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**Africa and the African Union**

Outgoing UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to Ethiopia, Ms. Eziakonwa-Onochie said the Ethio-Eritrea peace deal demonstrated the sort of commitment of leadership the world needs. She said: “We are facing a world where many leaders are not promoting this kind of reconciliation and bridge building. So the two countries, in agreeing to this peace deal, have demonstrated leadership that we need to tell the world not to build walls between the hearts of families, communities and nations”. “For me as an African,” she said in an interview with ENA, “this is a proud moment because this is a teaching moment for the world. These two countries should have continued to have these hardened borders between themselves; but they chose the different path. We really hope that the world could rally behind this kind of initiative.”

Former Ethiopian Prime Minister, Hailemariam Dessalegn, appointed to lead AUEOM to Zimbabwe by Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Moussa Faki Mahamat, officially launched the African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) to the Zimbabwe Elections 2018 this week. At a three-day briefing for the .Mission, he stressed the need to follow election observation principles and criteria for assessing democratic election, such as objectivity, neutrality, impartiality, and constructiveness.” Zimbabwe will hold national elections on 30 July.

**Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed attended a tripartite summit with Eritrea’s President Isaias Afwerki and United Arab Emirates Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces was held on Tuesday this week (July 24) in Abu Dhabi. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed hailed the historic peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, paving the way for improved bilateral relations and contributing to the security and stability of Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as the Horn of Africa and the wider region. **(See article)**

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed arrived in the United States on Thursday (July 26) for a six-day trip to meet members of the Diaspora in North America. He is visiting Washington, Los Angeles and Minnesota to “Tear down barriers, and build bridges!”, to engage the Diaspora community in the reforms and reconciliation in Ethiopia. **(See article)**

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy presided over a meeting of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Unification and Reconciliation Committee on his arrival in Washington on Thursday (July 26). **(See article)**

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy met representatives of over fifty national and regional opposition parties on Sunday (July 22), and stressed: “Given our current politics, there is no option except pursuing a multiparty democracy supported by strong institutions that respect human rights and rule of law.” Chief of Staff, Fitsum Arega, said the parties appreciated the mass release of political prisoners and efforts at reconciliation at home and across the wider Horn of Africa. They tasked the Prime Minister to make electoral reforms a key plank of the wider political reforms he is undertaking.

State Minister Mrs. Hirut Zemene attended the celebration of 24 years of Liberation at the Rwandan Embassy this week.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Aklilu Hailemichael led the Ethiopian delegation to the Ethio-Indonesia Business and Investment Forum which took place in Jakarta on July 22. The Forum was organized by the Ethiopian Embassy and the Indonesia Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The delegation travelled on the inaugural Ethiopian Airline flight from Addis Ababa to Jakarta. **(See article)**

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Professor Afework Kassu held discussions with a delegation from Lyon led by the City’s Mayor M. Georges Képénékian on Tuesday (July 24). The French Ambassador to Ethiopia Ambassador, Ambassador Frederic Bontems also attended the meeting. The two sides discussed on ways of further strengthening the cooperation between the sister cities of Addis Ababa and Lyons.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs Professor Afework met and held talks with Ambassador Michael Raynor, Ambassador of the United States to Ethiopia on Wednesday (July 25). Their discussions focused on preparations for Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed’s visit to the United States this week.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs Professor Afework met with Mr. Asahiko Mihara, Acting President of the Japan-AU Parliamentary League, and Mr. Daishiro Yamagiwa, Secretary General of Japan-AU Parliamentary Friendship League on Wednesday (July 25). They agreed on the need to further strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two countries

Professor Sebsebe Demissew of Addis Ababa University, awarded the prestigious Kew International Medal last year, has been elected a Foreign Member of the Royal Society, the first ever Sub-Saharan African scientist to be elected in the Society’s 357-year history.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church announced has announced that the two Holy Synods in Ethiopia and in the United States, divided since 1991, have agreed to resolve their differences and be reconciled.

