

A Week in the Horn 13.03.2020

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## **Africa and the African Union**

The African Union has asked Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia to seek a compromise to end their dispute on the filling and operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The Union also called on international partners to provide their immediate support to Sudan at this critical juncture of the transition in light of the serious economic situation it is facing. Concluding a three-day working visit to Khartoum, capital of Sudan, on Friday (March 6), H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairperson of the African Union Commission, said the object of his visit was to take stock of progress made in the peace process in Sudan, exchange views with national actors on the political and economic situation and assess the implementation of commitments made in the Constitutional Declaration, signed by the parties in August 2019.

A two day AU-EU joint consultative workshop aiming at designing and developing an African Human Security Index was held on 5-6 March 2020 in Addis Ababa. The Workshop brought together participants with expertise in different areas of human security. The discussions during the consultative meeting were structured around issues of “designing and developing the methodology of African Human Security Index.” (See **article**)

## Ethiopia

Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry said last week on Friday (March 6) that the decision to recall its ambassadors from Egypt and Sudan has nothing to do with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) dispute. The spokesperson for Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Nebiat Getachew explained that this is simply a routine procedure Addis Ababa performs from time to time, as some ambassadors have completed their four year work period.

Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen said that foreign interference in the negotiations on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) is unacceptable, local media reported on Friday (March 6). Pressures are inappropriate, we do not accept them. We will neither accept movements to tell us what we must do and what we must not do, Mekonnen said at the 12th ordinary session of the Council for the Construction of the GERD.

The first anniversary of the fatal Ethiopian Airlines accident was marked on Tuesday (March 10). Families and friends of victims of the crash paid tribute to their loved ones at the memorial site around Bishoftu, Oromia regional state. It was a year ago that the Nairobi-bound Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 MAX crashed shortly after take-off from Addis Ababa, killing all 157 people on board.

Ethiopian Airlines marked International Women's Day by operating an all-women flight from Addis Ababa to Washington DC. The flight, which took place on Saturday (March 7), was operated by female professionals in the sky as well as on the ground. Women handled all the ground operations including flight dispatch, load control, ramp operation, onboard logistics, safety, and security, catering as well as air traffic control.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed on Monday (March 9) met with the members of the ministerial committee established to follow up on COVID19. Key prevention and response preparations are underway at the federal and regional levels, spearheaded by the Ministry of Health, said the Prime Minister on Twitter. "It is imperative to maintain calm, undertake preventative care per Ministry of Health guidelines and strengthen awareness among our communities on prevention and response mechanisms," he added. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mokenen visited on Saturday (March 7) the

Ethiopian Public Health Institute's public health emergency operation center. During the visit, he was provided with a briefing about the preparedness and response for COVID-19 by teams of the center.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Gedu Andargachew said the Nile should be a major source of cooperation than conflict. The Minister made the remark during an interview he had with Al Jazeera on Tuesday (March 10) covering a range of issues, including on the ongoing talks on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). He thoroughly explained Ethiopia's stance and admired the 'principle-based' stance of Sudan on the dam talks. **(See article)**

Internationalizing the issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) cannot stop the project but only complicates it and delay the solutions sought, Sudanese Energy Expert. In an interview with local media in Ethiopia, Sudanese Energy, Mining, Electricity, and Regulatory Authority Secretary-General, Engineer Tigani M. Adam on Saturday (March 7) said: "I don't agree with internationalizing this issue." The interference of other parties will always complicate matters rather than facilitating dialogue to solve the problems, he noted. "So, I am against internationalizing this problem."

The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) and the Federal Supreme Court on Saturday (March 7) held a workshop on election dispute resolution. The day-long event was aimed at discussing the role of courts in Ethiopia's upcoming general elections and familiarizing lawyers about legal frameworks.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed has congratulated women on the occasion of March 8, International Women's Day. We celebrate International Women's Day because it is a Day for all of us, the Statement issued by the Prime Minister reads. Particularly, the day is unique for us, Ethiopians, as we are standing on the price that our mothers had paid. As we celebrate March 8, I hope that it will be a day in which our mothers and sisters will be revived again to make Ethiopia continue to live in dignity and freedom with its multinational unity and sovereignty intact, the statement adds.

The Government of Ethiopia has vowed to take action against political parties and media engaged in acts of undermining national unity. Hate speech being transmitted at public gatherings and via media pose threats to national unity, said Nigusu Tilahun, a Press Secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister. Nigusu's remarks came following the transmission of a program organized by

the Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) via OMN on International Women's Day.

