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Africa and the African Union

Ambassador Josefa Sacko, African Union Commissioner (AUC) for Rural Economy and Agriculture last week on Thursday (May 14), briefed the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) on measures being taken by the Department to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on food security in Africa. The brief centered on the status of the food system before COVID-19, the impact of Covid-19 on the food system and the response by her Department in mitigating the pandemic.

An African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) unit in Bilis Qooqani town on Friday (May 15) stopped a late-night attack on Jubaland Security Forces (JSF), killing and arresting several terrorists in the process, a statement issued by AMISOM said. AMISOM forces recovered several AK 47 rifles and rounds of ammunition from Al Shabaab elements who were neutralized during the foiled attack. The statement further stated that the two Jubaland Forces wounded in the ensuing battle are currently receiving treatment at the AMISOM Forward Operating Base (FOB) in Bilis Qooqani.

UNMISS said in a statement on Wednesday (May 20) that a patrol of military and civilian peacekeepers serving with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan has reached communities in Pieri, in northern Jonglei, who were affected by a series of intercommunal clashes at the weekend. The team is investigating reports that many people were killed, injured and lost their homes during the sudden outbreak of violence between armed Murle youth and Lou Nuer fighters. The patrol heard first-hand from local community members and military commanders about the impact of the violence, including testimony from relatives of people who were killed, injured and fled their homes.

In a new policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on the African continent, the Secretary-General of the United Nations highlights the continent's swift response to the pandemic, but also calls for global solidarity with Africans now and to recover better. In a video message recorded on Thursday (May 20), the Secretary-General said that most African countries have moved rapidly to deepen regional coordination, deploy health workers, and enforce quarantines, lockdowns and border closures. “[Africans] are also drawing on the experience of HIV/AIDS and Ebola to debunk rumors and overcome mistrust of Government, security forces and health workers,” said Mr. Guterres adding, “But, despite these efforts, the pandemic threatens progress achieved on the continent and will aggravate long-standing inequalities.

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed and his high-level delegation held virtual talks with Sudanese Prime Minister Abdala Hamdok on Thursday (May 21). The discussions focused on exploring amicable solutions related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) to resolve outstanding and misunderstood issues between the two parties. Responding to concerns raised by the Sudanese side, clarity was provided on environmental issues, dam safety and data exchange facilitation, according to the office of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister also provided progress information on the issues raised and highlighted the role the GERD will play in strengthening the economies of three countries concerned. Agreement was made for technical level discussions to continue, led by the Ministers of Water Affairs of the countries.

The outgoing ambassador of Ethiopia to Sudan, Shiferaw Jarso, on Thursday (May 21) held talks with Lt Gen Abdel Fattah Al Burhan, President of Sudan's Sovereign Council. The two sides discussed on how to further strengthen ties between the two countries and their long tradition of resolving border related issue through dialogue. Al Burhan thanked the ambassador and Prime Minister

Dr. Abiy Ahmed for contributing a lot to the restoration of peace and establishment of a transitional government in Sudan. Ambassador Shiferaw for his part extended his gratitude to the people and government of Sudan for the supports he was provided with during his stay in the country.

Ethiopia on Thursday (May 21) conducted 3,747 laboratory tests for COVID-19, out of which nine people have tested positive. All the confirmed cases are Ethiopian nationals, with the youngest being 20 years old and oldest 49 years, according to a statement by the Ministry of Health. One patient has recovered from the virus in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 123. Ethiopia has so far conducted 69, 507 laboratory tests and recorded 398 confirmed cases, with five deaths.

Minister of Waters, Irrigation and Energy Dr. Engineer Sileshi Bekele on Thursday (May 21) held a virtual discussion with Morocco's Minister of Energy, Minerals, and Environment, Aziz Rabbah on ways of strengthening partnership in the field of renewable energy among their respective countries. The two ministers examined prospects for bilateral cooperation, especially in the field of renewable energies, where several opportunities exist for developing projects of mutual interest between the two nations.

The Chinese based Tencent Foundation has donated medical supplies to help Ethiopia in its efforts to curb the spread of the virus. Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed on Thursday (May 21) expressed his gratitude to Ma Huateng founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the foundation.

