

## A Week in the Horn 08.05.2020

### *News in Brief*

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### **Africa and the African Union**

The Ministers in charge of Communication and ICT, met through Video conferencing on Tuesday (May 05) as the Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and ICT, organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) to consider strategies and actions to support the continental strategy on the COVID-19 pandemic. In a communiqué issued later, the Ministers agreed to work together to ensure a coordinated continental response to the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate its impacts.

The African Union Mission in Somalia, AMISOM, issued a statement on Tuesday (May 05) expressing its heartfelt condolences to the families of those who perished in the plane crash on Monday (May 04) in Somalia. The aircraft which left Baidoa, had six people on board and was approaching Bardale, south of Somalia, and 300km northwest of the capital Mogadishu when it crashed. The Mission welcomes the decision by the leadership of Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia to investigate the incident, the statement reads.

### **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed on Thursday (May 07) said the government would take measures against activities violating constitutional laws so as to protect the safety and security of the public. According to the Prime Minister, those who complained of the issue of the constitutional interpretation put forward as an option to postpone the election have not legal grounds to do so. The HPR is the highest authority of the federal government. Only the ruling Prosperity Party has a legislative power to lead the nation till COVID 19 crisis is over and the upcoming election held.

Ethiopia has reported 29 new cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on Thursday (May 07), the highest new cases in a single day. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Health, all the confirmed cases are Ethiopian nationals.

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Gedu Andargachew on Wednesday (May 07) exchanged a phone call with his Canadian counterpart François-Philippe Champagne to discuss ways of strengthening cooperation to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Gedu briefed his Canadian counterpart about Ethiopia's efforts to tame the virus and expressed the country's commitment to forging a united front in the region and assuage the dangers posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Champagne noted the Global level threat created by the spread of the virus and expressed his country's commitment to joining hands with Ethiopia in fighting the common enemy. The Canadian Minister also appreciated Ethiopian Airlines for its flying services given to Canadians who were stranded in various countries due to the virus.

Innovation and Technology Ministry on Wednesday (May 06) announced that Ethiopia is now technologically well equipped to launch electronic transactions. This was indicated when the ministry discussed the electronic transaction draft bill with the human resource and technology standing committee of the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR). Constructive ideas and recommendations have been obtained from the meeting with the standing committee so that the country runs the new transaction system with full preparedness, said Dr. Abrham Belay Minister of Innovation and Technology.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on Wednesday (May 06) held a telephone conversation regarding the domestic, regional and global challenges posed by the pandemic, and expressed solidarity with each other at the time of the crisis. The Indian Prime Minister "assured Dr.

Abiy Ahmed Ali of Indian support to Ethiopia, for ensuring supplies of essential medicines and ameliorating the economic impact of the pandemic,” an official statement said.

Ethiopians across the nation on Tuesday (May 05) have observed the 79th anniversary of patriots’ victory over fascist Italian forces. In Addis Ababa, it was celebrated at the victory monument around Arat Kilo in the presence of members of the community, representatives of the Ethiopian Patriots Association, and high ranking government officials.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed and his Pakistani counterpart Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi exchanged a phone call on Monday (May 04). The leaders we agreed on the importance of debt relief for developing countries to withstand the COVID-19 challenges as well as to quickly absorb and recover from economic shocks. Prime Minister tweeted, “We will work together to ensure the progression of our economies.”

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Monday (May 04) participated in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Contact Group online summit, organized under the theme “United against COVID19.” As one of the 25 founding member states of NAM, Ethiopia has been an active participant since 1955. One of the key outcomes of the online summit includes strengthening the values of international cooperation among the NAM member states in efforts to mitigate the effects of the COVID19 global pandemic. (**See article**)

The European Commission hosted a virtual pledging conference on Monday (May 04) to raise money to fill “immediate funding gaps” in vaccine research for the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with the agendas of the pledging conference, Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed writes a piece on ‘Project Syndicate’ underscoring the need to listen to Africa’s pleas to help the world better fight the pandemic. (**See article**)

Ministry of Trade and Industry on Monday (May 04) said it has banned 2500 metric tons of nonstandard products from entering the country over the past nine months. The goods were banned from entry for failing to meet Ethiopia’s compulsory product quality standard requirements, the Ministry indicated. Among the banned goods include 2304.95 metric tons of steel coils, 28.7 metric tons of corrugated iron sheet, 180 cartons of soap, 142 cartons of solar batteries,

150 cartons of electric wires, and 43.22 metric tons of inputs for roofing iron production.

