

*News in Brief*

*GERD is a development project, not a security threat, says Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie*

*The Bureau of the AU Assembly holds Extraordinary meeting on GERD*

*Ethiopia's Seventy-Five Years Journey in the United Nations*

*China Supports Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt to resolve differences through dialogue, says Minister of Foreign Affairs of China*

**Africa and the African Union**

Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, Amina Mohammed, on Tuesday (June 30) spoke at the ministerial round table on the impact of COVID-19 on Africa's energy sector. She stressed that, as we strive to ease the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, we must also plan now how to recover better. Ms. Mohammed noted that foreign direct investment flows into African countries are projected to decline between 25 and 40 percent in 2020 alone. Our common task for eradicating poverty and achieving the 2030 Agenda has never been more urgent, she said, stressing the need for access to clean, affordable and modern energy services. The Deputy Secretary-General also called on leaders to shape a climate-positive recovery through green jobs, ending fossil fuel subsidies, and pursuing a just and fair transition, amongst other means.

Last week on Friday (June 26), the Bureau of the AU Assembly conducted an extraordinary meeting via a video-teleconference to discuss developments about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). A report from the Chairperson of the AUC, Moussa Faki Mahamat noted that more than 90% of the issues in the Tripartite Negotiations between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan have already been resolved. Leaders of the governments of Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt addressed the Bureau of the Assembly with regards to their respective positions pertaining to the GERD matter. (See [article](#))

**Ethiopia**

Ethiopia expressed dissatisfaction over Egypt's decision to take the GERD issue to the UN Security Council bypassing the African Union, sidestepping the DoP provisions on dispute settlement, and contravening art. 33 of the UN charter that calls for solving disputes first by resorting to regional agencies or arrangements. Discussing the GERD issue in the Security Council "is bound to set a bad precedent and open a Pandora's box," Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the UN told the United Nations Security Council meeting that convened on Monday (June 29) to discuss the issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). "This Council should not be a forum for settling scores and for exerting diplomatic pressure," he said. "It is, therefore, regrettable that the Council has allowed itself to be politicized in this manner." (**See article**)

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has extended congratulatory message on Monday (June 29) to the newly elected president of the Republic of Malawi Lazarus Chakwera. "On behalf of the Government of Ethiopia, I would like to extend my congratulations to Malawi's new President Lazarus Chakwera on the recent election victory." the Premier said adding that Ethiopia looks forward to working together with the Republic of Malawi on bilateral ties and mutual regional interests. Malawi's newly elected president Lazarus Chakwera was sworn in on Sunday, pledging to make the country inclusive to all.

The 2020 Ethiopia Cup of Excellence (COE) auction has broken records, with total sales of 1,348,690 US Dollars topping the previous record of 830,245 US Dollars from El Salvador in 2011. The El Salvador auction had 42 lots for sale, while the COE Ethiopia auction included only 28, achieving a record-high average price of 28 US Dollars per pound. The top-scoring coffee in the 2020 COE Ethiopia competition sold at 185.10 US Dollars per pound or 407 US Dollars per kilogram. The Alliance for Coffee Excellence (ACE) says this is the highest price ever recorded for an Ethiopian coffee.

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Gedu Andargachew, and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi held a telephone conversation today (June 29) to consult ways to further strengthen the relationship between Ethiopia and China. The Ministers reiterated the need for cooperation between the two countries to contain and mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Gedu also briefed his Chinese counterpart about the current status of negotiations over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). (**See article**)

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali wrote on his Facebook page on Sunday (June 28) an article regarding the 75 years journey of Ethiopia in the United Nations emphasizing that his country has been at the forefront in upholding a foreign policy based on multilateralism and collective security. (**See article**)

Ethiopian Prime Minister, Dr. Abiy Ahmed and President Emmanuel Macron of France spoke over the phone on Saturday (June 27). Prime Minister Abiy said he has held ‘‘Productive telephone call with President Emmanuel Macron on development issues, Ethiopia-France relations and work on COVID19 response.’’ He further appreciated the continued support of France for Ethiopia’s growth endeavors.

## **Eritrea**

President Isaias Afwerki, on Saturday (July 27) concluded a three-day visit to Sudan. During his visit to Khartoum, the Eritrean President has met with the President of the Transitional Sovereign Council, Lt. Gen. Abdul-Fattah Al-Burhan, the council’s Vice – President, Lt. Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, and Prime Minister Dr. Abdalla Hamdouk, and discussed the progress of the bilateral relations and means of strengthening them further, issues of mutual concern to the two countries and the efforts for boosting peace in the region. President Isaias and his delegation also visited Gendetu agricultural project and Fapi Agro-Industrial Plan located 127 km from Khartoum.