Ethiopia has made \$81.6 million from the sale of electricity to Djibouti and Sudan in the last fiscal year (July 8, 2017-July 7, 2018) according to the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, \$47.5 million from electric power sales to Sudan, and \$34.1 million doe power sales to Djibouti.

Ethiopian Airlines inaugural flight from Addis Ababa finally touched down on 21 July, 2018 at 18.00 hr at Jakarta. This flight is the first direct connection between Africa and Indonesia.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) on Tuesday launched an appeal for 22.2 million U.S. dollars to respond to the internal displacement crisis in Ethiopia's Gedeo and West Guji zones. The IOM said that since April this year some 970,000 people have fled their homes due to fighting between communities along the border of s Gedeo Zone in the Southern Regional State and West Guji Zone in Oromia Regional State. It called on the international community to support the displaced people as well as assist the Ethiopian government's efforts in addressing the humanitarian needs of people affected.

The United States announced an additional \$170 million in humanitarian aid to support displaced people affected by insecurity and large-scale displacement along the border of Oromia and Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples regions. The aid would be for emergency food and nutrition assistance, as well as life-saving medical care, safe drinking water, and improved sanitation and hygiene programs.

## **Eritrea**

President Isaias made a working visit to Saudi Arabia on Monday (July 23) leading a delegation that included Foreign Minister Osman Saleh and Political Advisor to the President, Yemane Ghebreab. He held talks with King Salman and other on bilateral issues of cooperation and coordination and ways of enhancing these, as well as the latest regional developments including the ending of the state of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. High on the agenda was the issue of Saudi investment in Eritrea.

President Isaias took part in the tripartite Summit in the UAE with Prime Minister Dr, Abiy of Ethiopia organized Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi on Tuesday (July 24) in Abu Dhabi. **(See article)**

President Isaias has appointed the current Minister of Education, Semere Russom, as Ambassador to Ethiopia. Ambassador Semere, who will retain his Ministerial rank, has previously served as Eritrea's Ambassador to the US and Governor of the Central Region

The Head of Massawa Port Administration said this week that the port has gone through major renovation process in order to enable it provide service for Ethiopia. An Ethiopian business community visited the port last week to assess the port's capacity. Administrator Layne Asfahaley said the port was equipped with the necessary facilities and skilled labor and was ready to restart services for Ethiopia's import-export commodities shortly.

## **Somalia**

President Mohamed Abdullahi has announced the establishment of a National Economic Forum in a presidential decree. The Forum is made up of the ministerial subcommittee on the economy, the governor of the Central Bank, regional leaders and five advisers from academia and experts. Their work will be to advise and help the government design strategic economic and financial policies.

Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khayre on Thursday (July 26) issued a decree dismissing Education Minister, Abdirahman Dahir Osman. The State Minister for Education, Abdirahman Mahmud Abdulla Jabir will take over until the appointment of a new minister. No reasons were given for the dismissal of Mr. Osman who had released the year's secondary education results a day earlier.

Deputy Prime Minister Mahdi Mohamed Guled opened an international conference on higher education on Tuesday this week (July 24). Focusing on the high education sectors, the three-day conference, held annually by the Somali National University, was attended by the Ministers of Education and Planning, members of the federal parliament, ambassadors, national prosecutors and academics from both local and international universities.

UN Secretary-General Special Representative for Somalia, Michael Keating took part in a panel discussion in Mogadishu to consider the role of the media in enhancing good governance, peace, and democracy, and promote the free press as a cornerstone for democracy and help establish strong interaction between the media and the UN. **(See article)**

Al-Shabaab militants were driven off with heavy loss at a military base at Bar-Sanguni, about 50 kilometers north of Kismayo on Monday (July 23). Adam Isak, Deputy Information Minister said two suicide truck bombs were detonated near the base perimeter before 100 militants attacked. They were repulsed with 87 killed in a fierce firefight. He said: "government forces were in full control of the base now," with National Army troops hunting down the attackers who had fled. An SNA commander said four government soldiers had been killed and several wounded. Al-Shabaab claimed it had overrun the base after attacking it with a suicide car bomb, killing 27 soldiers.