President Sahle-Work Zewde on Monday (March 9) met with Alice Albright, the CEO of the Global Partnership for Education. The President emphasized the importance of strengthening the partnership between the organization and Ethiopia, according to the office of the President. Mrs. Albright, on her part, highlighted that the efforts to ensure that children are getting access to education in Ethiopia is an example for other countries.

The European Union (EU) has launched a €26 million decentralized risk management project that aims to strengthen households, communities and local authorities to manage and adapt to disasters and risks. The four years project that commenced on Monday (March 9) will be implemented in Oromia, Amhara, SNNP, and Somali regional states.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Gedu Andargachew on Monday (March 9) held talks with Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. The two discussed the status of the on-going negotiation on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The Minister reiterated that the negotiations on the GERD should be held in line with the principle of fair, equitable and reasonable utilization of transboundary natural resources. The African Union Commission Chairperson for his part underlined that the negotiation on GERD should strike a fair deal benefiting all stakeholders.

President Sahle-Work Zewde on Tuesday (March 10) received the credentials of five newly appointed ambassadors to Ethiopia. The ambassadors who presented their credentials were from Sri Lanka, Algeria, Vatican, Uruguay, and Korea, according to office of the President. The President urged the ambassadors to work hard to strengthen relations between Ethiopia and their respective countries.

Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen on Tuesday (March 10) held talks with Alice Albright, CEO of the Global Partnership for Education. The Deputy Prime Minister praised the support being provided by the organization to the education sector. Alice Albright for her part pledged continued support of the organization to expand access to education.

The House of People's Representatives (HPR) of Ethiopia has approved on Thursday (March 12) the appointment of senior government officials. The appointees are Adanech Abiebie – Attorney General, Dr. LiaTadesse –

Minister of Health, Lake Ayalew- Minister of Revenues and FilsenAbdulahi – Minister of Women, Children, and Youth. The House approved their appointment with a majority vote and 21 against. The House also approved the appointment of TsegayeArage as Commissioner of the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC) and the appointment of board members of the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA).

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed on Wednesday morning (March 11) spoke on the phone with Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations. They discussed regional peace and security efforts as well as support for Ethiopia’s political and economic reforms.

Ethiopia’s Immigration, Nationality and Vital Events Agency on Thursday (March 12) announced that it will put in place a new system as of next week to cut the time it takes to get a new passport. The new system will allow the agency to give a response to first-time passport requests within a month, said Mujib Jemal, Director General of the agency. A decision has been made to cut the time required to secure new passports to one month from the previous two and a half months, he indicated.

Ethiopia’s President Sahle-Work Zewde has arrived in Nairobi, Kenya on Thursday (March 12) for an official working visit. Upon arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, she was received by Kenya’s foreign affairs officials and Ethiopian Ambassador to Kenya, Meles Alem. President Sahle-Work held discussion on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest with Kenya’s President Uhuru Kenyatta and jointly issued a communique. **(See article)**

## **Eritrea**

Eritrea has condemned, in the strongest terms, the cowardly assassination attempt on Sudanese Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdook. In his message to General Abdel-Fattah Al Burhan, President Isaias Afwerki on Tuesday (March 10) stated: “this despicable act underscores, once again, the desperate measures that the forces of darkness and their sponsors are prepared to take to scuttle and reverse the ongoing positive changes in the Sudan” President Isaias further underlined: “The Government of Eritrea reiterates its full solidarity with the Government of Sudan in its vigorous undertakings to overhaul vestiges of the old regime to advance the welfare of the people of Sudan with its positive dividends to peace and stability in the region”

## **Djibouti**

Kenya and Djibouti are now connected through the submarine cable Djibouti Africa Regional Express 1 (Dare1). The cable landed in Mombasa this week and is expected to boost connectivity in the Horn of Africa. Installation of the more than 5,000 kilometer-long cable is complete and now awaits official launching and pre-test in the next few months. The submarine cable system connects Djibouti, Somalia, and Kenya with an option of extending to Tanzania.

## **Kenya**

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta has called for “African solutions” in identifying the workable share of the River Nile waters. At a meeting with Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde in Nairobi on Thursday (March 12), President Kenyatta said he understood the rising populations in the Nile Basin demanded changes on the formula of sharing the water resources, but did suggest discussions about that should be by Africans themselves.

