

A Week in the Horn 20.11.2020

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**Africa and the African Union**

Ministers in charge of Gender and Women's Affairs are scheduled to convene today (November 27), to deliberate and adopt decisions on accelerating actions on gender equality and women's right on the continent. Gathering under the 5th Specialised Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (STC- GEWE), the Ministerial meeting is mandated to lead in the formulation of decisions, policies and African Common Positions; advocacy for the ratification, implementation and domestication of the African Union legal and policy instruments; advocacy at national, continental and global levels; fund raising in support of the African Union's gender agenda; advocacy for the protection, promotion and respect of women's human rights.

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) held a virtual meeting on the agenda "the Situation in the Horn of Africa: how best to support the transition in Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan" on 26 November 2020. The meeting was chaired by Ethiopia, Chair of the AUPSC for the month of November 2020, and attended by the AUPSC member states and invited speakers, including the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Chairperson of the Africa in Union High Level Implementations Panel (AUHIP) former President of South Africa, the UN Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Representatives of Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan, Representative of IGAD and the Ambassador of the European Union to the AU. (**See article**)

On Wednesday (November 25), UNAMID's Human Rights and Communications and Public Information Sections jointly with the United

Nations Country Team (UNCT) and Central Darfur State's Ministry of Health and Social Development, launched the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Zalingei, Central Darfur, under the local theme: "Justice, Freedom and Equality for All." In his message, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, urged the international community to work to end "the shadow pandemic of gender-based violence once and for all."

Africa CDC on Tuesday (November 24) announced that as of 22 November 2020, a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N8 outbreak in wild birds and poultry has been reported in 12 countries, mainly in Western Europe. The virus has been carried across from Southern Russia to Kazakhstan, and now Eastern Europe through migratory birds heading back to their winter feeding grounds primarily in Africa. As these are migratory birds, and even poultry flocks or products, coming into Africa from the affected regions could be carrying the virus, this poses a threat to poultry flock health, farmer livelihoods, and food security on the continent. And while this particular virus has not caused illness in humans to date, the likelihood of a spill-over event that could impact human health should not be ignored.

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA) co-organized a virtual Second Ministerial Forum, under the auspices of the South African 2020 Chairship of the African Union (AU), represented by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy on 24 November 2020. The aim of the Forum was to agree on and promote actions to ensure a sustainable economic recovery and scale up of energy investments in Africa over the next three years coinciding with end of the first 10-year Action Plan of the Agenda 2063.

In a statement issued on Tuesday (November 24) the UN Secretary-General said that he is deeply concerned over the unfolding situation in the Tigray region and its surrounding area. Amid reports of a potential military offensive into the regional capital of Mekelle, he urges the leaders of Ethiopia to do everything possible to protect civilians, uphold human rights and ensure humanitarian access for the provision of much-needed assistance.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on Sunday (November 22) handed over an assortment of IT equipment to the Somali Police Force (SPF) to help build the capacity of the National Election Security Taskforce for the upcoming national elections. The National Election Taskforce is the highest security organ tasked with securing Somalia's upcoming national elections. It is chaired by the Somali Police Force, with support from AMISOM Police.

Donated by the Danish government, the equipment comprised of multi-biometric scanners, high speed laptops, desktop computers and server racks.

## **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed received at his office this morning former President of Liberia Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, former President of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano, and former President of South Africa Kgalema Motlanthe – the designated Special Envoys of Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa and Chairperson of the African Union. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed expressed his profound gratitude to the African Union Chairperson, President Cyril Ramaphosa for the utmost concern and understanding shared in Ethiopia's efforts to end impunity and bring the TPLF criminal clique to justice.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Thursday (November 26) said the final phase of law enforcement operation has begun against the TPLF clique in Tigray Regional State hours after an ultimatum for Tigray forces to surrender expired. Abiy twitted that “the 72-hour period granted to the criminal TPLF clique to surrender peacefully is now over and our law enforcement campaign has reached its final stage.” Abiy noted that when the federal government issues the 72-hours surrender window, it had two objectives, one is to demonstrate the intention of the operation which is to enforce the rule of law per the laws of the land. The second goal was to provide protection for those that finally understand the criminality of the TPLF clique and distance themselves for the group, Abiy noted. He told civilians to stay at home, warning that a 72-hour deadline for Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) forces to put down their weapons had now passed. He said religious and historical sites, institutions and residential areas would not be targeted.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen, has been on a diplomatic tour in Europe to discuss the situation in Tigray and the government's law enforcement operation in the region. He also delivered Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's messages addressed to some leaders of State in Europe. Accordingly, he met with Emmanuel Macron, president of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium Sophie Wilmès , U.K. Foreign Secretary Dominique Rabb , AU High Representative and Vice-President Joseph Borrell and Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič, Belgium's Foreign Minister, Sophie Wilmes and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of

the Italian Republic, Luigi Di Mayo. The leaders have expressed interest to cooperate with the Ethiopian government on humanitarian issues. In related news, the Ethiopian government said on Thursday (November 26) that efforts are being made to return the internally displaced persons and the Ethiopian refugees in Sudan who fled their areas after the government started the law enforcement operation in Tigray earlier this month.