The Ethiopian Defense Force and the African Union's Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have announced that the Ethiopian army has successfully delivered shipments of military logistics and equipment to Baidoa state of South-Western Somalia in its first-ever cross-border shipment, traversing the dangerous route filled with land mines and explosives allegedly planted by Al-Shabaab. In a joint statement, the Defense force and AMISOM issued last week on Wednesday, the successful convoy to deliver the military logistics to AMISOM is a landmark achievement which boosts the confidence of both the local armed forces as well as AMISOM.

The National COVID-19 Resource Mobilization Sub-Committee, with the help of Ethiopian Missions in various countries, has managed to collect more than 100 million Ethiopian Birr In monetary and non-monetary terms from the Ethiopian Diaspora and other entities. This was disclosed on Tuesday (May 05) in a statement given to local media outlets by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gedu Andargachew, Head of the Prime Minister's Office Press Secretariat, Nigusu Tilahun and Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, representing the Fund Raising Committee, and Ethiopian Diaspora Agency Director-General, Selamawit Dawit.

The Government of Ethiopia on Tuesday (May 05) issued a statement paying condolences to the recent plane crash victims in Somalia. "It is with deep sorrow that we learned about the crash accident of African Express on Monday (May 04) on a flight from Baidoa to Bardale in Somalia." Said the statement adding that reports from the accident site have shown that the unfortunate accident has claimed the lives of six individuals, all citizens of Somalia and Kenya, and that investigation into this incident is underway by the competent authorities of the Somali Federal Government. The statement further said, "The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia would like to extend its deepest condolences to the families and friends of the deceased in this terrible accident."

Ethiopia's Information Network Security Agency (INSA) on Saturday (May 2) said it has foiled a total of 538 cyberattacks over the last nine months. Out of the total, 263 were ransomware attacks, according to the national cybersecurity center at the agency (Ethio-CERT). The other attacks were 106 hacking, 105 web attacks, 54 infrastructure targeted spying, 9 cyberinfrastructure disruption and 1

internet fraud, it added. The attacks reported in the third quarter have shown a 68% increase compared to the previous two quarters of this fiscal year.

Billene Seyoum, from the Press Secretariat Unit of the Prime Minister Office, on Saturday (May 02) has given a video briefing summarizing key developments in regards to COVID-19 mitigation work nationwide as well as other recent related issues. The statement presented details on the effects of COVID-19 on the much anticipated national election schedule and subsequent deliberations of the government and competing political parties to give a legally and constitutionally viable resolve to the issue. The briefing also illustrates some of the activities of the COVID-19 Ministerial Committee and Sub-committees in alleviating the health crisis.

## **Eritrea**

President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea arrived in Addis Ababa on Sunday (May 03) morning for a two-day Summit with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed. The two leaders discussed bilateral ties, the fight against COVID-19, locust infestation, and other regional matters. President Isaias and his delegation also visited a number of agricultural and water development projects in the Zeway area of the Oromia Regional State. President Isaias was accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea Osman Saleh and Presidential Adviser Yemane Gebreab. (**See article**)

## **Kenya**

194 people have been killed by floods in Kenya since last month. 30 of them died since Tuesday (May 05), washed away by floods in various parts of the country where heavy rains are being experienced. Most affected parts are around River Nyando, River Nzoia, River Tana, and parts of Elgeyo Marakwet and West Pokot. Interior Cabinet Secretary Eugene Wamalwa said security forces have started moving people in flood-prone areas to safer grounds following imminent danger posed by the ongoing rains across the country.

