

A Week in the Horn 06.11.2020

News in Brief

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Ethiopia Chairing African Union Peace and Security Council For the month of November 2020

Africa and the African Union

The World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Thursday (November 05) that the COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a heavy blow to key health services in Africa, including with births, vaccinations, and malaria treatment. This could potentially worsen some of the continent`s major health challenges.

As of November 03, the confirmed cases of Covid-19 from 55 African countries have reached 1,803,413. Reported deaths in Africa have reached 43,390 and recoveries 1,473,556. South Africa has the most reported cases – 727,595, with deaths numbering 19,465. Other most-affected countries include Morocco (225,070), Egypt (107,925) Ethiopia (96,942), Nigeria (63,036) and Libya (62,907). The numbers are compiled by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University using statistics from the World Health Organization and other international institutions as well national and regional public health departments.

The African Anti-Corruption Dialogue, held from 2-4 November, has concluded with recommendations to Member States of the African Union and stakeholders on tightening the noose on corruption. The meeting convened by the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption is a major annual platform that formulates recommendations and strategies to strengthen the fight against corruption in Africa. The outcomes are submitted to policy organs of the African Union and relevant stakeholders for adoption and implementation. With a rich participation drawn from representatives of African Union Member States, National Anti-Corruption Agencies, Judiciaries, Investigative and Prosecutorial bodies, Civil Society, Academia, development partners and other actors including the citizenry, the 2020 African Anti-Corruption

Dialogue focused on “Fighting Corruption through Effective and Efficient Judicial Systems.”

Dr Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure & Energy, spoke on Wednesday (November 04) at the opening session of 8th African Rift Geothermal Conference (ARGeo-C8) organized by the Government of the Republic of Kenya in collaboration with the African Union Commission, UNEP, Kenyan Electricity Generating Company (KenGen), Geothermal Development Company (GDC), the Geothermal Association of Kenya (GAK), Africa Energy Branch of the International Geothermal Association (IGA-ARB) and other relevant partners. The main objective of the ARGeo conference was to promote and support the geothermal development in the East Africa Region.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat strongly condemns on Tuesday (November 03), the killing of innocent civilians following inter-communal violence in Wollega, Guliso woreda in Ethiopia. The Chairperson extends his deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wishes speedy recovery to the wounded. He calls on national authorities to ensure that the perpetrators of these heinous crimes are found and held accountable. The Chairperson reaffirms the African Union’s support to the reforms initiated by the Government and stands ready to assist Ethiopia in its efforts to promote peace and stability in the country.

Ethiopia

Following the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) attacks on the Ethiopian National Defense Forces’ (ENDF) base located in Tigray region on the early hours of Wednesday (November 4, 2020), the ENDF has been ordered to carry out mission to save the country and the region from ensnaring into instability, the Office of the Prime Minister said in a statement. TPLF through the attacks attempted to rob the northern command’s artillery and military equipment, it added. Indicating that war cannot be prevented by a sole goodwill and decision of one side, but it requires a mutual choice for peace by both parties, the statement said that the last red line has been crossed with this morning’s attacks and the federal government is therefore forced into a military confrontation.

The Council of Ministers, in its 21st Extraordinary Session held on Wednesday (November 04), has decreed a six-month state of emergency in Tigray Regional State. According to a statement issued by the Office of the Prime Minister, the

Council has decreed the state of emergency in accordance with article 93(1) (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The article offers the power for the Council of Ministers to decree a state of emergency in case of external invasion, a breakdown of law and order which jeopardize constitutional order, natural disaster or an epidemic occurrence. Accordingly, the Council of Ministers has decreed the state of emergency to shoulder its constitutional responsibility of the state to maintain the country's peace, the safety and security of its citizens and to prevent acts that may lead the country to further unrest and instability, the statement said.

The *Ethiopian* National Defense Force (ENDF) said all necessary precautions were taken to ensure safety of civilians during an offensive attack carried out yesterday against the TPLF group. In a press conference issued on Thursday (November 05), General Berhanu Jula, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF), said the TPLF group has committed treason by attacking the defence army. Instead of resolving any political differences via political discussion, the TPLF group waged war against the North Command Post based in the Tigray regional state, he said. The defence army has been containing the attack successfully, the Deputy Chief of Staff said, and vowed to conclude the war soon as more troops are heading to the area to provide support to the North Command. General Berhanu said the people of Tigray regional state have demonstrated their commitment for peace by showing their support to the national defence army.

Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonen and Israeli Deputy Public Security Minister, Gadi Yevarkan on Wednesday (November 05) exchanged views on deepening bilateral relations between Ethiopia and Israel. Speaking at the occasion, Gadi Yevarkan said Israel supports Ethiopia's sweeping reform in all fields. His country is cooperating with Ethiopia in the area of culture and tourism as well as science and technology, Gadi added. Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen on his part said the Government of Ethiopia is committed to deepen the existing relations with Israel. Demeke appreciated the comprehensive support Israel is providing to Ethiopia, according to ENA.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has held phone conversation with Sudanese Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdoug on Wednesday (November 05) on the current situation in Tigray regional state. On the occasion, PM Abiy briefed his Sudanese counterpart about the activities being carried out to stabilize the situation and restore peace in the regional state. Prime Minister Hamdoug expressed his country's keenness on the stability in brotherly Ethiopia, as it constitutes stability for Sudan and the region. The two leaders have also agreed

to continue communication in light of the relations and ties between the two countries and the two brotherly peoples.

US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo expressed concern over reports that the Tigray People's Liberation Front carried out attacks on Ethiopian National Defense Force bases in Ethiopia's Tigray region. Secretary Pompeo also urged immediate action to restore the peace and de-escalate tensions. Meanwhile, in a statement he announced via his spokesperson on Thursday (November 04), Secretary General Antonio Guterres has renewed the commitment of the United Nations, with its partners in the region, to support the Government of Ethiopia in its reform efforts aimed at building a peaceful and secure future for all its people. The Secretary-General also called for solutions to address issues between the federal government and the Tigray Regional State in order to ensure a peaceful resolution to the dispute.

Sudanese Kassala state government has announced on Thursday (November 06) the closure of its border with Ethiopia. The Secretary of the Kassala state, Fateh al-Rahman al-Amin, announced the closure of the borders yesterday until further notice. The decision to close the borders comes due to the current situation in the Tigray regional state, northern part of Ethiopia. The Secretary said any individuals or groups will not be allowed to enter the state with weapons in their possession.

Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority has on Thursday (November 06) announced closure of Mekele, Shire, Axum and Humera Airports effective November 6, 2020. Accordingly, all Airmen have been notified through the proper communication channel via Notice to Airmen, NOTAM, the Authority said. The air space of the Tigray region has been closed for any flight as of November 4, 2020.

Strengthening public diplomatic efforts set the way for a successful accomplishment of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The remark was given by Dr. Aregawi Berhe, Director-General of the Office of the National Council for the Coordination and Public Participation to the Construction of the GERD. Speaking to the Media on Wednesday (November 04), he said that Ethiopia has exhibited its clear stances in building the hydro dam with a view to increasing access to electricity to over 60 million Ethiopians that have lacked power supply. New arrangements are underway to deploy public diplomacy actors to various African, European, Asian, Middle East countries, America and other peace loving bodies.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs has briefed the diplomatic community based in Addis Ababa on the current situation of Ethiopia on Wednesday (November 04). The Spokesperson of the Ministry, Ambassador Dina Mufti has briefed the diplomatic community and resident Ambassadors in Ethiopia about the current situations in the country. The briefing was accompanied by a question and answer session where the spokesperson has provided further details.