The UNHCR and UNOCHA have issued reports on the humanitarian situation in June, detailing internal displacement of persons and refugee conditions in Somalia. Food security has improved following good *Gu* rains but most internally displaced persons will remain in need of emergency humanitarian assistance throughout the year. **(See article)**

The Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund) together with the Danish Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU) and Shuraako, an arm of One Earth Future (OEF), have set up the Nordic Horn of Africa Opportunities Fund) has set up a \$10 million fund to support small and medium-sized enterprises in Somalia. Dubbed Murabaha, the Sharia-compliant investment instrument offers financing of up to \$25,000. It expects to fund energy, fisheries, agriculture, light manufacturing and hospitality sectors across Somalia to help entrepreneurs to build sustainable businesses and contribute to the economy and create employment.

The Hargeisa International Book Fair took place this week (July 21- July 26) for the tenth year with a delegation from Rwanda as guests of honor at this year's event.

### **South Sudan**

The South Sudan government and SPLM-IO negotiators initialed some of the power-sharing and governance articles of the IGAD peace process in Khartoum on Wednesday (July 25). Sudan Foreign Minister El-Dirdeiry Mohamed Ahmed said a final signing ceremony would take place on August 5 in the presence of IGAD leaders. In the meantime the mediation would continue efforts to bring holdout groups to sign the agreement. The other political opposition groups, the South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA), Former Detainees (FD) and the Other Political Parties (OPP) have continued to express concerns over the power sharing ratios and the issue of the states. **(See article)**

### **Sudan**

Foreign Minister El-Dirdeiry Mohamed Ahmed received a written message from the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Monday (July 23). Mr. Pompeo praised positive results achieved in light of the five-track engagement plan between the two countries particularly regarding counter-terrorism efforts, regional security and humanitarian access. He expressed his interest to enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

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### ***Tripartite summit held between Ethiopia, Eritrea, and UAE in Abu Dhabi***

A tripartite summit attended by Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Eritrea's President Isaias Afwerki and United Arab Emirates Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces was held on Tuesday this week (July 24) in Abu Dhabi .

A joint statement was issued at the end of the meeting. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed hailed the historic peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia which paves the way for improved bilateral relations and contributes to enhancing the security and stability of the two countries as well as the Horn of Africa and the wider region. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed praised the wisdom of President Isaias Afwerki and Dr Abiy Ahmed, and commended the bold step that led to the signing of a peace agreement reflecting their astute statesmanship and which would pave the way for years of stability, development and prosperity for neighboring countries. It underlined the common interests, which would enhance the prospects for peace and development based on this agreement, a solid foundation for peace and stability in the region. Earlier this month, Ethiopia and Eritrea formally re-established diplomatic relations and signed a declaration of peace and friendship in Asmara. It has been welcomed across the world from the United Nations to the UAE.

The statement said that the UAE affirmed its support for the peace agreement between the two countries in the interest of maintaining a proper relationship in a framework of good

neighborliness and respect for international laws and charters. It called upon the international community to support this historic and constructive agreement to promote peace, stability and development and to benefit the peoples of the two countries and the wider region.

President Isaias Afwerki and Prime Minister Dr, Abiy Ahmed thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UAE for their contribution to the efforts to end the dispute between them, noting that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UAE had spared no effort to help the two countries re-establish good relations for the sake of their people and the wider region. They appreciated the wisdom of King Salman bin Abdulaziz, the Saudi King and Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and the contribution of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and Prime Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Saudi Arabia's Crown prince, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Defense, for further supporting the process that would benefit the neighboring countries and the Horn of Africa.

During the visit, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, also conferred the Order of Zayed (First Class), the UAE's highest civilian honor, on the two leaders at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi. This is a rare and significant honor. The last recipient was Chinese President Xi Jinping. The ceremony was attended by senior UAE officials including the Speaker of Federal National Council, Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs and Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; and Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance as well as other Sheikhs, ministers; members of the Executive Council, top military and police officials and ambassadors and heads of international missions accredited to the UAE.