The Security Advisor of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Gedu Andargachew briefed on Wednesday (November 25) President of Somalia, Mohammed Abdullahi Mohammed Formajo on the government's law enforcement operation in Tigray. Gedu explained that the law enforcement operation in the Tigray Region is proceeding very well as planned and the Government of Ethiopia would soon give an end to the lawlessness of the TPLF Junta. President Mohammed Abdullahi Mohammed Formajo, to his part, assured Security Advisor Gedu that the Government of Somalia is fully behind the Government of Ethiopia. In related news, Gedu has also been in South Sudan over the same mission.

Major General Mohammad Tessema, Director-General of the FDRE Defense Force Indoctrination said on Tuesday (November 24) that the TPLF clique has been undertaking various preparations to repeat the massacre it committed in Mai-Kadra in the State's capital, Mekele city. The group is carrying out a special operation by some of its fighters disguised as members of the Eritrean military. This was made possible with millions of Eritrean military uniforms produced at the Almeda Textile factory in the city.

In related news, Ethiopian Federal Police Commission on Thursday (November 24) urged Ethiopians and members of the international community to be aware of the TPLF Junta's plan to repeat the Maikadra genocide in Mekelle city. The statement further said the TPLF junta has planned plan to slaughter non-Tigrayans living in Mekelle, strangle them, and loot and burn their property, including putting on uniforms of the Ethiopian Defense Forces and open fire on civilians. The TPLF junta envisaged to carry out the plan to finally implicate that the federal government has committed this heinous crime, the statement said. The statement finally urged all Ethiopians and the international community to be aware of the TPLF junta's plan and to give no currency to the group's propaganda.

Ethiopia and Indonesia held their first business and trade meeting via virtual platform organized by their respective embassies in Jakarta and Addis Ababa. Members of the diplomatic community including ambassadors of Ethiopia and

Indonesia, Dr. Admasu Tsegaye and Al Busyra Basnur, economic sector representatives and experts participated in the webinar which has been concluded on Friday (November 27). Meanwhile, the Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels organized a virtual event titled “Promoting Ethiopian Coffee in the Belgian and Luxembourg Markets” on Thursday (November 26). The event aimed to attract more Belgian and Luxembourg companies in the coffee sector to do business with Ethiopia and to highlight the importance of coffee as part of Ethiopian culture.

Cooperation between Ethiopia and Oman, which began diplomatic relations in 1995, has been widening into spheres of trade and investment, Omani Ambassador to Ethiopia Jassim bin Eid bin Abdullah Al-Saadi said on Tuesday (November 24). The consensus the governments of Ethiopia and Oman have reached to transform relation and their commitment for the implementation and success of this vision is the major reason for the enhancement of economic ties, Ambassador Jassim told The Ethiopian Herald. Noting the volume of trade exchange and flow of investment between the two countries have not reached at the desired level, the ambassador expressed optimism that there are a lot of opportunities to broaden the horizon of economic partnership.

Presidents of Ethiopia and China have pledged on Tuesday (November 24) to deepen the long-aged bilateral ties between the two countries for a fruitful shared future. President Sahlework Zewdie and Chinese President Xi Jinping exchanged congratulatory messages on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the commencement of the diplomatic relations between the two countries. President Sahlework said the past 50 years witnessed the deepening of the bilateral ties and the fruitful cooperation between Ethiopia and China based on close consultation and mutual political trust. President Xi Jinping on his part said over the past half-century, China-Ethiopia friendship has withstood the test of time and grown even stronger. The Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership established recently between the two countries has been evidenced by deepening mutual political trust, fruitful multifaceted cooperation, mutual understanding and support on issues bearing on each other’s core interests and major concerns, the president stated.

A Consortium of Ethiopian Diaspora Associations, comprising 12 regional and federal diaspora associations, was established on Saturday (November 21). According to Selamawit Dawit, Director General of Ethiopian Diaspora Agency, the agency has been pushing for the realization of the consortium. She reiterated that the agency has a strategy and is doing diligently to unite, connect and coordinate all Ethiopian diaspora associations here and around the world

so as to solidify the efforts of the diaspora to realize national objectives. (**See article**)

## **Eritrea**

Eight patients have been diagnosed positive for COVID-19 in tests carried out on Thursday (November 26) at the Quarantine Center in Adibara – Gash Barka Region. All the patients are nationals who returned from Sudan recently. On the other hand, four patients who were receiving medical treatment in hospitals in Gash Barka Region have recovered fully and have been released from these facilities. The total number of recovered patients to-date accordingly stands at 477. The total number of confirmed cases in the country to-date has risen to 566.