President Uhuru Kenyatta’s special envoy Fred Matiang’i on Wednesday presented an invitation to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in Addis Ababa as part of efforts to address the Somalia security problem. Dr. Matiang’i whose day job is Interior minister, was earlier this week drafted to deliver a special invitation to Somali President Mohamed Farmaajo, and possibly help cool off tensions that arose the previous week. Wednesday, Dr. Matiang’i said his trip to Addis Ababa was to follow up on the security issue, which last week saw Somali National Army and Jubbaland state soldiers exchange gunfire on Kenyan soil in Mandera County.

Some locusts may appear old and others pregnant but the invasion in Kenya is bound to get worse, a UN agency has warned. The Food and Agriculture Organisation says in a memo dated March 10, a rising number of hopper bands and first-generation immature swarms continue to form in the country. The FAO, in its latest alert, says widespread swarm breeding continues in northern and central Kenya, with further concentration expected in Marsabit and Turkana counties.

Kenya has confirmed its first Coronavirus case. Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe last week on Friday (March 6) said the patient is a Kenyan who travelled from the US via London. He said that although patient, a Kenyan, is stable and eating, she will not be released from hospital until she is confirmed

negative. The woman is at Kenyatta National Hospital's Infectious Disease Unit. The government says it has traced all contacts the patient made since her arrival. Consequently, Kenya has suspended all travel outside the country unless necessary. Public gatherings are also suspended, including all inter-schools events.

## **Somalia**

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, on Saturday (March 7) has issued a statement welcoming Somalia's official deposit of the instruments of ratification of the African Union Convention for the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to the AU Commission in Ethiopia. Johann Siffointe, UNHCR Somalia representative, said the latest move shows the progress made by the government to find durable solutions for displaced citizens in the country.

The US Africa Command (Africom) on Tuesday (March 10) conducted an airstrike in coordination with the Somali troops that killed five Al-Shabaab fighters in Janale, southern Somalia, a day after another US airstrike killed four other militants in the same region. "In coordination with the Federal Government of Somalia, U.S Africa Command conducted an airstrike targeting Al-Shabaab terrorists in the vicinity of Janaale, Somalia on March 10," Africom said in a statement. "The command's initial assessment concluded this airstrike killed five terrorists," the statement added. Africom, however, said they were investigating reports that the latest airstrike killed civilians.

## **South Sudan**

The SPLM-IO on Thursday (March 5) said they have gotten several important ministries in the national unity government including defence, oil, and federal affairs, while the SSOA expressed dissatisfaction over the power-sharing. Citing an SPLM-IO spokesman the Chinese news agency Xinhua said President Salva Kiir and his First Vice-President Riek Machar have finally agreed on Thursday to share the important ministerial positions ahead of the formation of the government next week.

Special Representative and head of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) David Shearer, gave a press statement on the situation in South Sudan's peace process to members of the Media on Wednesday (March 9). His discussion mainly focused on describing the rapid changes witnessed in the political

landscape of South Sudan in recent weeks and the sudden outbreak of intercommunal violence in Jonglei. (See **article**)

## **Sudan**

The talks for peace in Sudan have been extended until 9 April, announced the South Sudanese mediation on Monday (March 9). The announcement was made by Dhieu Matouk, the spokesman of the mediation team in Juba after a meeting with the Sudanese government and Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) with the South Sudanese chief mediator Tut Kew Gatluak. “The parties agreed to extend the peace talks for a month starting from the eighth of March and ending on the ninth of next April,” he said.

U.S. administration should link Sudan’s foreign debt cancellation to the full control of the civilian government over the finances and assets of the security and intelligence services says a bill by Congress members. On Friday Congress members introduced a bipartisan bill to support the democratic transition in Sudan signed by Eliot L. Engel, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee; Michael McCaul, the Committee’s Ranking Member; Karen Bass, Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Africa; and Chris Smith, the Subcommittee’s Ranking Member.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) agreed to extend a \$75 million to DAL Group, one of Sudan’s largest conglomerates, to improve food security and household incomes in the country. The signing ceremony of the agreement was held on Thursday (5 March) at the AfDB’s office in Khartoum by Jennifer Blanke, Bank Vice President for Agriculture, and DAL Group Chairman Osama Daoud Abdellatif.