Sheikh Mohamed praised Ethiopia's and Eritrea's efforts to restore relations and said the award was in recognition of their vision, courage and statesmanship to end war and bring about peace between the two countries. He said they had been responsible for bringing peace between their two nations. President Isaias and Dr Abiy expressed their deep thanks and appreciated the UAE's efforts in supporting peace and development and its role in building bridges of friendship, cooperation and peace with various countries. They wished the people of the UAE and its government continued progress and prosperity.

UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, described the peace agreement as an example of great political wisdom. He said: "The UAE supports sound international relations that seek to promote peace and prosperity, with respect for international law," adding, "UAE congratulates Ethiopia and Eritrea on this historic agreement, and hopes that this move will open further opportunities and development across economic, cultural and social sectors between the two nations.

During his visit to the UAE, Dr. Abiy who headed a delegation including Ahmed Shide, Minister of Government Communication Affairs Office and Lemma Mergers, President of Oromia Regional State, also held talks with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed to discuss bilateral and regional issues as well as ways of strengthening investment and commercial ties between Ethiopia and the UAE.

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### ***Prime Minister Dr. Abiy to meet the Ethiopian Diaspora in North America***

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed arrived in Washington DC on Thursday (July 26) at the beginning of a visit of scheduled meetings with the Ethiopian Diaspora community residing in North America. The meetings are being held under the theme: “Tear Down the Wall and Build a Bridge”. The Prime Minister is leading a delegation including Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Minister for the Government Communication Affairs Office, Ahmed Shide, the President of the Oromia Regional State, Lemma Megersa, and other high-level government officials.

Upon arrival at Dulles International Airport, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy was warmly welcomed by Ethiopia’s Ambassador to the US, Ambassador Kassa Teklebirhan and members of the Ethiopian Diaspora community. During his tour, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed is expected to hold discussions with members of the Ethiopian Diaspora Community in Washington DC, Los Angeles and Minnesota. During his visit to the US, the Prime Minister will also meet US Vice-President Mike Pence and hold discussions on ways of strengthening bilateral cooperation and enhancing the people-to-people ties between the two countries.

Members of the Ethiopian Diaspora Community residing in Washington D.C, Los Angeles and Minnesota in collaboration with the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington DC and Ethiopia’s Consulate General in Los Angeles are finalizing preparations ahead of Dr. Abiy’s meetings which will start on Saturday (July 28). The organizers of the meetings, drawn from all walks of life, are doing all they could for the successful conduct of the Premier’s visit to North America and his meetings with the Diaspora. They said the meetings would be open to all and there was no need to stand on ceremony or await formal invitations. T-shirts with Premier Abiy’s images are now being sold in several shops in Washington DC, Los Angeles and Minnesota. Over 63 US-based community media and several Addis-based media outlets have already begun to give the event wider media coverage.

During his inaugural speech at the House of Peoples’ Representatives in the first week of April this year, the Prime Minister called on the Ethiopian Diaspora to be part of the current momentum of reforms underway in the country and contribute their share to the national development. As part of these initiatives for peace, reconciliation and development, earlier this month Dr. Abiy also announced government plans to establish a Diaspora trust fund to finance social services in the country. The Premier requested the Diaspora community to save a dollar a day to support development projects in Ethiopia, in education and health services. The government has provided a bank account number for the Ethiopia Diaspora Trust Fund and hundreds and thousands of members of the Ethiopian Diaspora have already begun responding to the call.

As part of his scheduled meetings with the Ethiopian Diaspora in North America, the Prime Minister and his delegation attended a reception for residents of Washington at the Ethiopian Embassy on Thursday (July 26). The Prime Minister noted the number of the Ethiopian Diaspora

Community residing in North America was greater than some of the states in Ethiopia. He said Ethiopia cannot go on without its Diaspora: “it accounts for half of our soul”. The Prime Minister stressed that “together, we shall prevail,” adding that Ethiopia, a country, which had managed to maintain its freedom could not fail to ensure that peace, democracy and development prevailed. He assured the gathering that the future was bright for Ethiopia and called on all Ethiopians at home and abroad to work for their motherland together in one spirit. Ambassador Kassa Teklebirhan took the opportunity to thank the organizing committee for “The Tear Down the Wall and Build a Bridge” event.