## **Kenya**

Kenya could face its worst locust invasion in mid-December after a cyclone that allows the pests to rapidly mature hit Somalia. This emerged even as an Agriculture ministry survey showed Samburu, Turkana, Laikipia, Isiolo, Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet were the hardest-hit by the first round of invasion earlier this year. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations said in an update on Tuesday (November 24) that Cyclone Gati struck Somalia last week, and this will hasten maturity of the swarms. The cyclone that formed in the Indian Ocean from Tuesday to Saturday caused rains along the Coast of northern Somalia, the driest part of the country.

## **Somalia**

The French government has pardoned the Somali government for \$ 306 million following an agreement reached in Mogadishu on Thursday (November 26). The agreement was signed in Mogadishu by the Minister of Finance of the Federal Government of Somalia Dr. Abdirahman Duale and the French Ambassador to Somalia and Kenya Aline Ménager. Dr. Abdirahman Duale Beileh, Somalia's Minister of Finance, spoke to the national media after the signing of the agreement and explained the importance of the agreement.

The new Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Government of Somalia Abdirazak Mohamed Abukar has been sworn in on Monday (November 25) as the newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. The swearing-in ceremony took place in Mogadishu and was attended by the speaker of the Somali

parliament Mohamed Mursal Sheikh Abdirahman and his first deputy Abdiweli Sheikh Ibrahim Mudey.

Somalia President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo has presented medals and certificates of honour to officials and staff who have helped the restoration of airspace management to the country. The President said the domestication of air navigation control was one way of ensuring the country's independence, governance and dignity. Somalia's airspace was controlled by the regional offices of the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) in Nairobi until 2018. ICAO had taken over after Somalia fell among warlords in early 90s, leaving a vacuum in its airspace controls.

The Prime Minister of Somalia Mohamed Hussein Roble and a delegation he was leading on Sunday (November 22) arrived in Baidoa, the current seat of Southwest State of Somalia. The delegation, which included the Somali Minister of Justice, members of the Prime Minister's Office, was welcomed at Baidoa's Shati-Gaduud Airport by the President of South West, the Speaker of Parliament, ministers and members of parliament and members of the public. Reports indicate that the purpose of the visit was to expedite the election process and security, and to hold meetings with leaders of the South West Administration and various sectors.

## **South Sudan**

The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) has hailed South Sudan government for recently adopting inclusive policies to enable the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees living in the neighboring countries. UNHCR, in a statement, said the resolutions adopted on Tuesday last week at the conclusion of the national dialogue largely focused on displacement solutions that will encourage IDPs and refugees to return to their homes and fully participate in nation-building process.

## **Sudan**

The head of Sudan's Sovereign Council Abdel Fattah al-Burhan on Thursday (November 27) voiced his support to the government negotiating position in the filling of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). Sudan has suspended its participation in the direct tripartite talks on the first filling of the GERD, calling for a new approach involving a mediation team made of African experts and international observers. Irrigation Minister Yasir Abbas who is also the head of the government negotiating team briefed al-Burhan on

the process which lasts for more than eight years. “Al-Burhan confirmed his support for the position taken by the negotiating team, calling for the Sudanese national interest to be the only reference for negotiations,” said a statement by the Sovereign Council after the meeting.

Sudan has declared three days of national mourning after former Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi died from Covid-19 complications. The Transitional Council of Ministers said on Thursday (November 26) flags will be lowered at all state facilities, institutions and Sudanese embassies as a sign of respect for al-Mahdi, the leader of the Umma Party. Al-Mahdi, 84, was the last democratically elected prime minister in Sudan before he was toppled in 1989 by a military coup led by Omar al-Bashir.

The French President, Emmanuel Macron, on Tuesday (November 24) has pledged to support peace process in Sudan for reaching comprehensive and durable peace. This came during a phone call between the French President and the Prime Minister, Dr Abdalla Hamdok, who expressed over the phone contact his pleasure over France’s voicing commends for what have been achieved in the peace file. The two sides tackled issue of the Renaissance Dam and affirmed necessity of reaching a just deal considering interests of the three countries- Sudan-Egypt and Ethiopia.

The Council of Ministers has ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) on Tuesday (November 24). The decision still needs to be approved by the Sovereign Council, the Forces for Freedom and Change and the armed rebel movements that signed the Juba peace agreement. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) came into force in December 2010.

Minister of Finance Abdirahman Duale Beileh on Wednesday (November 25) said the Somali Ministry of Finance is assisting its Sudanese counterpart in the international process of debt relief. In a video conference with Sudanese finance officials, the minister shared his experience of debt relief and the surrounding IMF terms. Beileh said Somalia was honoured to assist Sudan in the terms of the debt relief process, according to an IMF statement that Somalia should report to Sudan on its knowledge of the debt forgiveness process under IMF terms and the SMP process.