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Gedu Andargachew and United Kingdom's Minister for Africa, H. E. James Duddridge on Wednesday (May 20) held a video-conference call to discuss bilateral and regional issues between the two countries. Mr. Gedu gave briefings about Ethiopia's stance on the GERD and reiterated the importance of returning back to the trilateral talks among Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt since dialogue is the only viable option to solve disputable issues. The discussion also covered the COVID-19 pandemic and UK support to the Ethiopian and wider African response to the scourge. Mr. Duddridge reaffirmed that the UK will continue to support Ethiopia's and Africa's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. He also said unresolved issues regarding the GERD should be solved through dialogue.

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Gedu Andargachew on Wednesday (May 20) bade farewell to the departing German Ambassador Brita Wagener. Gedu appreciated the German ambassador for her unrelenting efforts in further

enhancing the long-standing relationship between the two countries. Ambassador Brita said she was happy during her stay in Ethiopia and thanked the Government and the people of Ethiopia for helping her spend a fruitful time in the country. During the occasion, the two sides underscored that cooperation between Ethiopia and Germany in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic should continue.

Rainbow Push Coalition urged US Congressional Black Caucus to pass a resolution against Egypt's Letter to the UN Security Council, in a letter issued on Wednesday (May 20). According to the VOA, the letter indicated Egypt's letter to the UN Security Council pushes Ethiopia into signing a neo-colonial agreement that will make Egypt hegemony over the Nile River. The letter wrote to USA's Congressional Black Caucus Chairperson Karen Bass signed by Founder of Rainbow Coalition and the renowned Civil Rights Advocate Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. and its Chairman William D. Dickerson said Egypt's claim is inexplicable for 85% of the waters of the Nile River originate from Ethiopia. The source of Ethio-Egypt dispute is a colonial legacy that Egypt is trying to hang on to, the letter said. The letter indicated that Ethiopia has done everything in accordance with international water laws.

Global Alliance for the Rights of Ethiopians has donated COVID 19 protective supplies and testing kits amounting 11. 5 Million Birr to Ministry of Health on Wednesday (May 20). While receiving the donation, Ministry of Health Dr. Liya Tadesse said protective supplies offered by the alliance have a great role to reinforce the national COVID 19 control and prevention activities. Coordinator of the support, Amha Mekonnen said the donation includes Face Masks, Gloves, Instant Sanitizers, Test Kits and other protective equipment.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations in a statement issued on Tuesday (May 2019) said he is closely following developments related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). He noted the good progress in the negotiations between the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Sudan thus far and he encouraged the three parties to persevere with efforts to peacefully resolve any remaining differences and to achieve a mutually beneficial agreement. (**See article**).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in collaboration with the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity on 18-19 May 2020 gave briefings about the construction, filling and operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam as well as the various trilateral meetings held with Egypt and Sudan to

African, Asia-Pacific and Middle Eastern Countries' ambassadors residing in Addis Ababa. **(See article)**

The Prime Minister Office of Ethiopia on Tuesday (May 19) gave a short video briefing on key progress updates on COVID-19 and the launch of the Green Legacy Planting season. Taking the recent upsurge of COVID-19 cases into consideration, the statement said that the risk of spread still exists and people should continue to strictly adhere to measures that have been put in place by the government. The statement also covered COVID-19 mitigation and prevention measures that have been taken by the ministerial committee which was established to achieve this end. Drawing lessons from the experiences of tree planting initiatives in the previous year, the Prime Minister Office announced: "this year there has been a lot of work to prepare and meet the target that has been set for 5 billion trees within the rainy season." **(See article)**

Finland has provided a €4 million support to help finance the implementation of Ethiopia's One WASH National Program II (OWNP II). Ambassador of Finland to Ethiopia, Helena Airaksinen, signed the agreement representing her country. In a tweet on Monday (May 18), ambassador Airaksinen said that the agreement was made "to support Ethiopia to improve water and sanitation services and hygiene, which are all essential in COVID19 prevention."