Meanwhile, following his arrival, the Prime Minister also presided over the first stage of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Unification and Reconciliation ceremony which was officially launched in Washington DC on Thursday (July 26). The two Holy Synods, in Ethiopia and in the US, have agreed to heal a rift that began in 1991. The Unification and Reconciliation Committee extended its deepest gratitude to Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed for his significant efforts during the reconciliation process. The Prime Minister previously held talks with a peace committee in Addis Ababa, when he stressed the Church, as a representation of Ethiopia, should lead by example and become a symbol of the current peace, unity and reconciliation efforts. The Prime Minister said it was impossible to think of Ethiopia without taking note of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which he said, is both great and sacred. While noting that the reconciliation event marks a historic development, the Prime Minister emphasized that it was overdue. He added that if it had taken place earlier it wouldn’t have taken Ethiopia and Eritrea over 20 years to reconcile and make peace. Dr. Abiy emphasized that unity in the Orthodox Church not only benefits the Church but also Ethiopia, the Horn of Africa and the entire continent.

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### ***Prime Minister Dr Abiy addresses academics from 50 Universities***

The Prime Minister met with over three thousand academics from 50 universities across the country on Monday this week (July 23). Opening the meeting, Dr. Abiy underlined that inspired educators and effective teaching mechanisms were indispensable to fulfill the manifest promise of education. In a manner reminiscent of the Ancient Latin scholastic motto, *Non scholæ sed vitæ*, (We do not learn for school, but for life!), the Prime Minister said that schooling without learning was both a wasted opportunity and illustrative of injustice. In this regard, he noted, reforming the education sector in ways never thought of before was a key priority for Ethiopia.

He underlined that merit and academic freedom were preconditions, the *sine qua non*, for a free thinking and engaged intellectual life in the higher education institutions of the country. Speaking of the teaching profession, Dr Abiy described it as the noblest calling in life. Hence, he avowed, “we need to take responsibility for our failings”. He added that governance challenges and sporadic conflicts were in part manifestations of the learning crisis. He reassured the academics that the government would devote more resources to furthering education and focus on improving quality in tandem with expected learning outcomes. In response to questions raised during the discussion by the 3,175 academics, the envoys of Ethiopia’s Higher Education system, The Prime Minister said the Government was ready to reinstate the 42 University lecturers expelled from Addis Ababa University in 2001.



In a related development, the Prime Minister also launched a flagship Mentorship Program for Gold Medal graduates. While addressing the graduates, the Prime Minister urged them to reject conventional pursuits and focus on nationwide community services not just in the cities. He also noted that there was much that needed improvement to ameliorate the situation in the education sector. At the end of his address, Dr. Abiy urged the youth to face the problems bravely. The United Arab Emirates announced this week, following the tripartite summit of Premier Dr. Abiy, President Isaias of Eritrea and UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed in Abu Dhabi on Monday, that it would be granting of scholarship opportunities to 50 of the Gold Medal graduates under the Mentorship Program. Thanking the UAE for the scholarships, Dr. Abiy underlined the fact that these scholarships were investments in the next generation of young leaders who have the passion, aspirations and commitment to bring about a difference in Ethiopia.

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### ***South Sudan government and SPLM-IO initial agreed governance articles***

The South Sudan government and SPLM-IO negotiators initialed power-sharing and governance articles in Khartoum on Wednesday (July 25). Other political opposition groups, the South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA), the Former Detainees (FD) and the Other Political Parties, have not yet signed, they acknowledged that the Khartoum discussions have made progress and they reiterated their commitment to the process. Sudan's Foreign Minister El-Dirdeiry Mohamed Ahmed said a final signing ceremony will take place on 5 August 2018 in the presence of IGAD leaders. He said the mediation would continue efforts to bring the holdout groups to sign the agreement on 5 August. IGAD Partners, including the Troika, have continually called for a fully inclusive peace process.

