The President detailed progress in public finance management reform, including a working Central Bank and an Independent Office of the Auditor General as well as agreement with the International Monetary Fund on a reform program for the next year, set up following an economic growth rate of 3.7 per cent in 2015. He stressed the need for the international community to expand support for high-priority economic sectors and youth employment. He said the Somali Compact, now in its final year, had helped to improve partnership and mutual accountability between the Government and the international community. Work was now under way on a three-year national development plan to ensure that the approach forged through the Somali Compact would not be lost.

Members of the Council underlined the importance of the electoral process and expressed concerns over the security situation and stressed all parties should push the peace process forward and the international community should acknowledge that it was Somali-owned and -led.

The UK Permanent Representative stressed it needed to be transparent, deliver on time and be inclusive,” adding “There can be no place at the table for any group or individual that seeks to undermine this process. Egypt said the process must “be completed within the determined time frame, with a large participation of women and youth.” The Russian Representative emphasized that “State-building and federalization was a primary task for the Somali Government to ensure that remaining antagonisms did not affect the election process.” New Zealand emphasized that the August elections must be Somali-led and key issues must be addressed, such as setting regional boundaries, completing the constitutional reform process and determining national resources. Services must be provided for people in areas under Government control, with closer coordination between the Somali National Army and police forces being vital for long-term stability, defeating terrorism and implementing an exit strategy for ongoing international missions.

China, the current chair of the Security Council, noted the fragile security situation; Venezuelastressed the Security Council should need Somalia’s appeal to lift sanctions, including the arms embargo. Japan underlined the need for further offensive action against Al-Shabaab in a more coordinated manner. Security sector reform was also important as was capacity-building needs for the maritime police force. State-building efforts had to be Somali-led and supported by the international community. France called on AMISOM to launch more offensive operations against Al-Shabaab and stressed the need for exemplary conduct among its troops. It said the role of the Somali security forces was particularly crucial in supporting AMISOM and keeping liberated areas free. The US said it would continue to use its financial, diplomatic, intelligence and military tools to help dismantle Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups.

The 5th Tana High Level Forum on Security held in Bahr Dar

The 5th Tana Forum was held in the city of Bahr Dar last week from 16-17 April 2016. This year's forum was held under the theme "Africa in the Global Security Agenda". Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, President Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan, President Faure Gnassingbe Eyadéma of Togo and President Hassen Sheik Mohamud of Somalia were present as well as the former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan. Among the former presidents at the Forum were Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; Festus Mogae of Botswana; Pierre Buyoya of Burundi; Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique; Joyce Banda of Malawi; and Leste Ramos-Horta of Timor; as well as Olesogun Obasanjo of Nigeria, who is also the Chairperson of the Tana Forum Board.

The annual Forum state brought together over 250 participants, including academics, policymakers, representatives of non-governmental organizations and officials of regional, continental and international organizations as well as heads of state and governments. The Former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, who was attending the Forum for the first time underlined the value of ex-leaders coming together with current leaders "to share experience and try to talk very frankly about the challenges facing the continent and also about our relations with the international community."

Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom chaired the sessions and acted as master of ceremonies. Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn opened the Forum, noting that "the growing attendance and diversity of participants demonstrate the growing recognition of the Tana Forum". He added that the Tana Forum had become an invaluable platform for the exchange of views, best experiences and innovative approaches to the fast changing security challenges facing the [African] continent and the global community today". The Prime Minister emphasized that African solutions to African problems require collecting and analyzing knowledge as well as upgrading local institutions. He said that Africa suffered from a number of security and political challenges which required African leaders to develop a strategic vision for resolution. It was welcome that a growing number of African leaders were participating in the Forum. This underscored their interest to promote a common understanding to achieve security and stability in the region. He spoke of the challenges of peace and security in the continent and the ways to resolve them, pointing out that Africa had begun to tackle these problems. Equally, he underlined the importance of cooperation among African leaders to develop the continent. They must look forward to securing participation of all to face the existing threats.

The chairman of the Tana High-Level Forum Board, former Nigerian President Obasanjo also underlined the importance of the Forum in encouraging support and promoting cooperation among African nations to resolve the challenges facing the continent. In his presentation on the "State of peace and Security in Africa", he said that Africa, as a continent, needed to prioritize its security. As such, the African Union must be prepared to step up in times of conflict to protect the lives of civilians. Africa, he said, should position itself as a credible and relevant partner in the global security agenda. He added that in order solve the African security issues it was very necessary that there should be adequate leadership at all levels. He said the Forum sought to achieve adequate solutions for the African problems, and he expressed the hope that the just completed Darfur referendum represented a step forward to achieving peace, development and

stability in the region. In this context, he welcomed the presence of Sudan's President Omer Al-Bashir at the Forum. He underlined, he said, his keenness to resolve Sudanese and African problems. The former Nigerian President pointed to the role that should be played by African leaders, saying that if they had a sufficiently strong will they could resolve the problems facing the continent. He mentioned the issue of migration, emphasizing that the only way to prevent migration would be to develop a strategy to create jobs and eradicate poverty on the African continent.