## **Somalia**

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in Somalia on Wednesday (May 06) said that at least 16 people have died and more than 200,000 have been affected by torrential rains and floods since the April-June rains began. The most affected area has been the northeastern state of Puntland where heavy downpours April 27 killed eight people and displaced more than 22,000.

An African Express Airways (XU) Embraer EMB 120 Brasilia airplane crashed on Monday (May 04) in the town of Bardale, in the southern Bay region during a cargo flight transporting medical supplies to help fight against the coronavirus. The crash left six passengers dead.

Two Turkish military airplanes carrying the third batch of medical supplies to help Somalia fight coronavirus arrived in the capital Mogadishu on Monday (May 04). The shipment followed two previous batches of medical aid, including new Turkish-made ventilators last week. “We can’t thank you enough,” said Somali Foreign Minister Ahmed Awad. “We are profoundly indebted to our brothers and sisters of Turkey.”

The High-Level Virtual Meeting on Somalia took place last week on Wednesday (April 29), co-chaired by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the African Union (AU) and also attended by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. (**See article**)

## **South Sudan**

The Executive Secretary of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu today (May 08) disclosed on his Twitter page that after announcement by the Presidency of South Sudan of the allocation of States in the country on Thursday (May 07), First Vice President and Chair of the SPLM/IO Dr. Machar addressed a letter to IGAD Chair, Heads of State and Government, and the IGAD Secretariat expressing concerns. The Executive Secretary said, “IGAD is working towards addressing these for lasting peace in South Sudan.” President Kiir on Thursday (May 07) issued a statement saying that the presidency in a meeting chaired by President Kiir and after “thorough

deliberations” and “in the spirit of collegial decision making” decided to give the SPLM-IG six states, the SPLM-IO three states, and SSOA one state.

## **Sudan**

Sudan’s donors’ conference will be held in Germany next June, said a statement issued by the Friends of Sudan after a videoconference meeting chaired by France’s foreign ministry on Thursday (May 07). In a statement issued in Paris, French Minister Jean- Yves Le Drian voiced the support of the Friends of Sudan for the transitional government to achieve the goals of democratic transition and economic reforms set in the Constitutional Declaration. Also, the statement disclosed that the long-time awaited donor meeting to support Sudan will take place in Berlin next month.

About 30 civilians were killed in South Darfur state in intercommunal violence on Tuesday (May 05), according to a statement by the office of the Sudanese prime minister. As the hybrid peacekeeping force prepares to exit Darfur definitively, reports from the western Sudan region points to the increasing tribal fighting and attacks on civilians, further destabilizing one of Sudan’s most volatile regions. In a statement issued on Wednesday, Governor Hashim Khalid said that the fighting between Fellata and Rizeigat began on Tuesday at 03:00 am on the backdrop of cattle rustling and its transfer to Tullus area, home of the Fellata people. He added that the violence very quickly spread in the region to include the areas of Balail, Hajir Togo, Umm Kuja, Abujabra, Damso, Tulus, and Katila.

The United States has not yet decided when an ambassador will be sent to Khartoum said Michael Pompeo who expressed hope to do it soon. On Monday (May 04) Foreign Ministry said that the State Department accepted the nomination of Nur Eldin Satti as the first Sudanese ambassador to Washington since more than two decades ago. In a press conference held in Washington on Wednesday Pompeo was asked whether his administration approved Satti nomination and when they would send an ambassador to Khartoum. The Secretary of State praised what the Sudanese have achieved after the ouster of the former President Omer al-Bashir and stressed that Washington wants to support the democratic transition in Sudan. Meanwhile, in a statement released on Monday (May 4), Khartoum said Washington accepted the nomination of Nur

Eldin Satti “as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Sudan to the United States of America”.

Prime Minister Dr. Abdullah Hamdouk made a phone call on Monday (May 04) with the President of the State of South Sudan, Lieutenant-General Salva Kiir Mayardit, during which they discussed the progressing bilateral relations between the two countries and ways of enhancing them further for the common interests of the peoples of the two countries. The two sides have also discussed the recent incidents that happened in the area of Abyei, and affirmed the need for strict and swift intervention to reach a comprehensive solution to end the conflict in the area during the coming days.