The Ministers of Water Affairs of the Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt held virtual trilateral meeting on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). According to the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy, observers and experts assigned by the Bureau of the AU Assembly attended the meeting which was held on Wednesday (November 04). The ministers were presented with the report of the country experts on the modality of the upcoming negotiations. The ministers also exchanged views on enhanced role of the AU experts and their Terms of Reference, the basic for the upcoming negotiations and time frame. Ethiopia made propositions to bridge the positions of the three countries. As the three countries failed to reach a complete agreement on the agenda items mentioned above, the three countries reached an understanding to resort to the Chairperson of the AU Executive Council and the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the South Africa to consult on the next steps of the negotiation and make their respective reports. The delegations of the three countries had participated in the virtual meetings between 27 October and 04 November 2020. What were the main points in the latest round of the negotiation over the GERD? (**See article**)

Chairman of Sudan's Transitional Sovereign Council, Lt Gen Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, on Tuesday (November 03) returned to Khartoum after concluding his official visit to Ethiopia. In his two-day stay, the Chairman visited industrial, agricultural and investment complexes in Ethiopia. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Lt Gen Al-Burhan also discussed bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest. (**See article**)

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) forecasted heavy rainfall in some parts of Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. According to IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Center, heavy rainfall is expected in south eastern Ethiopia, northern Kenya, and southern and northern parts of Somalia. Heavy rainfall between 100-200 mm, among the top 5 percent on record, is expected in northern Kenya, south-eastern Ethiopia, and southern and northern Somalia, the forecast stated, adding that a small area in south-western Somalia is expected to receive more than 200 mm, among the top 1 percent on record.

The attack against civilians in west Wollega zone was committed by the rebel group OLF-Shene with the help of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Oromia Police Commission confirmed on Tuesday (November 03). Commissioner General Ararsa Merdassa, told journalists today that 34 people were killed in the attack and 11 others also went missing. A school and 50-60 houses were burned by the rebel group. He said those who were arrested after the attack admitted that they had been receiving TPLF-sponsored training by traveling continuously to Mekelle, Tigray regional state. The rebel group had been using Dimtsi Weyane (DW) and Oromia Media Network (OMN) to instigate attacks on civilians, which according to him is a justification for the link between the OLF-Shene and TPLF.

Members of the House of Peoples Representatives have forwarded request to get armed groups such as Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) labeled as terrorist Organizations. Members of the parliament have attributed their request to the killing of innocent civilians by armed groups they have dubbed terrorists including TPLF. The house put the recent horrendous killings in Wollega that have left dozens dead and hundred others displaced as a prior discussion points. The House of Peoples' Representatives is holding its 6th year 2nd regular session, and is expected to pass various decisions.

Ethiopia has already assumed chairmanship of the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) that will run throughout the month of November 2020. The program of work for the month that envisages several sessions, including those focusing on country/region specific issues, and those dealing with thematic issues have been jointly developed by the Foreign Ministry of Ethiopia and the AUPSC Secretariat and finally approved by member states of the Council. (**See article**)

Eritrea

Four patients have been diagnosed positive for COVID-19 in tests carried out on Thursday (November 05) at Quarantine Centers in Adibara (2), and, Shambuqo (2) in Gash Barka Region. All the patients are nationals who returned from Sudan and Ethiopia recently. On the other hand, three patients who were receiving medical treatment in hospitals in the Gash Barka Region have recovered fully and have been released from these facilities. The total number of recovered patients to-date accordingly stands at 429. The total number of confirmed cases in the country to-date has risen to 484.

Djibouti

A delegation led by Mahmoud Ali Youssef, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti has arrived in Addis Ababa on Tuesday (November 03). Gedu Andargachew, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia accorded a warm welcome to the delegation at Bole International Airport.

Kenya

A new generation of immature swarms could move to Northeast Kenya in early December, UN-food agency FAO has said. The Food and Agriculture Organization says desert locust watch shows immature swarms are expected to move South and threaten Ethiopia, Somalia and Northeast Kenya. The Monday (November 02) update indicated that the epicentre of the locust invasion is shifting to eastern Ethiopia and Somalia.

Somalia

Turkey has granted nearly \$3.4 million to Somalia's debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as part of an initiative the fund kicked off earlier this year to relieve the heavy debts of low-income countries. According to an International Agreement issued on Thursday (November 05) on the Official Gazette, Turkey contributed some \$3.4 million to Somalia for the IMF's Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. The amount Turkey granted to Somalia's debt relief corresponds to 2,372,189 of special drawing right (SDRs). SDRs, based on dollars, euro, yen, sterling and yuan, are the IMF's official unit of exchange. Member countries hold them at the fund in proportion to their shareholdings.