The Sudanese Ministry of Health reported on Wednesday (November 25) that 3,025 cases of coronavirus were recorded so far in November, which is the

highest infection rate reported since May. Dr Montasir Osman, Deputy Director of the Health Emergency and Epidemiology Department of the federal Ministry of Health, reported in a press briefing that Khartoum state registered 1,594 new COVID-19 cases, followed by El Gezira that reported 325 new coronavirus infections this month.

The Transitional Prime Minister, Dr. Abdalla Hamdoug and the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel reviewed in a telephone call, Monday, the situations of the Ethiopian refugees who crossed Sudan's borders. Dr. Hamdoug and the German Chancellor also discussed a number of regional issues including the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, where the two sides assured the necessity for reaching just agreement that maintains the interests of the three countries. The democratic transition in Sudan, was also discussed during the conversation.

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### ***Ethiopia and China commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relation***

Although records depict that the relations between Ethiopia and China dated back for centuries, the year 2020 is exactly half a century since the two countries have officially established diplomatic relations when their respective Ambassadors inked on 24 November 1970. Since then Ethiopia has been officially represented in China by an Embassy in Beijing and three Consulate General offices in Guangzhou, Chongqing and Shanghai; whereas the People's Republic of China is represented by its Embassy and a Permanent Mission to the AU in Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia and China somehow share a similar history in defending their sovereignty and independence from foreign aggression. The Chinese Communist Party demonstrated its solidarity with and support to the people of Ethiopia by standing against the Italian fascists invasion of Ethiopia in the 1930s and organising protests in several Chinese cities against the invasion. This will always remain a shining movement in the history of Ethio-China relations.

Moreover, after the establishment the People's Republic of China, Ethiopia along with 26 independent African States supported China to take its rightful place in the UNSC. Ethiopia upholds the territorial integrity and unity of China

and remained a strong supporter of one- China policy and the two systems and one Country policy regarding Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The relations and close partnerships between Ethiopia and China has been taking on new dimensions from time to time. Such relation is mainly characterized by frequent high-level visits to both sides. Emperor Haileselassie (1971), the Late Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Melese Zenawi (1995,2004,2011), H.E. President Dr. Mulatu Teshome (2004,2014,2017), Former Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn (2011,2014,2015,2017), Prime Minister H.E Dr. Abiy Ahmed (2018,2019) and many other Ethiopian Ministers visited the People's Republic of China at various times on different occasions. From the Chinese side: Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Chen Qichen (1994), President H.E. Mr. Jiang Zemin (1996), Premier of the State Council H.E. Mr. WenJiabao (2003), Vice Premier H.E. Mrs. Liu Yandong (2013), Premier H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang (2014), vice President H.E Mr. Li Yuan-Chao (2016), Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), H.E. Mr. Li Zhanshu (2018) and many other Ministers visited Ethiopia. The diplomatic relations of the two countries has significantly strengthened during the past decades and the year 2017 marks a major departure as the relation was elevated to new heights, the Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership (CSCP), declared by the two leaders, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia H.E Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn and President of China H.E Mr. Xi Jinping. The CSCP enables the two countries to enhance and develop a multifaceted cooperation across the board with growing strategic importance and their relations become stronger than ever.

Despite changes in the world over the past 50 years, the two countries relation has always been based on equality and mutual respect, assisted each other's exploration of development path favorable to its national conditions, understood and supported their respective core interests and major concerns and have jointly upheld multilateralism and fairness and justice.

Ethiopia and China have made major strides in the past decades. Not less than 70 bilateral agreements and MOU's have been signed between the two countries including: Agreement for Economic and Technological Cooperation, Trade Agreement, Economic and Technological Cooperation, agreement for Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investment, Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, MOU on Air service, Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for the Holders of Diplomatic and Service Passports and so on to mention a few.

Ethiopia and China have also been continuously deepening political mutual trust. In recent years, the leaders of the two countries have been engaging in frequent interactions. President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed have maintained close communication through two official meetings, multiple telephone calls, video conferences and correspondence. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed visited China during the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2018 and the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in 2019. Such frequent engagements at the highest level have contributed to strengthen the bilateral relationship.

As developing countries that have similar positions on tackling challenges in the globalized era such as climate change, poverty reduction, and regional conflicts, the two countries have always been in close communication and collaboration at the UN and other international organizations, and effectively safeguarded the shared interests of developing countries.