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

## **Djibouti**

Djibouti seeks to bring stability to neighboring Somalia as the situation of the country impacts the security of the Horn of Africa, the country’s envoy to Saudi Arabia said on Wednesday (July 01). Establishing stability and security in Somalia and limiting ‘‘the flow of refugees’’ is key for the Horn of Africa as ‘‘the region is geographically, culturally, humanly and economically linked to each other,’’ Ambassador Ziauddin Saeed Bamakhrama said in an opinion piece published by Arab News’ sister-paper Asharq Al-Awsat.

The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, on Saturday (July 27), congratulated the government and the people of Djibouti on the country’s 43rd Independence anniversary. In his message, Ambassador Madeira said: ‘‘On this day, 43 years ago, a new nation was born. I salute all

the great sons and daughters of Djibouti who sacrificed themselves for the independence of their country so that, today, their compatriots are able to enjoy the fruits of their sacrifice.”

## **Somalia**

Domestic flights in Somalia are set to resume on Sunday (July 05), in line with the partial easing of lockdown restrictions in parts of the country. The Somali cabinet has outlined the measures it has adopted to offer a “healthy and comfortable travel experience” in compliance with directives from the Ministry of Health. The measures include installing markers on the floor of terminal buildings to encourage social distancing, recommending travelers keep 1.5 meters from others. The wearing of a face mask has been made mandatory in all areas of the airports, and hand sanitizing stations are now available throughout terminal buildings.

Somalia’s election body says it intends to delay the parliamentary and presidential elections scheduled for November by 13 months, citing the country’s security problems. Announcing that a new date for the elections in August 2021, Halimo Ismail, Chairwoman of the electoral commission, told lawmakers and journalists on Monday (June 29) that elections were being postponed for more than a year because of “significant technical and security challenges.” The announcement by the electoral commission was welcomed by many in the international community including the United Nations, the African Union Mission in Somalia, the European Union, the U.S., and Britain.

The World Bank approved a \$40 million International Development Assistance (IDA) grant for Somalia as part of the Emergency Locust Response Program, which seeks to respond to the threat posed by the locust outbreak and strengthen systems for preparedness in affected countries in Africa and the Middle East. The locust invasion has gravely impacted the livelihoods of nearly 2.6 million living in forty-three districts of Somalia. The agriculture sector remains the backbone of the economy and accounts for about 75 percent of GDP. The World Bank Group approved on May 20, 2020, a \$500 million multi-phase program of emergency financing, complemented by policy advice and technical assistance, to support countries in Africa and the Middle East affected by the locust outbreak.

United Nations envoy to the country commended Somalia's advances in diagnostic testing for COVID-19, and highlighted the importance of the national laboratory and other laboratories throughout the country in the COVID-19 response. "Over the last four months, the NPHRL has played a critical role in the pandemic response by detecting cases and monitoring virus circulation. The NPHRL has worked alongside two other public health laboratories with molecular testing capability for COVID-19. This has helped the country to test and track virus circulation across the country, and to detect high virus transmission areas for early containment," said the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, James Swan.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense has sent on Tuesday (June 30) a cable of congratulation to President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmaajo of the Federal Republic of Somalia on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. In his cable, HRH Crown Prince wished the President constant good health and happiness and the Government and people of Somalia steady progress and prosperity.

## **Kenya**

World Food Programme (WFP) on Saturday (June 27) announced that it has launched cash transfers and nutrition support for more than a quarter of a million people struggling to survive from the impact of the virus on informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya. Nearly 280,000 people, who struggled to feed themselves even before the onset of the pandemic and have lost their income due to COVID-19 restrictions, will receive these cash distributions.

## **South Sudan**

South Sudan President Salva Kiir appointed eight of the ten State governors on Monday (June 29) while the remaining two states- Jonglei and Upper Nile- should be nominated in the upcoming days. The appointment of the state governors was announced In a presidential decree broadcast by the official TV South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC).