A visiting delegation of U.S. Department of the Treasury discussed with the Sudanese prime minister and foreign minister financial reforms to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Marshall Billingslea Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing at the U.S. Department of the Treasury met with Abdallah Hamdok and Foreign Minister and Asma Abdallah on Sunday (March 8). Billingslea “praised Sudan’s role in combating terrorism and reaffirmed the support of the US government for the transitional period,” said the foreign ministry in a statement released after his meeting with the minister.

Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok survived an assassination attempt on Monday (March 9) when a bomb exploded near his motorcade in Kober neighbourhood of Khartoum North. The bombing took place at the entrance to



the Kober Bridge in Khartoum North, at the usual time he goes to his office. Hamdok issued a short statement to reassure the Sudanese that he is well. “What happened will not stop the march of change and will only be an additional splash in the high wave of the revolution,” he said. The International Community including the UN Secretary General, Chairman of the African Union Commission, President and Prime Minister of Ethiopia and other leaders condemned the attack and expressed their relief that Prime Minister Hamdok survived the attack unharmed.

A member of the leadership body of the ruling coalition in Sudan said on Monday (March 9) that the Miscellaneous Amendments Bill of 2020 has removed the death penalty for apostasy in the 1991 Criminal Law and replaced it with a disposition criminalizing ex-communication.

Sudan’s National security and defence council decided to request friends’ help to find out the responsible for the assassination attempt of the Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok. The Security and Defence Council held an emergency meeting on Monday (March 9), headed by the Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council Abdel Fattah al-Burhan against the backdrop of the failed terrorist attack that targeted Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok. Following the meeting, Interior Minister al-Traifi Daffallah Idriss read a statement announcing that the Council decided to “request the help of (Sudan’s) friends to uncover those involved in the attack and bringing them to justice.” Meanwhile, The Sudanese Ministry of Interior announced, on Tuesday evening, the arrival of a security team from the Federal Bureau of Investigation “FBI”, to assist in the investigations on the assassination attempt of the Sudanese Prime Minister on Monday.

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### ***President Sahle-Work Zewde Pays a Visit to Kenya***

Her Excellency Sahle-Work Zewde, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia made a one-day official visit to Kenya to update H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, on the progress of negotiations on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and discussed bilateral and regional issues. The leaders held fruitful discussions at State House Nairobi on Wednesday 12th March 2020. The discussions were held in a friendly atmosphere characteristic of the relations between the two countries.

In a Joint Communiqué issued at the conclusion of the visit, President Sahle-Work thanked the President for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to her and her delegation since their arrival in Kenya.

The two leaders noted with appreciation the existing cordial relations between Kenya and Ethiopia founded on the historical and socio-cultural ties and buttressed by shared aspirations for economic transformation for the well-being and prosperity of the people of the two countries.

President Sahle-Work briefed President Kenyatta on the GERD project and the trilateral negotiations with Sudan and Egypt aimed at reaching an agreement on the First Filling and Annual Operation of the GERD. The President also underscored Ethiopia's commitment to continue working with all Nile Basin countries and to ensure that only treaties that are properly entered into by the countries will apply to the basin.

President Uhuru Kenyatta underlined the need for Africa to sustainably utilize its natural resources to address the needs of its increasing populations. The President also emphasized the importance of ensuring equitable and reasonable utilization of natural resources. The two leaders agreed on the importance of reaching a resolution in the spirit of African Solutions to African Problems and concurred on the need for the African Union to support the countries reach a win-win outcome.

On bilateral issues, the two leaders re-affirmed their commitment to deepen and enhance bilateral cooperation through the existing mechanisms, including the High-Level Commission and the Joint Border Commissioners'/Administrators' Commission. They directed that these commissions should meet on a regular and predictable basis in order to create and sustain the requisite momentum for enhanced economic, political, and security cooperation between the two sister countries.

The two leaders noted with concern the grave threat to the food security of the two countries and the region arising from the invasion by desert locusts. They agree to work together at bilateral and regional levels, including through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to urgently and comprehensively address this menace to the livelihoods of the people of the two countries and the region.

The two presidents lauded the ongoing efforts to revitalize IGAD under the leadership of the Prime Minister of the Sudan, H.E. Abdalla Hamdok,

Chairman of IGAD and Executive Secretary of IGAD Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu. They pledged their full support and commitment to making IGAD revitalization successful in order to create an organization that is better positioned to respond to and spearhead the economic and security aspirations of the region.