As it is clearly elaborated on Article titled as “Partners Working Together for Shared Prosperous Future” Co-authored by H.E Mr. Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and H.E Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, on the occasion of marking the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic ties between Ethiopia and China,

“In the past 50 years, the two countries have achieved fruitful results in cooperation across the board. China is Ethiopia’s largest trading partner, source of investment, and development partner. Ethiopian coffee and flower are widely popular in the Chinese market. Sesame import from Ethiopia accounts for over one-tenth of consumption in China, Chinese companies have put into operation or under construction over 1, 500 projects with a total investment exceeding 1.153 billion US dollars. Ethiopia is among the first African countries to sign Belt and Road cooperation agreement with China. The Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway is one of the flagship projects of the Belt and Road cooperation between China and Africa, Roads, airports, industrial zones, power facilities and other infrastructure built through the partnership have injected strong impetus into Ethiopia’s sustainable development. In 2019, with Chinese assistance, Ethiopia launched its first Remote Sensing Satellite (ETRSS-I) for earth observation, which unveiled a new chapter in the bilateral scientific and technological cooperation.

Moreover, Ethiopian Airlines has more air links with China than any other African airlines, which serves as an essential air bridge that facilitates people-to-people exchanges and cargo trade between China and Africa.”

It has to be recalled that the journey of Ethiopia and China for the last half a century was tested by many unprecedented challenges and dynamics. Recently, the relations of the two countries have stood the test of time of the unprecedented challenge due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In this regard, the two countries joined hands and coordinated closely in the battle of containing the spread of Covid-19. President Sahle-Work Zewde and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed sent letters of sympathies to president Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed also had a telephone call with President Xi Jinping to reaffirm Ethiopia’s strong solidarity and support to China’s efforts to fight against the pandemic. Ethiopian Airlines demonstrated its commitment by continuing all flights to and from China during the coronavirus outbreak and, has played its pivotal role in the transshipments of anti-Covid-19 supplies across Africa and the globe at large. The Chinese government at the central and local levels, as well as organizations from different sectors have delivered a large number of supplies to Ethiopia since the outbreak of this coronavirus. This confirms that Ethiopia and China have been and will continue to be all-weather friends.

Taking the opportunity of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic ties, the presidents of Ethiopia and China have vowed their commitment to work closely so as to further enhance historical friendship, bilateral exchanges and collaboration that harmoniously exist at all levels, as well as intensify and expand the mutual benefit between the two countries and peoples.

Therefore, this moment of commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and China avails an opportunity to celebrate their achievements so far and chart the future of their relations together for the mutual benefit of the two countries and people.

With the view of Ethiopia-China Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, we believe the future is indeed bright.

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***Making the operation in Tigray Short is Crucial***

The damage of any war is commonsense knowledge. This is more so in countries like Ethiopia, with fragile nation-state, and titanic challenges. Ethiopians very well know how war can make their lives near hell. It is a nation that much of its golden age was wasted under internal conflicts and foreign aggressions, east and west, north and south. Any living human under the age of 50 years in Ethiopia has on average experienced 5-8 full-fledged armed conflicts, not accounting for skirmishes and ethnic clashes, with sacrifices of at least one life from each family. Therefore, avoiding war is every family's daily prayer.

But avoiding war doesn't mean peace nor stability. Ethiopia's resolve for averting war has fell on deaf ears of the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF), which resisted any reform, inclusive leadership, and equality among people. What has been witnessed in the past two and half years in Ethiopia is the clamor for peace on the one hand, while the war has been waged on the central government, in overt and covert ways. Averting war requires all side commitment and genuine partnership.

If the country has to live and prosper peacefully, law enforcement is fundamental, whether on TPLF or any other group. On the other hand, the federal government's self-defense is an absolute and legitimate step. Besides, the conflict that is looming over Ethiopia is caused by the struggle between the intent for a disorderly house and preventing it. Ethiopians of all walks of life know well that there is no way the old days of TPLF would come back, under anyone's watch! The party should categorically be outlawed.

### *The Prelude*

April of 2018 was no ordinary month in Ethiopia. It brought the end of years of overt and covert opposition against the 27 years of administration, more so in the last four years of the regime. There were very few exceptions where people, particularly the youth have not taken their frustrations to the street. Despite the absence of a coordinated political struggle, there was an overwhelming consensus on the political and economic malaise of the ethnic politics in Ethiopia, the TPLF-led regime being at the center of the problem.

Decades-long secretive and manipulative administration by the minority government reached the apex, as the largest ethnic population were far from the power center. The end result was obvious: massive corruption, embezzlement, exclusion, rising inequality, high unemployment, that were

knocking on the doors of the lower segment of society. Despite an economic growth over the years, the widening inequality was alarmingly evident.

Many argue that the ethnic politics was not meant to bring change in the country but to serve as a divide and rule strategy of the minority regime. The three decade political administration effectively dismantled the Ethiopian nation-state, replacing it with a localization mindset, tribalization, exclusion, and segregation like no other.