## **Sudan**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (PSC) has urged holdout armed groups to join the peace process in Sudan and requested the transitional government to designate those who obstruct the ongoing efforts. The PSC

discussed the situation in Sudan in a meeting held on 17 and released its decisions in a communiqué published on Friday (June 26). The meeting welcomed the progress achieved so far in the Juba process for peace in Sudan which started in September 2019 between the government and the armed groups in Darfur and the Two Areas. The Council further called on the Sudanese parties to expedite the negotiations and conclude a peace agreement, at the same time it appealed to the hold out groups to join the talks without preconditions. The Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdel-Wahid al-Nur (SLM-AW) remains the only group that rejects the South Sudanese government mediated negotiations.

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

The Sudanese authorities on Sunday (June 28) arrested Islamists cells planning to stage large-scale riots during demonstrations for justice and formation of transitional parliament that pro-democracy Resistance Committees will hold on 30 June with the broad support of political forces. The Sudanese youth will take to the streets on 30 June to recall the government of Abdallah Hamdok their demand for justice and trial of those who killed protesters on 3 June 2019 in Khartoum. Also, they want the formation of the remaining transitional period institutions: the legislative council, commissions, and generally the implementation of the transitional constitution.

Khartoum's meetings for peace in Sudan are stalled over the number of parliamentary seats to be allocated to the armed groups during the transitional period. The armed groups, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) and the Sudan Liberation Movement- Minni Minnawi (SLM-M) – demand 150 of 300 seats of the transitional parliament. Under the transitional constitution, the Forces for Freedom and Changes (FFC) will get only 201 seats (67%) and the remaining 99 seats should be allocated to the forces supporting the revolution but were not part of the coalition including the SPLM-N al Hilu.

Sudanese security authorities on Thursday (July 02) arrested a leading member of the former regime after search operations that lasted for several weeks. Anas Omer, a leading member of the disbanded National Congress Party and former East Darfur governor on 13 April 2020 vowed to topple the transitional government. The General Intelligence Service (GIS) said in a statement released on Thursday (July 02) that Omer was arrested in the Eastern Nile area of Khartoum state. The three arrested Islamists are interrogated in the GIS buildings before to undertake the other legal measures, added the statement.

Talks on the first filling of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) will resume within days, said Sudan's irrigation minister on Thursday (July 02). "The Sudanese negotiating team continues its preparations to resume negotiations on the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam over the next few days," Yasir Abbas told the official news agency SUNA. This time, the discussions will resume under the auspice of the African Union after the intervention of Cyril Ramaphosa South African President and AU chairman. Abbas said that the African Union is preparing a list of African experts, to join the talks as observers besides South Africa, the European Union, and the United States of America.

Sudan's Prime Minister is preparing to appoint the long-time awaited state governors during the few coming days as he requested the list of candidates made by the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) in the different regions. During the past months, Abdallah Hamdok delayed the appointment of state governors hoping that a peace agreement would be signed in Juba with the armed groups which persistently threatened to suspend their participation in the negotiations.

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***GERD is a development project, not a security threat, says Ambassador TayeAtske Selassie***

Ethiopia expressed dissatisfaction over Egypt's decision to take the GERD issue to the UN Security Council bypassing the African Union, sidestepping the DoP provisions on dispute settlement, and contravening art. 33 of the UN charter that calls for solving disputes first by resorting to regional agencies or arrangements.

Discussing the GERD issue in the Security Council "is bound to set a bad precedent and open a Pandora's box," Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the UN told the United Nations Security Council meeting that convened on Monday (June 29) to discuss the issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). "This Council should not be a forum for settling scores and for exerting diplomatic pressure," he said. "It is, therefore, regrettable that the Council has allowed itself to be politicized in this manner."



Recalling the recent Extraordinary meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly of the African Union that decided to entertain the tripartite talks, Ambassador Taye urged the Security Council to drop the case and allow the AU-led process to take its course.

Rejecting Egypt's accusation of Ethiopia for taking unilateralist actions concerning the building of the GERD, the ambassador reminded the Council of the most unilateralist decisions Egypt took in signing the 1959 agreement with the Sudan that apportioned the entire waters of the Nile between the two of them, with Egypt securing the lion's share, leaving nothing for Ethiopia although it was protested by Emperor Haillessillase I of Ethiopia. "In 1997, Egypt again took another unilateral decision and built the Toshka and Peace Canals, taking the Nile waters away from its natural course," he said adding that Ethiopia's repeated complaints over these projects since the mid-1950s fell on deaf ears.