Sudan and Ethiopia have agreed to create a conducive environment for the resolution of the border issues between the two neighbors and to follow-up discussions next month. The agreement was announced in a joint statement released on Monday at the end of the meeting of the 'High-level Political Committee Meeting on Border Issues' from 16 to 18 May in Addis Ababa. "The two countries have agreed to continue the discussion and to create a conducive environment for the resolution of the boundary issues within the existing frameworks and on the basis of agreed and signed documents," reads the statement. Further, the parties agreed "to strengthen cooperation, to combat any illegal activities and ensure the security of people along the border area and reinforce people-to-people relations." **(See article)**

Eritrea

The Ministry of Information stated that Eritrea's senior delegation composed of Foreign Minister Osman Saleh and Presidential Adviser Yemane Gebreab met with First Vice President of the Sovereign Council, Mohammed Hamdan Deglo, and Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok in Khartoum on 17 and 18 May 2020. The discussions focused on bilateral ties and regional cooperation. At

the meetings, the First Vice President Mohammed Hamdan Deglo expressed appreciation for President Isaias' initiative to spur the partnership with Sudan and his efforts to promote regional cooperation. Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok for his part underlined the dividend of partnership and joint efforts of both countries for viable regional integration.

The 29th Independence Day Anniversary will be celebrated under the theme "Resilience and Progress", the chairman of the National Holidays Coordinating Committee, Ambassador Zemed Tekle stated on Sunday (May 17). According to Ambassador Zemed, the 29th Independence Anniversary will be celebrated under prevailing global reality of the spread of corona virus and lockdown guidelines.

Ministry of Health announced last Friday (May 15) that one patient has recovered fully after standard tests at the National Laboratory and was released from hospital on the same day. This result means that all 39 confirmed cases in the country to-date have recovered fully. The Ministry said, "this important milestone should not induce complacency at this point in time."

Somalia

The United States Africa Command (Africom) on Monday (May 18) confirmed the killing of two terrorists inside Qunyo Barrow area in Sothern Somalia on Sunday. In a statement, Africom said the two were killed in an air strike targeting Al Shabaab militants in an operation conducted in coordination with the Federal Government of Somalia. "The US support to our Somali partners is and will remain strong," said Africom's director of operations Major General William Gayler. The statement claimed that there were no reported civilian casualties in the strike.

Somali Health Ministry on Tuesday (May 19) confirmed 47 new cases of coronavirus, bringing the total tally of infections to 1,502. Fawziya Abikar, the Health Minister said the new patients are from the semi-autonomous region of Puntland which has 19, Banadir 13, Somaliland 8 and South West 7. Abikar said two patients succumbed to the deadly respiratory disease, bringing the total number of deaths since the pandemic was reported in the country to 59.

She said 15 people recovered from COVID-19, bringing the total number of people who have been discharged from hospitals to 178.

HirShabelle state president Mohamed Abdi Waare on Monday (May 18) has presided over a key regional cabinet meeting held in Beledweyne city. The meeting focused on the current humanitarian situation in the Hiran region and ongoing efforts to mitigate the flood crisis in Beledweyne resulted from the heavy Gu' rainfall. HirShabelle state leader urged his cabinet to work tirelessly and step up the mission to prevent the River Shabelle from flooding again to the town and nearby environs. The city has seen recurrent floods that uprooted hundreds of Somali families who became often IDPs in the region with no adequate humanitarian assistance from aid agencies.

A suicide bomb attack has killed a governor in Puntland state on Sunday (May 17), the second top official assassinated in the northeastern Federal State since March. Ahmed Muse Nur and several security guards were reported to have been killed in a huge blast targeted his vehicle while travelling in northern Galkayo city. Some reports suggest that the attack occurred outside the governor's office. Last March, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for a suicide attack that killed Nugal governor and former regional police boss in Garowe city.

Kenya

In Kenya, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) and other aid agencies as well as the Government are strengthening their COVID-19 response, after authorities confirmed that two people tested positive for the virus in the Dadaab refugee camp. In Dadaab, isolation and quarantine centers with nearly 1,000 additional beds have been constructed, and 125 handwashing stations are being installed at food distribution sites, schools and markets, the United Nations stated in a statement issued on Thursday (May 20).