The South Sudanese government said the holdout groups would not stop the implementation of the revitalized peace agreement and called upon them to join it. Government spokesperson Michael Makuei Lueth said on Thursday: "Anybody who has abstained I appeal to him or to her to join the people of South Sudan in this peace process." He also called on the international community "to come and support the people of South Sudan in the implementation of the agreement so that peace comes to the people of South Sudan."

The SSOA and the FD did not sign over concerns at their representation in the national and regional transitional institutions and over the referendum proposal to settle the issues of the 32 states. The Sudanese mediators released new proposals on Wednesday, providing for power-sharing at local government levels, despite opposition from the government, and for a referendum if the parties fail to reach an agreement over the future of the 32 states at the level of the Independent Boundaries Commission.

According to the agreement, the transitional government, tasked with the implementation of the peace agreement, should be composed of 35 ministers. The incumbent government will get 20 ministers, SPLM-IO 9 ministers, SSOA 3 ministers, FDs 2 ministers and OPP one minister. Dr. Machar will be reinstated as First Vice President, and with him, there will be four other vice-

presidents. All of them they will form a collegial presidency with President Salva Kiir, to deliver the content of the peace agreement and achieve democratic and institutional reforms during the 30-month transitional period. The Parliament will consist of 550 parliamentarians with 332 members from Kiir's government, 128 from Machar's group, 50 members from SSOA, 30 members from OPP and 10 members from FDs.

The IBC will be made up five members to be appointed by TGoNU two from the SPLM/A-IO, one from SSOA, one from the FD, and one from OPP, and five appointed by the C5 states (South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania, Algeria and Chad). If the IBC fails to complete its work within 90 days, it will automatically be transformed into a Referendum Commission on Number and Boundaries of States, under the direct supervision and support of the African Union and the IGAD, and shall conduct the referendum before the end of the agreed eight months Pre-Transitional Period.

The agreement calls on the Parties to issue, at the beginning of the Pre-Transitional Period, a solemn commitment to their people and the international community at large confirming unequivocally that they will not return to war and shall work hand in hand diligently and collectively for the sake of peace and stability of their country. In particular, the Parties shall pledge to use the resources of the country wisely and transparently, for the best interests of the people of the Republic of South Sudan, and to put in place the efficient mechanisms required for achieving this paramount goal. In their solemn commitment the Parties shall also appeal to the international community for support and cooperation at this difficult time of the Republic of South Sudan. It notes that the IGAD-led mediation should revitalize and restructure all monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure inclusion of all Parties and enhance the effectiveness of all mechanisms.

Meanwhile, last week at a meeting in Nairobi (July 17-19) the heads of the Churches of the South Sudan Council Churches (SSCC) welcomed recent initiatives by South Sudan's neighbors, the Khartoum Declaration of Agreement, security arrangement agreement and the Entebbe proposal. However, referring to the discussions over power-sharing, they expressed concerns over untimely emphasis" on the technical aspects of the agreement before trust had been built between the parties. Their statement said:"Without genuine dialogue, healing and substantial trust-building amongst the Parties, the political will needed for the successful implementation of a peace agreement will be lacking, and will void all efforts." The heads of the Churches said all stakeholders should know that "peace is not an event, nor a document, but a process requiring commitment and sacrifice."

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### ***Ethiopia-Indonesia Business and Investment Forum held in Jakarta.***

The Ethio-Indonesia Business and Investment Forum took place at the weekend on July 22 at Indonesia's capital Jakarta under the auspices of the Ethiopian Embassy and the Indonesia Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Ethiopia delegation was led by State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Aklilu Hailemichael who stressed Ethiopia's interest in encouraging foreign investment in his opening remarks. He mentioned the provision of a range of opportunity and

incentive packages including state of the art industrial park facilities with one stop services, exemption from income and duties taxes as well as impressive infrastructural support.