He further illustrated how Ethiopians are economically and emotionally attached to the Dam and said the GERD is a development project and not a security threat as Egypt claims it to be. "If there is a security threat to be discussed, it has to do with the fact that there are millions of Ethiopians living under the poverty line," he said.

Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie also highlighted the unprecedented initiatives Ethiopia took to create an understanding with both Egypt and Sudan on the GERD. To illustrate his case, he cited the establishment of the International Panel of Experts (IPoE), and the Tripartite National Committee (TNC) to implement its recommendations and later the National Independent Scientific Research Group (NISRG) to formulate "different scenarios and the first filling and annual operation of the GERD." However, "All these initiatives failed to deliver the desired result because of Egyptian intransigence and its insistence on "historic rights and current use," the ambassador said, adding: "The reason why Egypt has been consistently engaged in scuttling the tripartite negotiation has more to do with its own internal domestic situation than anything else."

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

The Ambassador told the Council how Ethiopia has shown a great deal of flexibility in the tripartite process to build the necessary trust and confidence. "As a demonstration of its good faith gesture," he said, "Ethiopia agreed to fill the GERD reservoir from 4 to 7 years, although it could be filled in three



years without causing significant harm to Egypt and the Sudan.” “The three countries have already agreed on the initial filling of the Dam. Mother Nature is in agreement, too. This year is an opportune time to begin impounding water in the GERD reservoir,” he said citing the current season’s abundant flow of water to the Nile River tributaries and the Aswan Dam.

In concluding his speech, Ambassador Taye said: “Ethiopia believes any agreement must not in any way constrain its sovereign rights to future use and upstream development on the Blue Nile” and expressed his confidence that the tripartite will reach a cooperative agreement in the coming weeks under the AU-led process, adding “ ultimately, good-faith negotiation is the only avenue to bridge gaps and find a lasting resolution.”

You can access the full text containing the Ambassador’s speech here: <https://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/ethiopias-statement-at-the-united-nations-security-council-on-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam/>

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***The Bureau of the AU Assembly holds Extraordinary meeting on GERD***

Last week on Friday (June 26), the Bureau of the AU Assembly conducted an extraordinary meeting via a video-teleconference to discuss developments about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). A report from the Chairperson of the AUC, Moussa Faki Mahamat noted that more than 90% of the issues in the Tripartite Negotiations between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan have already been resolved. Leaders of the governments of Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt addressed the Bureau of the Assembly with regards to their respective positions pertaining to the GERD matter.

Tweeting right after the meeting, Prime Minister Abiy declared that the meeting was fruitful. “Our continental organization, with a Pan-African spirit, is the right space to dialogue on issues that are of value to Africa,” he said adding, “The GERD offers all stakeholders the opportunity for unprecedented economic growth and mutual development.” In a press statement issued by the Prime Minister Office of Ethiopia on the following day (June 27), the office announced that Ethiopia is scheduled to begin filling the GERD within the next two weeks, during which the remaining construction work would continue. “It is in this period,” says the statement, that “the three countries have agreed to reach a final agreement on few pending matters.”

In a communiqué issued about the meeting on Friday (June 26), the African Union urged Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt to expeditiously work towards finding a mutually acceptable and amicable solution on the outstanding technical and legal issues in the negotiations process. Welcoming the commitment of the three Parties to an AU-led process, “the Bureau of the Assembly agreed to augment the Tripartite Committee dealing with the GERD issue consisting of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan with the participation of observers, namely South Africa in its capacity as Chairperson of the AU, Members of the Bureau of the AU, and experts from the Commission, to address outstanding technical and legal issues.” According to the communiqué, the augmented Committee will present its report to the Chairperson of the AU, President Ramaphosa within a week from the issuance of the Communiqué (i.e. as of June 26).

The Bureau of the Assembly appreciated the three parties to the GERD talks for displaying positive and constructive approach in finding a peaceful, negotiated settlement on all outstanding matters, and further emphasized the importance of a win-win outcome, in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation. The Communiqué further states: “The Bureau of the Assembly welcomed the undertaking by the three Parties to refrain from making any statements, or taking any action that may jeopardize or complicate the AU-led process aimed at finding an acceptable solution on all outstanding matters.” Reaffirming the AU’s commitment to finding African solutions to African problems, the Bureau of the Assembly and participating Heads of State and Government requested the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to take note of the fact that the AU is seized of this matter.