Sudan’s Foreign Minister Asma Abdallah said she is optimistic about Sudan’s removal from the terror list despite the “obstacles” raised by the American administration. Abdallah was speaking in a talk show at the Sudan TV on Saturday (May 02) evening within the government efforts to improve communication with Sudanese people and to explain what has been achieved in the program of the transitional period.

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### ***Ethiopia Participates in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit on COVID-19 response***

The Online Summit of the Heads of Governments and Heads of States of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Contact Group in response to COVID-19 was virtually conducted on Monday (May 4, 2020) under the theme of “United against Covid-19”. During the Online Summit of NAM more than forty Heads of Governments and Head of States from Asia, Africa and Latin America were among the participants including the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Dr. Abiy Ahmed. The heads of several International Organizations including UNSG, UNPGA, DG of WHO, EU and the AU Commissioner have also participated in the virtual summit and provided briefings about the unprecedented socio-economic and humanitarian impacts of COVID-19 and called for the need to strengthen multilateralism and international solidarity in the fight against the pandemic. This virtual summit has deliberated thoroughly on the need to

strengthen cooperation and making an effective contribution towards the global efforts of tackling the unprecedented challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Heads of States and Governments, as well as International Organization participants have accentuated the devastating socio-economic impacts of the pandemic particularly on developing countries, and underlined the need for a global, coordinated, game-changing, people-centered and intensified international response. The importance of a spirit of solidarity and renewed multilateral selfless cooperation was highlighted. Leaders have further underscored that developing countries need not only debt suspension but also debt cancellation.

In the Online NAM Summit, Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has emphasized how the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic distressed human life and health, particularly in Africa. He underlined the pandemic has a devastating impact on the hard-won economic gains of the continent. The pandemic also undermined exports and imports including the capacity for timely purchase of essential equipment and medical supplies, he added. He called global leadership, coordination and solidarity not only to defeat the pandemic but also to quickly repair the enormous damages left in its wake. He stated that our collective vulnerability to this pandemic is a reminder that contemporary challenges are not bound by national or geographic borders.

The Premier has mentioned what has been done in Ethiopia in the fight against the impact of COVID-19. He mentioned some of the proactive measures his government has taken, including the declaration of a State of Emergency, to contain the spread of the virus and mitigate its long-term economic impact. He said the government is closely working with religious leaders, civil society organizations, community leaders, women, and youth groups and volunteers from a cross-section of our society to raise awareness and to ensure no-one is left behind.

He further stated that the African economies are going to suffer significantly from the wider spillover effect of the pandemic on our health system and ensuring food security for the most vulnerable countries. The premier also underlined the need to extend debt payment suspension beyond 2022, until the pandemic is over and

for such supports to involve not just debt suspension but both full official bilateral and commercial debts cancellation. He urged the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement to campaign for a global Marshall Plan for all our economies, including debt cancellation and rescheduling as well as other large scale support for Member states in distress. Many Leaders including Prime Minister Abiy reiterated their unwavering support to the World Health Organization (WHO) in its role and effective mandate delivery in the fight against COVID-19.

In conclusion, the summit has adopted a Political Declaration that underlines the importance of international solidarity in the fight against the COVID-19, inter-state cooperation in the provision of medical supplies and equipment, as well as strengthening multilateralism for post-pandemic economic and social stability and developments. In the Online summit, a *Non-Aligned Movement Task Force* has established with the task to work out a database that will include the basic humanitarian and medical needs and requirements of NAM Member States. The data organized by the Task Force will be submitted to all donors for concrete and timely international support.