President Uhuru Kenyatta invited President Sahle-Work to undertake a state visit to Kenya at a date to be agreed upon through diplomatic channels.

President Sahle-Work accepted the invitation. The two leaders expressed their commitment to strengthen the relations between the two countries with a view to addressing strategic issues of mutual interest.

President Sahle-Work once again thanked her host and the people of Kenya for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements during her visit.

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### ***FM Gedu says the Nile should be a Major Source of Cooperation than Conflict***

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Gedu Andargachew on Tuesday (March 10) has conducted an interview with Al Jazeera (Arabic Service) covering a range of issues and shedding light on contentious issues on the ongoing talks on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). He thoroughly explained Ethiopia's stance, admired the 'principle-based' stance of Sudan on the GERD talks and called on all stakeholders to use the river Nile as a source of cooperation than conflict.

Responding to the question if the Arab League Statement is going to affect Ethiopia's ties with the Arab countries, Gedu said: "Taking many factors into account, the recent statement issued by the Arab League, which Ethiopia denounced in its entirety for its lack of objectivity, would not pose any threat to shake up the excellent relationship between the two sides." He said that Ethiopia and the Arab countries are tied together in history, geography, and economic engagements and recalled that Ethiopia was among the first countries in the world to accept Islam next to the Saudi Arabians. "We even have strong footprints in Islam through the works of well known Islamic scholars from Ethiopia," he added. Aside from these historical and religious ties, the two sides are found in close proximity in their geographic locations, he said, adding that Ethiopia has been the gateway for the Arab world to Africa

while the Arabian Peninsula has been serving as the main gateway to Ethiopia in its dealings with the Asian Countries. Above all, the Minister underscored that the two sides are forever attached to each other through the longstanding people-to-people relation that continued to create fusion in culture and language. Many of the Arab countries have got also strong trade and economic ties with Ethiopia; since time immemorial, he added. He said that it would not be that easy to cut oneself from such a strong attachment.

In explaining why Ethiopia needs to build the Dam, Gedu said: “We are building the dam being mindful that although we contribute about 86% of the water flow to the Nile river basin, we did not adequately utilize the water resource. We have got 65 million people who have got no access to electricity. Addressing this need would have paramount importance to Ethiopia to achieve its goal of lifting up as many people as possible from the poverty line. We know that the dam, once completed, will create a vibrant economic integration with our neighbors and this will end the age-old distorted thinking that considers the Nile as a source of conflict rather than cooperation. Above all, people should know that the River is adequate enough to address our needs provided that we use it equitably.”

The Minister also denounced rumors signposting to the possibility of war (an armed conflict or a proxy one) between Ethiopia and Egypt due to the current stalemate over GERD talks. “There will not be any war,” he said, “since we believe that there is no reason to go to war at all.” Ethiopia believes that since the river is a shared resource, it would be indispensable to share it equitably, he added. He also said that the current stance of Egypt regarding the right of Ethiopia to utilize the water resource is “not only wrong but profoundly immoral and wicked.”

The Minister also explained if the rejection of the statement released by the U.S. Treasury would cast a shadow on the relationship between the two countries. He said: “We believe that the statement issued by the U.S. treasury was not in line with U.S.A’s status as an observer in the GERD talks. I do not think Ethiopia’s refusal to sign on a document that runs against its interest will disturb the long-standing U.S.-Ethiopia relations. But one thing is for sure: we will not be obliged to accept any agreement that threatens our sovereignty.” The Egyptians were the ones who were looking for third parties to involve in the trilateral talks over the dam believing that this would give them more guarantee than the dialogue between Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt, the Minister added. He said that Ethiopia has a firm belief in dialogue as the best option to deal with any issue related to the GERD talks. “What we need from Egypt is,”

he added, “to make itself shake hands with the reality that Ethiopia has got the right to use the Nile water resource.”

Gedu has also cleared out the rumors behind the GERD project that external power is backing it up. He said, “We are building the dam collecting money from the pockets of every Ethiopian. The dam is a flagship project for us and it is owned by Ethiopians and only Ethiopians alone. No external power is involved in this.”