In the TPLF's 27 years of admiration, the prices paid by Ethiopians remain unaccounted. Ethiopia's record of gross violation of human rights committed by the regime put the country as the most repressive regimes in Africa. The minority TPLF's secretive regime, killed, tortured, and disfigured who came in its way, not to mention those who left the country. The government's most malicious anti-corruption laws, press laws and terrorism laws served as tools for the persecution of citizens and groups who opposed the regime.

The regime's most brutal killings during the popular uprisings in the post-2005 election came under the spotlight of international human rights organizations. Ethiopia rose on the world map as the most repressive and dictator regimes, silencing every voice and agency. The country shattered the records on numbers of political prisoners and detained journalists, and young bloggers alike.

As the people of Ethiopia shed their blood and lives to peacefully topple the brutal regime in 2018, the TPLF's resistance to remain in power was an open secret.

The popular uprising as well as the party's internal struggle brought in Dr. Abiy, heralding the new dawn. There was an opportunity for civility and humility from the TPLF leadership. However, while the TPLF leadership had an opportunity to concede humbly, as their blessing in disguise, the course they chose was chaotic. It took no time to learn their choice for vengeance and disrupting the stability of Ethiopia. Their first plot to assassinate the prime minister in broad day light in the middle of the rally in June 2018 was ruthless, barbaric and cowardice.

It became all too obvious that the same oligarchs will be the sponsors of every cycle of ethnic conflicts around the country, day in day out, with the money they amassed and using the security database they compiled in their 27 years of repression.

Indeed, it looked that Ethiopia descended into a cycle of violence and ethnic war as the self-isolated TPLF leaders were masterminding and financing genocidal calls in Oromia, Southern Nations and Nationalities region, Somali, Beneshangul, Amhara regional states.

*The Daily Prayers of TPLF: Conspiracy, Hate, Disdain towards Ethiopians*

The true nature of the TPLF was never clear until it was effectively replaced by the new administration. While the other major coalition fronts like the OPDO and the ANDM reformed their orientation toward naming Oromo Democratic Party and Amhara Democratic Party, the TPLF stubbornly remained with its liberating name and mentality. This core power monger group resisted and boycotted the formation of an inclusive national party named Prosperity Party. They took the dissolution of their highly manipulated EPRDF as their death sentence. The TPLF leaders continued to resist to take the bitter pills for the cure against their tribal psychopathy.

Although the nature of TPLF was no new to observers, the last two and half years have exposed several pervert policy prescriptions and wishes to the Ethiopian populace. Their claim as champions of federalism and labeling the Abiy's administration as unitary is a laughing stock. Their dangerous and sinister motives have made them work with the most violent and radical groups who claim to be the vanguards of federalism, but who massacred people in broad daylight. This group's cry for the respect of the Constitution of the land is mind boggling, when they have violated every law of the country.

Every step of the way, Abiy Ahmed's administration has been the subject of its smear campaign. Many agree that the patience by the central government against these blemishes and defamation was extraordinary, perhaps causing the current day crisis. The pursuit of these warmongers was never done, leaving the self-isolated group for more damages. The group's deliberate undermining of the federal government was piling up hate, inciting suspicion and leading even to treasonous calls. Almost repeated now and then, these lies and propaganda had some resonance to some quarters of society.

What is wildly bizarre is the fact that the TPLF leaders have received the destabilizing forces of the country with open arms-the forces that they previously chased, tortured and incarcerated for years. What is even more intriguing is the group's deliberate and ominous motive for undermining and disrespecting federal laws that have the least political ramifications.

When the federal government was issuing precautionary measures to contain COVID 19 , TPLF was the first to delegitimize it and confuse the people. Based on the recommendations of health experts, postponement of the national and local election by the National Election Board, was rejected by the TPLF who violated all decisions related to it. They respected neither the House of Representatives nor the House of Federation, mocking and insulting the lawmakers.

By all counts, the TPLF leaders have denigrated into the most ludicrous trajectory, for reasons that are not clear to any sane mind. The group has declined all mediation efforts of local elders, while at the same time writing letters to several foreign leaders, as if they were a sovereign state. All boils down to the Front's disdain and disrespect for all Ethiopians other than themselves, implying that only TPLF should remain in power.

They took instability as the only guarantee to escape from the court of law. Stability implied that the government's attention would divert towards these oligarchs to justice for the crimes against humanity and massive corruption of the 27 years. So they were trying to avert any semblance of stable government and peaceful atmosphere, which meant that the prosecution would be real.

### *The Operation of Law Enforcement*

Law enforcement is not new to Ethiopia, nor to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Over the period of time the current government administered the country, there have been several occasions where the federal forces intervened, saved lives and averted large scale conflicts; after all law enforcement is the use of force for those who violate the law with intent and purpose.