The Forum's keynote address came from the former Secretary General of the United Nations and President of the Kofi Annan Foundation, Kofi Annan. Mr. Annan, who also chairs the Africa Progress Panel and the Nelson Mandela-founded The Elders Group, stressed that the challenge of security in Africa was foremost a political problem. He affirmed that "you cannot have peace, security and development without security, rule of law and respect for human rights". He said winner-take-all approaches to elections on the continent had the effect of leaving out citizens for holding an opposing view, raising tensions around elections. He also noted that economic inequality has made Africa vulnerable to instability. He stressed the need for a strong and unified voice of the African continent in the global stage, and underlined the need to recognize the work and efforts of the African Union in peacekeeping operations on the continent at a regional level.

Mr. Annan underlined that solutions to the problems that the continent faced must come from within, and Africa must build up its ability to achieve these including financing its institutions. He said: "We cannot always pass a hat around and insist we want to be sovereign, we want to be independent. We should lead and get others to support us. That support will be much more forthcoming when they see how serious and committed we are." Mr. Annan also noted the constraints imposed by budgetary concerns for strengthening stability. To resolve this required creative ways of resourcing the African Union which has struggled to get members to pay their dues to allow it run its operations and programs effectively. He said this was affecting the work of the continent but he was happy to hear African leaders say "we must be prepared to pay for what we want; we must be prepared to put out our own money on the table and fund issues that are of great importance to us."

In an interview later, Mr. Annan also urged African leaders to leave when their mandated time is up and to avoid excluding opposing voices if elections are to cease contributing to conflicts on the continent. Unconstitutional changes to government in Africa had declined, he said, but exclusionary politics also threatened to reverse these gains made. He said "I think Africa has done well, by and large the coups have more or less ended, generals are remaining in their barracks, but we are creating situations which may bring them back." He went on: "If a leader doesn't want to leave office, if a leader stays on for too long, and elections are seen as being organized to suit a leader and he stays term after term after term, the tendency may be the only way to get him out is through a coup or people taking to the streets." Neither of these possibilities can be seen as an alternative to democracy, to elections or to parliamentary rule, Mr. Annan said, adding that "constitutions and the rules of the game have to be respected."

Various heads of state and former leaders spoke; speakers also included Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, the Chairman of the Munich Security Conference which had held a meeting in Addis Ababa two days earlier. Ambassador Ischinger noted the legitimate right of Africa to expect a

permanent seat or two on the United Nations Security Council. He also called on Africa to focus on conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction with more gender sensitive programs. In addition to the formal sessions, panel discussions and symposiums on good governance, corruption, employment and the continent's peace-keeping operations were held. This year the subject of the annual Meles Zenawi Lecture, also given at the Forum, was: "Leadership in Africa: Reflections on the legacy of Patrice Lumumba". The Lecture annually honors an African leader for his or hers' leadership skills. Last year, the subject was Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of independent Ghana.

The Forum, of course, has never intended to be a decision making body, and it isn't. It was designed as an occasion where local solutions could be discussed and explored as the region seeks to carve out its proper place in a global security architecture which has been and still is dominated by western powers. It aimed to boost Africa's struggle to reposition itself in the global security agenda. This was underlined this year by the subjects discussed including conflict prevention, building peace infrastructures, and sustaining peace and peace support operations.

At the closing session on Sunday, Prime Minister Hailemariam announced the formation of the Tana Foundation, to replace the former Tana Foundation. The Prime Minister said "The formation of the Foundation is of paramount importance to attain the objectives and principles of the Tana Forum and Pan-Africanism, respectively". He noted the Forum has been working by giving due attention to African affairs over the last five years, and had played an important role in promoting peace and security through education at regional and continental level. Now the Tana Forum's Board had finished its five year- term and a new board would be designated to head the new Tana Foundation. The Prime Minister stressed that Ethiopia would strengthen its support to the Foundation; and the Chairman of the retiring Tana Forum Board, Olusegun Obasanjo, said "What we said we wanted to achieve through the Tana Forum, we have achieved."