The Galmudug state of Somalia on Wednesday (November 04) has signed an agreement with Oriental Company a consortium of three Turkish, British and Somali companies to build Hobyo Port. The agreement was signed by Galmudug Minister of Ports and Fisheries Abdisabir Nur Shurie, while Oriental was represented by Crom LTD, Hobyo Investment LTD, and Indian Ocean Holding LTD. The signing ceremony was also attended by Holman Fenwick Willan (HFW), a UK-based maritime law firm that advises on Galmudug State law.

Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Mohamed Hussein Roble on Tuesday (November 03) presided a key cabinet meeting which will focus

on national security, elections ahead and enhancing economic and debt relief and other pressing issues in Mogadishu. The cabinet is expected to draft and produce its program for the next one hundred days.

Several Somali legislators, government officials, youth participants, and aspiring Parliamentarians on Monday (November 02) joined Women's groups and Human Rights activists to discuss ways to increase the participation of women in politics and securing the 30 percent women's quota in Somalia's upcoming national elections. Organized by the Political Affairs Unit of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the forum in Mogadishu discussed the barriers women face in political participation and how to overcome them, and the proposed laws on women's rights that are before the House of the People of the Federal Government of Somalia.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has concluded a two-day training (28-29 October) on International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights and Gender for AMISOM, Somalia National Army (SNA) and Jubbaland forces. The training in Kismayo, the administrative capital of Jubbaland State, was to sensitise AMISOM and Somali troops on how to integrate issues of Humanitarian Law, Human Rights and Gender into joint operations. The training covered security sector reform, conflict-related sexual violence, Human Rights Law, gender mainstreaming, civil-military cooperation, among topics.

South Sudan

South Sudan's President Salva Kiir has urged the governor of the Central Bank, Dier Tong Ngor to steer efforts aimed at stabilizing market prices in the country. The South Sudanese leader made the remarks during the swearing-in ceremony for the new governor in Juba on Wednesday (November 06). "It is upon all of us to work collectively as a team to recover the economy that has been affected by the external factors," said Kiir.

The United States embassy in Juba has joined the United Nations and international community in condemning the recent killings of humanitarian aid workers in South Sudan. The embassy, in a statement on Wednesday calls upon authorities and communities at all levels to guarantee the safety and security of aid workers, humanitarian assets, and all people who access humanitarian services. In the past week alone, the UN said, two separate attacks in South Sudan's Jonglei State resulted in the deaths of two aid workers and injuries to three staff.

The water ministers of Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia failed to reach an understanding on the role that the observers and experts can play in the talks over the filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The Sudanese Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources said in a statement on Wednesday (November 04) night that the three riparian countries “failed to make any tangible progress on the role that experts can play in the negotiation, methodology, tracks and its timetable”. During the latest round of virtual discussions hosted in Khartoum from 27 October to 4 November, the Sudanese delegation presented a detailed proposal on giving a greater role to the African Union experts to narrow the gaps between the three parties and propose compromises. Ethiopia agreed to “maximizing the role of the African Union experts and presented a proposal similar to the one of Sudan, but Egypt objected to the (Sudanese) proposal and made proposed continuing negotiations through previous methods,” said the statement.

The Kenyan special envoy to South Sudan, Kalonzo Musyoka has urged South Sudanese politicians to work together for the sake of peace and development. Speaking during the national dialogue conference in Juba on Tuesday (November 03), the ex-Kenyan Vice President said the young nation had room to learn lessons and experiences from established nations.

Steps taken by South Sudan’s army to bring perpetrators of rape to justice underscores governance commitment to zero tolerance, a top United Nations official said. In a statement issued Monday (November 02), Pramila Patten, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, welcomed courts martial verdicts which resulted in rape convictions for 13 members of the South Sudanese army (SSPDF). The military trials, held in Yei River County and the convictions last month, were part of a process that saw 26 soldiers sentenced for killing, looting and other offenses committed in 2019 and 2020.

The African Development Bank (AfDB), has provided \$200,000 for people affected by the floods in South Sudan. In a statement, Meshack Malo, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Representative for South Sudan said on Saturday (October 31), AfDB’s donation is crucial to allow tens of thousands of people displaced by floods to procure their own food and avoid the spectrum of hunger.