No regime knows what law enforcement means more than the TPLF regime, who have taken hundreds of repressive measures under the guise of law enforcement in Ethiopia. No family remains unaffected by the highly interconnected police state in their effort to avert any chance of dissent.

The current law enforcement of the federal government is a long overdue action, creating suspicion over the government's will or capability. What is at stake in the current law enforcement is large, having far reaching implications. The government was dragged in the act as a result of the TPLF's attack on Defense forces and the Federal Police by the special forces of Tigray region, on November 4, 2020.

In the early hours of November 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) stationed in the Tigray Regional State were attacked by Special Forces organised by the TPLF with the intention to rob artillery and military equipment.

The first target of the attack, the Northern Command, has been stationed in the Tigray region for more than two decades safeguarding the people of Tigray from any threats. The TPLF forces also opened fire on the national army contingents stationed in Dansha, Amhara Regional State.

The attack was orchestrated by the TPLF at normal times, when the defense forces could never have speculated based on their past 20 years of close relationship with the region's people, as they were protecting the country's borders.

If any government doesn't take any law enforcement on forces that attack its defense forces, what more reason is there to act on? The most senseless attack on the innocent defense forces is clearly the highest of crimes, clearly being an attack on the nation.

All said, the current operation in Tigray by the National Defense forces is nothing but a response to the attack on national military installations, whose objective is to maintain law and order with the view of saving the country and the region from plunging into instability.

#### *What Ending the operation in Short Time Means*

In this undesired and unplanned law enforcement operation by the federal government, several precautions need to be taken. First and foremost, is the effort to give assurances for the people of Tigray, that the war is a self-defense against the treasonous and cowardly attack by the Tigray special forces, and no peaceful person should fear against being targeted. It should appear to all peaceful residents and ethnic Tigreans that the war is neither with them nor with the region.

All wishing to learn about the development of the conflict need to delve deeper in the relationship between the TPLF and the Tigrean people. It is public secret that while the leaders of the regime amassed wealth on the scale of most corrupt regimes in the world, the people of Tigray have remained in the same situation as the rest of the country. There is no question that the oligarchs of the TPLF regime have embezzled the resources that could have been used to

build schools for the poor or health centers. Therefore the war is nothing but a just war to empower the people of the region and liberate them from this tyranny.

Prime Minister Abiy's leadership will have to rise to the challenges of winning the war against the mafia group in short time and at minimal cost possible. There is no doubt that this will happen, but there are many reasons why ending the war should be short.

Over the three-week law enforcement operation, the tendency to label the operation war between two legitimate groups is looming. The TPLF leaders, in their desperate attempt to disinform the international community and the Ethiopian people say that the target of the operation is the people of Tigray, avoiding to take responsibility. Others allege the federal government punishing the Tigray region for challenging the former on the basis of their guardianship for federalism.

There is no doubt that this operation puts the country on the map of undesirable labelings if the operation does get prolonged. Besides, there will be pressure from the international community, particularly the donor community to stop the war, eventually with some measures. Abiy's government should be engaged in an effective diplomatic campaign targeting major international players. At the core of these diplomatic engagements should be exposing this psychopathic and criminal junta, who provoked the national defense forces, in its treasonous attack.

Clearly, it should be noted that all countries of the world, one way or another, pursue law enforcement with any criminal group within their sovereign territories, and safeguard their citizens from an evil act such as TPLF's.

On the grounds of the legitimacy of law enforcement, the moral of the army, the support of the people of Ethiopia, the federal government's conclusion of the war should be near and short. Perpetrators of the treason act should be brought to justice, even though they have forsaken millions of Ethiopians the right to a fair trial.

The days of TPLF are over, and it is not clear when does this criminal group realizes that it has no salvage for the Ethiopian people, north to south and east to west.

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## *African Union PSC discusses the Situation in the Horn of Africa: how best to support the transitions in Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan*

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) held a virtual meeting on the agenda “the Situation in the Horn of Africa: how best to support the transition in Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan” on 26 November 2020. The meeting was chaired by Ethiopia, Chair of the AUPSC for the month of November 2020, and attended by the AUPSC member states and invited speakers, including the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Chairperson of the African Union High Level Implementations Panel (AUHIP) former President of South Africa, the UN Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Representatives of Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan, Representative of IGAD and the Ambassador of the European Union to the AU.

The discussion was primarily focused on highlighting the trajectory of positive developments and transitions in the three countries in the Horn of Africa. This discourse stands in contrast to the stereotyped narrative of intractable conflicts as the defining feature of the sub-region. The countries discussed on were Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan, with their respective specific situations and hopeful prospects for sustainable peace, and their contribution to Silencing the Guns in Africa.