The Journalist was also curious to know if the Ethiopian Government has recently issued a strong statement against the Arab League’s decision to externalize domestic political problems. He explained the matter saying: “To be honest the Ethiopian Government does not want to internationalize talks regarding the project or create a global agenda out of it. It is the Egyptians that started to make a big fuss about it. They are the ones who have insisted on making smear campaigns against Ethiopia. Coming back to your question, we are perfectly aware of the fact that no political party is a permanent one in holding power in the country. Political parties may change but national interest and sovereignty come first. The GERD is a common project for all Ethiopian and all political parties-there is no illusion about that. We all perfectly understand that the project is beyond scoring an immediate political interest in elections.”

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### ***AU-EU Experts meet to consult on Developing an African Human Security Index***

A two day AU-EU joint consultative workshop aiming at designing and developing an African Human Security Index was held on 5-6 March 2020 in Addis Ababa. The Workshop brought together participants with expertise in different areas of human security. The discussions during the consultative meeting were structured around issues of “designing and developing the methodology of African Human Security Index.” A position paper and technical note anchored the discussions of the meeting. The emphasis of the consultative process was to reach a consensus on determining a suitable methodology to design, develop, and select pilot countries and spearhead the creation of a coalition around promoting and advocating the human security agenda in Africa.

Globally few tools exist that comprehensively measure human security while none have an African context and specificity. Therefore, the proposed African Human Security Index (AHSI) is an attempt to provide a holistic assessment of human security through the seven dimensions of economic security, food security, health security environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. It also directly responds to both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda on the centrality of human security as an enabler and precondition for sustainable and inclusive development.

The consultative meeting after deliberating on human security concepts, practices, and methodologies and the humanitarian, development, and peace triple-nexus, sought out to develop the set of recommendations that are expected to form the way forward on the efforts of developing a methodology to be applied in two or three pilot countries before designing a template for developing an Africa-wide human security index.

In the two-day workshop, attendees deliberated on ideas presented in various sessions that dealt with the discourses and practices of Human Security in the world giving emphasis to its African Context. The sessions also include discussions on AHSI Design, methodology & data comparability; Indices: Variety in Kind; Synergy between Early Warning and Human Security Approaches; and Developing AHSI work plan.

In his opening statement, Ambassador Quartey Thomas Kwesi, the Deputy Chairperson of the AUC, applauded the combined and coordinated efforts by the AU and UN saying: “I am delighted to note that this meeting demonstrates our determination to closely work together to design and develop the first-ever African Human Security Index.” The Ambassador also called on participants to foster and assert the UNDP 1994 Human Development ‘people-centered’ approach in the consultative meeting being mindful of the fact that threats that confront people’s lives on a daily basis are the critical starting point of the human security approach.

The Deputy Chairperson of the AUC emphasized the readiness of the African Union to work with the experts and partners to help in the development of an African Human Security Index, specific to the context of the African countries and the challenges they face in the current global and regional setting. “It will further strengthen peace and advance progress towards implementation of the Agenda 2063 and UN SGDs 2030, while supporting efforts to effectively silencing the guns on the continent, to ensure the prosperity of the African people”, concluded Ambassador Quartey Thomas Kwesi.

Mr. Yukio Takasu, the UN Special Adviser on Human Security, applauded the continued engagement between the two institutions to strengthen the statistical systems for effective collection, collation, and analysis of data. Takasu underlined that “AU has defined human security as “The security of the individual in terms of satisfaction of his/her basic needs. It also includes the creation of social, economic, political, environmental and cultural conditions necessary for the survival and dignity of the individual, the protection of and respect for human rights, good governance and the guarantee for each individual of opportunities and choices for his/ her full development”.

Mrs. Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Director, GPSPD, UNECA highlighted that the proposed AHSI is an attempt to provide a holistic assessment of human security through its seven dimensions of (1) economic security; (2) food security (3) health security; (4) environmental security (5) personal security; (6) community security; and (7) political security. She further added that AHSI directly responds to both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda on the centrality of human security as an enabler and precondition for sustainable and inclusive development. “The AHSI is expected to guide member States on policy formulation and support monitoring of human security at different tiers throughout the African continent”, concluded Ruzvidzo.

Mr. Gerald Mitchell, Deputy Head of Office and Director of Political Affairs, UNOAU, draws the attention of the participants to the role of human security indicators in the field of conflict early warning, along with the mainstreaming of human rights indicators into the same systems. “To this end, I draw your attention to the important work of the AU Continental Early Warning System and the coordination work ongoing between the experts of the Continental Early Warning System and the experts working on the early warning systems of the RECs/RMs. The integration of human rights and human security into the Continental Early Warning System can crucially assist with the key priority, not only of the UN Secretary General, but also of the African Union, namely: to prevent conflict”, underscored Mr. Gerald Mitchell.