Sudan

Sudanese Kassala state government has announced on Friday (November 06) the closure of its border with Ethiopia. The Secretary of the Kassala state, Fateh al-Rahman al-Amin, announced the closure of the borders yesterday until further notice. The decision to close the borders comes due to the current situation in the Tigray regional state, northern part of Ethiopia. The Secretary said any individuals or groups will not be allowed to enter the state with weapons in their possession.

The head of Sudan's Sovereign Council and the Ethiopian Prime Minister discussed bilateral relations particularly the border and regional issues, said the Sudanese foreign minister after their return to Khartoum on Tuesday (November 03). Abdel Fattah al-Burhan was in a two-day visit to Ethiopia for talks on bilateral relations with Abiy Ahmed who invited him to visit his country. Upon his return to Khartoum, the acting Foreign Minister Omer Gamar Eldin who accompanied him told reporters that the visit was successful and achieved its goals. The two sides stressed "the importance of cooperation and coordination on border, development and regional security issues," said Gamar Eldin. They also "reaffirmed the strong historical relationship between the two countries and agreed on the need to consolidate and develop it in the interest of the two peoples," he added.

The Joint Technical Committee for the Demarcation of the Border between Sudan and South Sudan resumed meetings in Juba under the auspices of the African Union on Tuesday (November 03). Claimed and disputed areas of the Sudan and South Sudan border include Joudat Al-Fakhar, Jebel al-Migainais, Kaka, Kafia Kingi enclave (Hofrat al-Nahas), and the 14-Mile area which is the most difficult one. The head of the National Border Commission, Muaz Tango, stated that the discussions between the two sides would be until 10 November in Juba and then would move on 12 November to Khartoum.

UNAMID's Governance and Community Stabilization Section, in partnership with Dar Elsalam Development Association (DDA), conducted a sensitization training session on Tuesday (November 03) on prevention of COVID-19 for 30 volunteers from Camps for Internally Displaced Persons in Shangil Tobaya, North Darfur. These efforts are part of the Mission's overall response to support the host community in combating the spread of COVID-19.

The U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo revealed that Washington is working with members of the United Security Council (UNSC) towards lifting long-

standing sanctions imposed on Sudan. In a statement released on Monday (November 02) Pompeo explained the reasons behind the renewal of national emergency with respect to Sudan by President Donald Trump. “This notice maintains certain Sudan-related authorities, which the United States relies on to implement our sanctions obligations under UN Security Council resolutions related to the conflict in Darfur,” the top U.S. diplomat said.

Sudan Chief Justice, Nemat Abdallah Khair, on Monday (November 02) dismantled the notorious public order courts that sentenced women to be publically flogged for dressing “indecently”. The decision comes one year after the repeal of the Public Order laws that curtailed women rights and legalized violence against women for 30 years.

Sudanese and Egyptian armies’ chiefs of staff held talks in Khartoum on military cooperation between the two countries, including border security and military industries. The Egyptian chief of staff, Mohamed Farid, arrived in a two-day visit in Khartoum on Saturday heading a military delegation including the main commanders of the Egyptian army. The military spokesman of the Egyptian army, the meeting came in implementation of what was recently agreed by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on the development of military and security cooperation.

The trilateral negotiations on the GERD: recent developments

On 27 October 2020, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Water Affairs of Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan were convened by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the AU Executive Council to deliberate on the resumption of the negotiation on the GERD. Based on the understanding reached in this six-party meeting, the delegations of the three countries held virtual meetings between 27 October and 04 November 2020.

The agenda of the meetings was the plan of work for the upcoming negotiations. Accordingly, the discussions focused on the document that will be the basis for the upcoming negotiation and role of the AU assigned experts. The matter is discussed between ministers of water affairs and at the level of experts.