The meeting underscored, with appreciation, how much Somalia has come back from the complex situation that obtained in the country since 1991. This was achieved with the help of sub-regional, regional and global organizations as well as the international community at large. The deployment of AMISOM and the collaboration of the international community to sustain it for over a decade was mentioned as a landmark success. It was also stressed that the gains so far achieved should be protected in the anticipated reconfiguration and eventual exit of AMISOM.

The meeting appreciated the consensus reached by the Somalia political stakeholders on the election model and underlined the successful holding of the national elections in 2020 and 2021 as critical to sustain this positive trend. The meeting discussed the changes expected to happen with regard to AMISOM and emphasized the need to involve the African Union in conducting the Independent Assessment of this peace support operation. The threat of Al-shabab continues to pose a serious security challenge as the group’s methods are evolving in a sophisticated way to access technology,

weapons, and finance and other resources. The meeting highlighted that this threat requires a lot more concerted global action.

With regard to South Sudan, one of the youngest states in Africa, the meeting has expressed its appreciation for the steady progress in implementing the revitalized peace agreement, and commended the efforts of IGAD, AU the UN and the international community for their assistance to support South Sudan. The landmark Addis Ababa agreement signed on 12 September 2019, which led to the subsequent establishment of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGNU) and the unified national force, continues to make positive progress. The meeting expressed its confidence that this process would eventually secure sustainable peace and development for the people of South Sudan.

The Sudan, likewise, is passing through a massive political transition which has been shaped by the Sudanese political actors themselves, with the help of the African Union and IGAD, then chaired by Ethiopia.

In addition to the successful transition, the meeting has expressed its firm optimism that the Juba Peace Agreement signed between the transitional government of the Sudan and the armed movements on 3 October 2020, would give further momentum to peace in the country. The meeting reached consensus that sanctions of any kind imposed on the Sudan in the past should be removed for the success of the transition in the country.

The meeting appreciated and thanked Ethiopia for putting this timely item on the agenda of the AUPSC at this critical juncture for all the three country cases discussed. It also underlined that having discussions on such type of agenda would help create a better understanding of the Horn of Africa as a region of hope with huge potential for peace and prosperity.

It should be noted that the Peace and Security Council of African Union (AUPSC) is the standing decision-making organ of the African Union for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. It is a collective security and early warning arrangement intended to facilitate timely and efficient responses to conflict and crisis situations in Africa. Ethiopia was elected as a member of this Organ in February 2020 for a two years term.

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## *Establishment of Consortium of Ethiopian Diaspora Associations: A New Trend for Coordinated Effort*

Ethiopians living overseas are estimated to be over three million. They are spread almost all over the world. But the majority of the Ethiopian diaspora is believed to live in the Middle East, Africa, North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. In the United States of America, Ethiopians are the second largest African immigrant group after Nigerians. In that country alone there are quite a number of Ethiopian diaspora organizations of many sorts: community based, developmental, faith-based, professional and youth, to mention just a few. Either fully or partially this trend is replicated wherever Ethiopians live across the world. This shows that Ethiopians abroad have a tendency to come together by forming different kinds of associations.

When the Ethiopian diaspora come back home and start their lives in their country of origin, they follow the trend of organizing themselves again. Ethiopian Diaspora Association was founded some ten years back by returnee diaspora to promote their rights; to seek solutions to diaspora business and investment related problems; to give back to the society and share from their vast experience. As returnee diaspora spread all over the country for business and investment, they saw that forming regional diaspora associations was crucial to solve problems based on the existing condition of their locality. This brought about the number of Ethiopian diaspora associations over ten: associations in each regional state and the two city administrations.

Though the formation of diaspora associations in the regional states and city administration was a good move to solve problems in their localities, lack of coordination between and among the diaspora associations required the formation of a consortium or an umbrella organization. Considering the need of the diaspora associations to form such a forum for common good, Ethiopian Diaspora Agency along with the associations was doing its level best. After an effort that took over a year, Consortium of Ethiopian Diaspora Associations, comprising 12 regional and federal diaspora associations, was established on Nov 21, 2020.

On her opening remark at the ceremony, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, State Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, expressed her appreciation for what the diaspora has been doing to support national projects and their responsiveness for national calls. She called up on the diaspora to strengthen their power under the banner of the new umbrella organization. The

state minister also extended her thanks to Ethiopian Diaspora Agency which has been supporting the establishment of the consortium.

Selamawit Dawit, Director General of Ethiopian Diaspora Agency, on her part described what the agency has done over the last twelve months for the realization of the consortium. She reiterated that the agency has a strategy and is doing diligently to unite, connect and coordinate all Ethiopian diaspora associations here and around the world so as to solidify the efforts of the diaspora to realize national objectives. She also added the importance of unity at this juncture of time. After expressing her delight on the establishment of the consortium, she assured the consortium members that the agency will continue supporting them as usual.

The establishment of the consortium was concluded with the election of five executive and three evaluation and monitoring committee members.