The Bureau of the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division (GPSPD) of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in partnership with the Human Security Unit of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) organized the experts’ consultative meeting.

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## *Head of UNMISS Gives Press Statement on the Current Political Landscape in South Sudan*

Special Representative and head of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) David Shearer, gave a press statement on the situation in South Sudan's peace process to members of the Media on Wednesday (March 9). His discussion mainly focused on describing the rapid changes witnessed in the political landscape of South Sudan in recent weeks and the sudden outbreak of intercommunal violence in Jonglei.

The UNMISS head recalling his recent address to the Security Council a few days ago about some of the positive political developments where he particularly highlighted the compromises made by President Salva Kiir and Dr. Riek Machar which enabled the transitional government to be formed. He reiterated the political commitment of South Sudan leaders to forge peace saying that the top two leaders, in particular, showed they had the political will to put the interests of their country and people first.

“While there is a sense of relief that the new government has formed,” Shearer said, “there is still much to be done, and many challenges ahead that will test its unity.” He said that there have been ongoing negotiations over ministerial and other appointments over the past two weeks. He said: “I understand from speaking to those involved, that while tough, they have been carried out cordially. There is some optimism amongst parties that an announcement may be possible by the end of this week.” He said: “The filling of the governor positions is particularly urgent,” adding, “the absence of authority at the state level has caused a vacuum of power and decision-making – as we have seen in Jonglei – emboldening those involved in the recent violent intercommunal clashes.”

Despite an urgent need to move on transitional security arrangements, the Implementation is dangerously lagging, made worse by the absence of the NPTC, he added. Shearer underscored that the government needs to set up new lines of authority to lead this process. Asked by journalists to elaborate more on what is missing on the implementation of the security arrangements as far as the Revitalized Peace Agreement is concerned, the special envoy said: “... first of all, there is no authority heading it anymore because, with the transitional government forming, the pre-transitional mechanisms like the NPTC, like many of the other institutions that help with the organization on the ground, are gone. So, there is a vacuum, if you like, in terms of leadership. Secondly, when you visit these places on the ground, they are lacking in the



most basic things – food in some places, but shelter, water, often latrines, and then also training equipment. There is a whole range of items missing. Although many of these training sites were under-equipped, there was good-natured enthusiasm from both sides and most often they were from both sides of the conflict who were there together. I think that enthusiasm is starting to wane and what you might see is people going back to their homes, leaving the training sites and if they do, they might be disgruntled in the way that the process has gone and I think that is a worry.” He said that UNMISS is assisting where it can, including transporting more than 300 metric tonnes of supplies to training locations to plug urgent gaps admitting that across the sites, a shortage of supplies remains. “There is no registration and no substantial training underway,” he said.

Regarding the recent outbreak of intercommunal violence in Jonglei, the special envoy said that the devastating floods that occurred in the area last year that destroyed crops and livestock and contaminated water supplies and worsened health conditions together with the absence of political leadership in the area contributed to the incident. According to Shearer, this fighting has caused significant casualties and the displacement of thousands of families, particularly in areas around Pibor and the villages of Likuangole, Waat, Manyabol, and Anyidi. He said he has received reports that women and children have been abducted by both sides. He said that more than 8,000 people are currently living in makeshift shelters next to the UN base in Pibor, where UNMISS responded immediately reinforcing that base with additional peacekeepers and carrying out a series of patrols to hotspots in addition to setting up temporary basis in Anyidi, Gumuruk, Manyabol, Yuai, and Waat. Sadly, the towns of Manyabol and Likuangole have been almost totally destroyed, he added. He said: “Our Indian and Ethiopian troops carry out daily patrols to provide a protective presence, deter violence and assist humanitarian activities.”

He concluded his statement saying that the protection environment has changed, since the signing of the peace deal and the ceasefire. He said: “While inter-communal conflict remains a concern in some areas, the risk of political violence has certainly lowered, including the threat to those living in UN Protection of Civilians sites.” “This means that UNMISS can change its protection priorities as well,” he added.

He also expressed his hope that the parties that have shown leadership in the past two weeks will continue doing so and they will not renege the peace agreement or, most importantly, of the ceasefire. He finally called on the

international community, including the UN, to continue to support the peace process.