Dr. Belachew Mekuria, Commissioner of the Ethiopian Investment Commission, Mr. Mesfin Tassew, Chief Operating Officer of Ethiopian Airlines Enterprises and Mr. Kiros Mehari, General Manager of Ethiopian Tour Operators Association respectively presented papers on Investment and Business Opportunities, the Progress of the Ethiopian Airlines enterprises, and the Tourism Potential and Opportunities of Ethiopia. The discussion session was chaired by Ambassador Professor Admasu Tsegaye. The Chair of the Investment Board of Indonesia spoke at the Forum and encouraged Indonesia companies to invest in Ethiopia. He also met later with members of the delegation for further discussions. At the end of the Seminar, Dr. N. Rusmiati, General Secretary of Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies and Mr. Kiros Mehari, General Manager of the Ethiopian Tour Operators Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate in strengthening, promoting and developing tourism between Ethiopia and Indonesia.

During his visit to Indonesia, Dr. Aklilu Hailemichael met with Abdurrahman Mohammad Facher, Vice Minister of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Indonesia and discussed bilateral relations and investment, trade and tourism. Dr. Belachew Mekuria, Commissioner Ethiopian Investment Commission and Ambassador Admasu Tsegaye met with Sinthya Roesly, Chairwoman and Executive Director of Indonesia Eximbank and discussed ways to support specific projects in order to encourage Indonesian companies to invest in Ethiopia. They agreed to set priority areas and sign a Memorandum of Agreement before September. A delegation from Hawassa University led by Dr. Fisseha Getachew, Vice President for Academic Affairs also visited Binus University and signed a MoU to establish academic and research partnerships in the areas of research, staff and student exchange, student internship and online learning programs.

The Ethiopian delegation flew to Jakarta on the Ethiopian Airlines inaugural flight from Addis Ababa, marking the first direct connection between Africa and Indonesia and the first flight into Jakarta by an African carrier with the modern Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner. This new Ethiopian airlines' service will further cement Ethiopian's growing footprint in Asia and enable it to remain the carrier of choice for travelers connecting Africa and Asia. The Ethiopian Embassy in Jakarta, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopian Airlines and the Ministry of Transport worked tirelessly to get this flight off the ground.

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### ***The role of the media to enhance good governance in Somalia***

The UN Secretary-General Special Representative for Somalia, Michael Keating participated in a civil society panel in Mogadishu to consider the role of the media in enhancing good governance, peace, and democracy. The aim of the meeting was to promote the free press as a cornerstone for democracy and help establish a strong interaction between the media and the UN to discuss key issues on state building and the discussion was organized by the National Union of Somalia Journalists whose Secretary General Mohamed Ibrahim Moalimuu thanked participants

and especially Michael Keating for his active role in fighting for media rights and the continuous technical and financial support the UN has extended to the Somalia media.

Abdirahman Koronto, a former BBC Somalia journalist, spoke on the role of media in peace, development and democracy in Somalia and panelists, Michael Keating and university lecturer Professor Hassan Sheikh Ali, then faced questions from those present, including members of parliament, representatives of civil society, peace activists and journalists from public and private media outlets. There was a lot of interest in what the United Nations and the Somalia government were doing to help the media be free to better perform their monitoring work.

Mr. Keating stressed the Somali media played an important role of educating, informing and helping shape the country's future, in an exceptionally challenging environment in which dozens of journalists had been killed and many others wounded while performing their duties since 1992. He emphasized that for the media to better effectively perform they must be protected and defended, adding that in turn the media must also act responsibly and professionally. He reiterated the UN's support to National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) efforts to professionalize the Somalia media. He said: "Democratic institutions can only flourish with a robust and free media that contributes to the overall peace-building effort, as well as contributing to good governance and reconciliation. And for the media to flourish there must be respect for freedom of expression and press freedom."

Panelists and participants agreed on the need for security and for improving the capacity of the media. Professor Ali said it was vital to have a professional media and for authorities to provide security to the media. Abdirahman Dinari from the Somalia Think Tank Group, thanking UN for providing a platform for civil society, underlined the huge role of the media played and stressed its need for support. He said: "The Somali media has gone through a lot of challenges in Somalia. There was a time when the media were being killed, arrested or harassed but now the situation is much better because the country is experiencing change. The media", he said, "Plays a key role in peace building, development and democracy, adding, "but it needs much more support to better professionalize it."