The International Court of Justice has postponed a hearing into Somalia and Kenya's long-running maritime dispute by another 10 months following Kenya's petition. Both countries claim sovereignty of an area in the Indian Ocean that is thought to be rich in oil and gas. The BBC reported that a letter sent by the court to both parties stated that the hearing scheduled for early June

is now is delayed to 15 March 2021 due to the exceptional circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic.

Kenya has shut its borders with Somalia and Tanzania as the country strives to stem further spread of the coronavirus. In a televised address to the nation on Saturday (May 16), President Uhuru Kenyatta said he was imposing more measures after it emerged that some of the cases had crossed the border from Tanzania and Somalia. “If we do not take additional precautionary measures and get even more serious in implementing existing guidelines, the number of people who will get sick and die is going to rise sharply,” said President Kenyatta. The decree, effective Saturday midnight, does not affect cargo vehicles.

South Sudan

More than 200 people were killed and at least 300 others wounded in inter-communal clashes last weekend in South Sudan’s Jonglei state, according to local leaders. Local officials say armed youth suspected of being from the Greater Pibor Administrative Area carried out attacks in four villages on Saturday and Sunday. Young men reported to be wearing military uniforms raided several villages and burned two Uror County villages – Pieri and Pamai – to the ground, according to Pal Mai, former deputy secretary general of the now defunct Bieh state.

South Sudan’s First Vice President Riek Machar and his wife Angelina Teny have tested positive for Covid-19. Dr. Machar on Monday (May 18) said that he and his wife, who is also the Defense minister, had contracted the virus after interacting with infected members of the High-Level Taskforce on Covid-19, a team drafted to help fight the pandemic. A statement from his office said a number of his staffers, including security guards, also contracted the virus. South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir sent a message on Wednesday to his First Vice-President Riek Machar wishing him a speedy recovery. In a related news, South Sudan’s Information Minister and government spokesman, Michael Makuei, has also tested positive for the Covid-19 coronavirus.

Alor Koul, chief administrator for Abyei, reacted positively on Monday (May 18) to word that the United Nations Security Council extended the mandate for Abyei for six months, but cautioned that renewing the U.N. mandate will not alone solve the dispute between Sudan and South Sudan over who controls the

area. The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously on Thursday to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and urged Khartoum, Juba and local communities to take all necessary steps to ensure that the area is effectively demilitarized and to fully cooperate with UNISFA.

Sudan

A senior Sudanese official revealed that Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok discussed on Wednesday (May 20) with South Sudanese President Salva Kiir supplying Khartoum with additional oil crude for gasoline refined in Sudan. “Khartoum asked Juba to supply it with more than 20,000 barrels per day after the global decline in oil prices and in exchange Sudan will give South Sudan gasoline from El-Obeid refinery after refining the crude,” said the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Energy and Mining, Hamid Suleiman.

The head of Sudan’s Sovereign Council reiterated the position of his country that no peacekeepers are needed in Darfur region after the exit of the hybrid operation (UNAMID) from the western Sudan province. Abdel-Fattah al Burhan on Monday (May 18) received UNAMID chief Jeremiah Mamabolo who briefed him about the ongoing discussions between the African Union and the United Nations over the situation in Darfur after the planned withdrawal of the blue helmets by the 31 October 2020.

Sudan and Ethiopia have agreed to create a conducive environment for the resolution of the border issues between the two neighbors and to follow-up discussions next month. The agreement was announced in a joint statement released on Monday at the end of the meeting of the ‘High-level Political Committee Meeting on Border Issues’ from 16 to 18 May in Addis Ababa. **(See article)**

The transitional government and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) will initial the peace agreement on 20 June, announced the South Sudanese mediation on Sunday (May 17). The eight-month process had initially to last for two months but the parties continued to extend it month after month until the 9th of May when the mediation extended the negotiations with no time limit, as some observers say the process has lost momentum. After consultations with the parties, the South Sudanese mediation Sunday released

a time table of the talks showing that the discussions will resume on 18 May and be concluded on 19 June.