Ethiopia as one of the founding members of NAM has been actively participating and promoting its principled positions in the Movement starting from 1955 Bandung Conference. Ethiopia actively engaged itself in advocating anti-colonialism, International peace and security, disarmament, and other issues of NAM in various International forums. Ethiopia remains committed to the NAM ideals and principles and solidarity with its members in the fight against the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) as a body constituting two-thirds of the membership of the United Nations is a unique platform-with a meaningful influence-that is capable of countering any attempts aimed at undermining the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

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*A Pledge for Africa*

By Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia

**Note:** This article was first published on ‘Project Syndicate’ on May 1, 2020

In 34 of Sub-Saharan Africa’s 45 countries, annual per capita health spending is below \$200, and measures like lockdowns, stay-at-home orders, and even frequent handwashing to combat COVID-19 are nearly impossible to implement. This simple fact underscores the urgent need for the Global Health Pledging Conference on May 4.

ADDIS ABABA – The world will not be free of the COVID-19 pandemic until all countries are free of the coronavirus that causes it. This simple fact underscores the urgent need for the Global Health Pledging Conference to be held on May 4. Only by acting now to support developing countries’ ability to combat the disease can the world avoid a second wave of the virus this autumn.

African Union leaders welcome the offers that are now coming in of test kits, ventilators, and personal protective equipment (PPE) from the developed world. But if we are to turn the tide against COVID-19, the world’s richest countries must hear and respond to the developing world’s pleas for a comprehensive strategy to overcome the dual public health and economic crisis we face. Up to now, there has been a huge disconnect between the rhetoric of rich-country leaders – that this is an existential, once-in-a-century global crisis – and the support for the world’s poor and developing countries than they seem willing to contemplate. Indeed, until last week, African countries were spending more on debt payments than on health care. In 34 of Sub-Saharan Africa’s 45 countries, annual *per capita* health spending is below \$200 – and barely reaches \$50 in many of these countries. Such low levels of spending make it impossible to fund acute-care hospital beds, ventilators, and the drugs needed to confront diseases like COVID-19. Paying for doctors, nurses, X-ray technicians, and other health professionals, together with their equipment, can seem almost like a luxury. Worse yet, many of the measures available to richer economies as they work to mitigate the disease – lockdowns, stay-at-home orders, and even frequent handwashing – cannot easily be implemented in much of the developing world. In often-overcrowded cities, social distancing is all but impossible, and there are not enough resources to provide adequate sanitation and, in many cases, the running water that people need.

So, what must be done? For starters, Africa's governments need an immediate flow of funds to enable investment in health care and social safety nets. Here, the most effective starting point is debt relief. So far, relief from bilateral debt is available for the 173 members of the International Development Association (the World Bank's concessional lending arm for the poorest developing countries) only until December. To meet our immediate needs and to plan ahead, we need an agreement for debt relief not just for this year but for next year as well.

Beyond debt relief, the grant and lending ceilings of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other multilateral development banks will need to be raised substantially. And an issuance of international money – the IMF's Special Drawing Rights – to raise \$1.5 trillion must take place soon. We in Africa are asking for this support not only for ourselves, though our needs in this crisis are perhaps greater than they have ever been. We in Africa seek the help of the developed countries (including China) so that we can do our best to protect the entire world from a return of this scourge. But time is short. Africa may be among the last places on Earth to be struck by COVID-19, but the disease remains as potent and deadly as ever. If we are to eliminate the threat, every country needs to do what it can to accelerate the search for a vaccine and ensure that it is available everywhere. To that end, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations needs sufficient funding – \$3 billion immediately, with more in 2021 and beyond – not only to develop and produce a vaccine for those who can afford it but also to be in a position to distribute it equitably around the world. And Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance needs the funds to ensure that this happens.

Likewise, a coordinated global effort could greatly accelerate production of the PPE, testing kits, and ventilators that are needed in every country and on every continent, and ensure that these life-and-death supplies are fairly distributed, not hoarded by the rich and few. Countries that have few coronavirus cases and are beyond the pandemic's peak should be willing to help poorer countries by sending lifesaving equipment to them. And, looking ahead, we should be building up stocks of these supplies for emergencies, so that we can help each other the next time we need help the most.

All of these issues are on the agenda for the Global Health Pledging event on May 4. We ask all countries in a position to do so to participate, to listen and advise, and, most important, to give.