The meeting was convened by President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa, and Chairperson of the African Union (AU) following the consultation he has held with the three Negotiating Parties concerning the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The meeting was attended by all of the members of the Bureau, the presidents of Congo, Egypt, Kenya, and Mali. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok of the Republic of Sudan, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Moussa Faki Mahamat also participated in the Meeting.

The Communiqué indicated that the Bureau of the Assembly and participating Heads of State and Government welcomed the intervention of President

Ramaphosa and expressed their deep gratitude for his initiative to bring together the three Parties to the GERD to find a negotiated solution on outstanding matters. The Communiqué further stated the Bureau of the Assembly and the participating Heads of State and Government agreed to reconvene in two weeks from the date of issuance of the Communiqué to consider a report on the outcome of negotiations of the outstanding issues concerning the GERD matter.

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***Ethiopia's Seventy-Five Years Journey in the United Nations***

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali wrote on his Facebook page on Sunday (June 28) an article regarding the 75 years journey of Ethiopia in the United Nations emphasizing that his country has been at the forefront in upholding a foreign policy based on multilateralism and collective security.

Recalling that Ethiopia was the only African nation represented in the League of Nations – the forerunner to the United Nations, the Premier further emphasized his country's role in the post-WWII period. He said: "At the end of the Second World War when world nations decided to form a body that ascertains world order and reconstruction, Ethiopia was prominently represented as a founding member of the United Nations, signing the UN Charter on June 26, 1945."

Despite changes in regimes in Ethiopia, Dr. Abiy said that the rulers have given due importance to the undertakings of the United Nations within the framework of protecting the national interest of the nation while promoting mutual benefits. "Ethiopia has been true to the spirit of common development by contributing all it can in tackling global challenges of our times that range from terrorism, climate change, migration, and underdevelopment," he added.

The Prime Minister has also discussed the prominent role Ethiopia has played in the maintenance of world peace and security. To illustrate his claim, he said that his country is one of the largest troop-contributing countries for the United Nations Peace Operations with more than 8000 blue helmet troops. "Commanding a disciplined and effective troop successfully serving in various missions in many parts of the world," he said, "Ethiopia also has a colorful record in deploying women peacekeeping officers as early as the 1950s."

The article also covers the key roles Ethiopia has been playing to safeguard the interests of African nations and other developing countries serving at different capacities in the United Nations. In this regard, he recalled that Ethiopia has served on three occasions as a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council representing the cause of Africa. “With a longstanding track record in promoting the interest of developing countries in the United Nations, Ethiopia is a seat for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa,” he added.

“With many African member states part of the United Nations today, Ethiopia is proud that we stand together with a common voice and in collective leadership in this fora, he said, adding, that the increasing transformation of the continent as a global player is sourced in speaking with one voice on various issues. He said: “The hallmark of Agenda 2063 is the African pledge to speak with one voice and act collectively in promoting its common interests in the international arena.” “Our membership in the United Nations as proud African countries gives us the impetus to act collectively and in a unified voice.”

REPORT THIS AD  
REPORT THIS AD

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***China Supports Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt to resolve differences through dialogue, says Minister of Foreign Affairs of China***

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Gedu Andargachew, and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi held a telephone conversation on Monday (June 29) to consult ways to further strengthen the relationship between Ethiopia and China.

During the conversation, Gedu appreciated the Chinese Government for organizing and successfully convening “The Extraordinary China-Africa Summit” and “Ministerial Level conference on Belt and Road International Cooperation” that called for solidarity to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minister Gedu further extended his gratitude to China’s unreserved support to Ethiopia’s fight against the Coronavirus and reaffirmed Ethiopia’s commitment to continue its collaboration with China in tackling the pandemic.

Gedu also briefed the Chinese counterpart regarding current circumstances surrounding the GERD issue.

He cited the extraordinary African Union (AU) Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State & Government video-teleconference meeting on the GERD where the leaders have affirmed to solve differences over the dam through an Africa-led process within the next two weeks.

Stating that the AU has decided to report to the UN Security Council that it has begun to look into the matter, minister Gedu requested China to support the decision to resolve the matter through the African Union.

Wang Yi for his part expressed his Government's commitment to supporting Africa, including Ethiopia, in mitigating the economic impact of COVID-19 as it has been well pledged on the Extraordinary Summit and Ministerial video-Conference.

He reaffirmed China's support to Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt to solve their differences over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam through dialogue.