Sudan's donor conference will be held on 25 June, disclosed the European Union's foreign affairs chief Joseph Borrell on Saturday (May 16). "We are going to hold soon, on 25 June, the Sudan Partnership Conference, together with Germany, the United Nations and Sudan," said Borell who was speaking in a press videoconference. "It will be an opportunity for the international community to recall and renew their support for the ongoing political transition in Sudan and include, I hope, concrete pledges," he added.

UN Secretary-General Calls for Continued GERD Tripartite Talks

The Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres on Tuesday (May 19) issued a statement on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) calling on Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt to peacefully solve unresolved issues through dialogue along with the spirits of the 2015 Declaration of Principles on the GERD.

Noting the good progress in the negotiations between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt, Mr. Guterres "encourages the three parties to persevere with efforts to peacefully resolve any remaining differences and to achieve a mutually beneficial agreement," the statement said.

According to the statement, "The Secretary-General underscores the importance of the 2015 Declaration of Principles on the GERD, which emphasizes cooperation based on common understanding, mutual benefit, good faith, win-win, and the principles of international law."

Mr. Guterres encourages progress towards an amicable agreement in accordance with the spirit of these Principles, the statement added.

It is known that the Declaration of Principles on the GERD emphasizes the equitable and reasonable utilization of the Nile water resources in line with accepted principles of 'causing no significant harm' as well as cooperation.

Ethiopia Briefs Resident Ambassadors in Addis Ababa about GERD

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in collaboration with the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity on 18-19 May 2020 gave briefings about the construction, filling and operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam as well as the various trilateral meetings held with Egypt and Sudan to African, Asia-Pacific and Middle Eastern Countries' ambassadors residing in Addis Ababa.

Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Dr. Eng. Seleshi Bekele and State Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Redwan Hussein gave the briefings to the African Ambassadors. Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Gedu Andargachew and Eng. Gedion Asafaw on the other hand briefed Asia Pacific and Middle Eastern Countries' Ambassadors.

The national, regional, and continental level values that can be gained in building the dam have been explained in the presentation. The presenters also stressed Ethiopia's commitment to equitably and reasonably utilize its water resources in line with accepted principles of 'causing no significant harm' as well as cooperation. Following the briefing, the Ambassadors thanked the presenters for clarifying cloudy issues regarding the dam and stressed on dialogue as the only option to solve contentious issues. The African Ambassadors, in particular, called on the need to solve African problems through Africans highlighting that countries in Africa or the African Union can mediate the GERD talks whenever necessary.

PMO Delivers Briefings on COVID-19 and Green Legacy Initiative

The Prime Minister Office of Ethiopia on Tuesday (May 19) gave a short video briefing on key progress updates on COVID-19 and the launch of the Green Legacy Planting season. Taking the recent upsurge of COVID-19 cases into

consideration, the statement said that the risk of spread still exists and people should continue to strictly adhere to measures that have been put in place by the government. Since the first case that was announced within Ethiopia eight weeks ago and an initial responsiveness to precautionary measures that had been put in place, what we are witnessing is an increase in positive cases of COVID-19 cases is attributable to the gradual onset of complacency,” the statement said. The statement also covered COVID-19 mitigation and prevention measures that have been taken by the ministerial committee which was established to achieve this end.

According to the statement, the COVID-19 Ministerial Committee has been taking measures against breaches of the health state of emergency regulations that have been put in place. Hence, it said, “measures taken nationally over the past month against 44,200 establishments that were providing services that have been restricted or banned under the state of emergency including in breaches of physical distancing regulations. Similarly, action is continuously being taken against businesses that have been increasing prices on consumer goods hiding goods and not making them available to the market as necessary as well as related illegal activities.”

COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts around border areas have also been proceeding in close collaboration between federal and regional entities under the watchful eyes of the peace and security subcommittee, the statement said. “To this end,” said the statement, “a multi sectoral team has been dispatched to assess the needs in those areas and accordingly has been working to upgrade and expand the quarantine facilities that have been set up in that area.” “They have also been working to provide the necessary materials and equipment for these quarantine facilities as well as enhancing the border control measures to ensure that of COVID-19 cases are not on the increase in the border areas.” The statement also said that testing for cross-border truck drivers has also been ramped up.