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### ***President Isaias Afwerki visits Ethiopia for a two-day Summit with PM Abiy Ahmed***

President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea arrived in Addis Ababa on Sunday (May 03) morning for a two-day Summit with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed. The two leaders discussed bilateral ties, the fight against COVID-19, locust infestation and other regional matters. President Isaias was accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea Osman Saleh and Presidential Adviser Yemane Gebreab.

Following the discussion between the two leaders, President Sahle-work Zewde hosted a luncheon for the Eritrean President & his delegation. Former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, and, President of the Oromia Region Shimeles Abdissa, attended the luncheon hosted by the Ethiopian President. President Sahle later tweeted, “It was a renewed pleasure to join our Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in welcoming President Isaias Afeworki who is on a two-day visit to Ethiopia. We hosted him in the stunning park coming up on Entoto Mountain, a truly amazing place to relax and unwind.” President Isaias Afwerki and his delegation also visited some sites in Addis Abeba.

On the following day (May 04) President Isaias Afwerki and the delegation accompanying him visited a number of agricultural and water development projects in the Zeway area of the Oromia Regional State. The leaders inaugurated the Meki-Zeway Irrigation Development Project followed by a visit to the Flora-vegi fruit and vegetable seedlings nursery. They also visited the Dugda woreda seedlings nursery. The two leaders also had further discussions on bilateral cooperation and regional issues.

In the visits to the development sites, President Isaias and his delegation were also accompanied by former Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Foreign Affairs Minister Gedu Andargachew and, Water, Irrigation and Energy Minister, Sileshi Bekele.

President Isaias Afwerki returned home on Tuesday (May 05) after a fruitful working visit to Ethiopia which, according to the Ministry of Information of Eritrea, “was marked by extensive talks on the enhancement of bilateral ties,

regional issues of mutual importance and site visits to developmental projects in Oromia Regional State.”

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### ***High-Level Meeting on Somalia calls for Continued Support to the Country***

The High-Level Virtual Meeting on Somalia took place on 29 April 2020, co-chaired by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the African Union (AU) attended by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. According to a communiqué issued subsequent to the meeting, the meeting comes at a time when the world including Somalia is battling with the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19.

In addition to the challenges posed by the novel coronavirus, the meeting expressed concern on the floods, locust invasions, and conflicts that caused loss of lives, internal displacements and made humanitarian services difficult to attain. The meeting called for the promotion of a people and partnership centric approach in support of the Somali people. Participants encouraged the Federal Government of Somalia and its Member States to continue to engage in regular political dialogue at all levels and strengthen technical level engagement on security cooperation and development in addition to tackling the threat posed by Al-Shabab.

The meeting commended Somalia’s commitment to restoring macroeconomic stability through the strengthening of macroeconomic management, rebuilding financial institutions, and improving governance. The meeting also appreciated the crucial reforms in the security sector underscoring their importance “to bolster the governance and institutions of Somalia, which in turn strengthens security.” Acknowledging that Al-Shabaab still poses an existential threat to the peace, security, and stability of Somalia and the region as a whole, the meeting noted. “strengthening Somali capacity to defeat the asymmetric threat posed by the organization, in particular, its use of improvised explosive devices, and to restore State authority over Al-Shabaab-controlled territory is a priority for Somalia and international partners.”

“The meeting encouraged the FGS and FMS to maintain dialogue and unity of purpose to agree on a common vision of federalism and finalize the constitutional review, and, in preparation for the elections, move forward on the electoral legislation,” the communiqué reads.

The meeting appreciated the efforts of AMISOM in keeping peace in Somalia so far and underscored the need to identify the threats to Somalia’s stability and security in the current context, and to take a fresh look at what steps need to be taken by Somalia and international partners to enable Somalia to assume primary responsibility for security and enable the completion of AMISOM’s mandate.

The meeting also underscored the need for continued regional political consensus in support of a Somali-led and owned agenda. It called on the regional and extra-regional players to continue playing a united and cohesive role in supporting Somalia. The meeting commended IGAD, the UN, EU, UK, USA, Turkey, and other bilateral partners for their continued financial and material support to both the FGS and AMISOM.