As it relates to testing within the country, nationally, the testing capacity has been augmented with 26 laboratories. It’s to be recalled that when positive cases were announced within the country the nation did not have a strong testing capacities or facilities and in fact suspected cases would be sent outside of the country for testing but now there has been a concerted effort by the ministerial committee to expand these testing facilities and also ramp up the daily testing capacity that we have. According to the statement, “now we have 26 laboratories with 28 testing machines that have been put in place. As such on a daily basis we have seen the increase of actual testing being done

nationally to be around 4,500, for example, in the past week. And the maximum testing capacity has increased to 7,500 within the new laboratories that have been operational.”

In concluding the briefing on the COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts, the statement said, “it’s still imperative that all continue to follow the regulations or the measures that have been put in place by the State of Emergency Committee as they have been put in place to ensure that the spread is contained and that we are not pushed into a full-blown health crisis with grave consequences to the economy and data livelihoods.”

Proceeding to the second issue, i.e., the launch of the green legacy planting season as the part of the briefing, the statement said that the Government has drawn lessons from the experiences of tree planting initiatives in the previous year and plan to plant 5 billion trees within the rainy season for this year. The statement also recalled that last year in 2019 Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed launched a national initiative aimed at planting 4 billion trees during the rainy season calling upon all citizens or all friends of Ethiopia living within the country to plant 40 trees per person, adding, “Coordination efforts had been spearheaded nationally and enabled reaching the goal set for that planting period.” The Ethiopian national planting day, i.e. July 29 2019, mobilized millions of people throughout the country to plant 353 million trees within a 12-hour period the statement said. According to the Ministry of Agriculture estimates, an average of 84 percent of all planted seedlings during the set target last year have been sustained.

Based on these lessons from last year as well as the preparation, the planting and all other related activities that had been undertaken to fulfill the set target last year and reviewing the lessons from what had had transpired, the statement said, “ this year there has been a lot of work to prepare and meet the target that has been set for 5 billion trees within the rainy season.” “So, the steering committee that was quite active last year chaired by the Minister of Agriculture has also been re-initiated.”

Nurseries throughout the country as have been preparing the requisite number of seedlings to be made available for the official launch of the planting season, the statement added. The briefing also noted that beyond aesthetics, the greening aspirations of the country is rooted in optimizing Ethiopia’s multi-faceted potential for development including in Eco-tourism as well and positioning Ethiopia to be a green and climate resilient economy. The

statement ended saying that the Government is working on a clear roadmap for how people can plant in a COVID-19 responsive manner.

Ethiopia, Sudan Conclude High-level Political Committee Meeting

Ethiopia and Sudan have concluded their ‘High-level Political Committee Meeting on Border Issues’ that was held on 16-18 May 2020 in Addis Ababa issuing a joint press statement.

The meeting was held in a cordial and friendly atmosphere reflecting the longstanding fraternal relations between the two countries based on good neighborliness and mutual understanding, the statement said.

The statement further disclosed that the two countries have agreed to continue the discussion and to create a conducive environment for the resolution of the boundary issues within the existing frameworks and on the basis of agreed and signed documents.

Being cognizant of the current situation along the border area of the two countries, the meeting “agreed to strengthen cooperation and to combat any illegal activities and ensure the security of people along the border area and reinforce people-to-people relations.”

The joint statement also indicated that the two sides have agreed to convene the next follow up High-Level Political meeting in Khartoum by the end of June 2020.

In the Meeting, the Ethiopian delegation was led by Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia, while, the Sudanese delegation was led by Omar Bashir Manis, Minister for Cabinet Affairs of Sudan.

Prior to the meeting, Omar Bashir Manis had delivered a message from the Prime Minister of Sudan Abdallah Hamdok to Abiy Ahmed, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia. The Prime Minister Office of Ethiopia disclosed that the two sides met “to discuss on key issues, including border issues, enhancing Ethiopia-Sudan economic ties, mitigating the effects of the COVID19 pandemic collaboratively and regional geopolitics.”