The deliberation in a small group of experts and the level of ministers allowed an exchange of views among the three countries. Ethiopia has made the utmost effort to reconcile the positions reflected and move the process forward. Regarding the modality of the negotiations, intending to find African solutions to Africa's problems Ethiopia and Sudan converged on enhancing the role of the AU experts. This is in line with the communiqués that were issued in June and July 2020 on the GERD, and facilitates the process and help the countries reach an amicable solution. It also preserves the ownership and leadership of the process by the three parties. However, this proposal did not get the support of Egypt.

On the matter of the text to be used for the upcoming negotiation while Ethiopia and Egypt believe the latest working document from August 28 could be the basis for upcoming negotiations, Sudan argued that the three countries must first agree on the modality of the next negotiation before deciding which text to use.

On the issue of time frame, Ethiopia proposed a two-phased approach to the negotiation process. The first phase will encompass a negotiated outcome on the filling of the Dam that should be concluded in the coming two months. The second phase to be concluded in the next three to five years will prepare a comprehensive agreement on the operation of reservoirs and the utilization of water. This proposition is considerate of the Declaration of Principles, concerns of the negotiating parties, and the deliberations among the heads of states and governments during the meeting of the Bureau of the AU Assembly on the GERD. Furthermore, the approach best addresses the unique context of the basin and preexisting factors that impeded progress in the negotiation.

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Eventually, understanding is reached to resort to the Chairperson of the AU Executive Council and the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa to consult on the next steps of the negotiation and make their respective reports.

In these meetings, Ethiopia has reiterated its firm commitment to the AU-led process and appreciated the efforts of the Republic of South Africa and the African Union Commission in guiding and following up the tripartite negotiation process. Ethiopia made it clear that the AU led process is the best platform for the three African countries to reach a negotiated outcome. Ethiopia further underlined that its position to continue the negotiation is a manifestation of its utmost commitment to negotiation and the success of the

AU led process. This position remains indefatigable to the statements or remarks that undermine the AU process, no matter who might be responsible for them.

Sudan`s General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan`s Visit to Ethiopia: Cementing relations of the two brotherly peoples

Ethiopia and Sudan as neighboring countries have a long history of relations. They have been together both in good and bad times. Above all the people to people relations between the two countries is long standing and survived many challenges. Sharing a long border, people, culture, religion, natural resources and of course common destiny of achieving the needs and aspirations of their people.

On 1 November 2020, H.E. Lt.General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, Chairman of the Sovereign Council of the Republic of the Sudan was in Ethiopia for a two day working visit. Upon arrival at Bole International Airport, Lt.General Al-Burhan was accorded with a warm welcome and received by H.E. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and high level government officials.

The two have exchanged views on how to enhance and strengthen the bilateral relations of the two sisterly countries, enhance people to people relations and work in enhancing infrastructures in the two countries for the benefit of their brotherly peoples.

As countries of the Nile River, Ethiopia and Sudan have common objectives and interests regarding the utilization and management of the River. In fact, the completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and its operation will be in the best interest of the Sudan. Sudan will benefit from the Dam among others to expand its irrigation, uplift its energy production, halt flooding, ensure regulated water flow and minimize water pumping costs, extend the life of dams and substantially reduce the cost of dredging of canals and maintenance costs of turbines as a result of reduced siltation.

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In his stay in Ethiopia, Lt. Geberal Al-Burhan also visited a number of development projects in Ethiopia including the Eastern Industrial Zone in Dukem, Adama Industrial Park, Adam city where the Abba Gadas blessed the

visitor and accorded him with a gift of a horse and an armor and also visited the Joytech Seedlings Nursery in Bishoftu town.

Ethiopia Chairing African Union Peace and Security Council For the month of November 2020

Ethiopia has already assumed chairmanship of the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) that will run throughout the month of November 2020. The program of work for the month that envisages several sessions, including those focusing on country/region-specific issues, and those dealing with thematic issues have been jointly developed by the Foreign Ministry of Ethiopia and the AUPSC Secretariat and finally approved by member states of the Council.

Informal consultation between the chairs of the month of November 2020 of the AUPSC and the UNSC has been graciously facilitated by the UN Office to the African Union. The purpose of the consultation was to create a better understanding and synergy between the two Councils when dealing with African issues.

The situation in Libya, the situation in Abyei, how best to support transitions in the Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia are the country situations to be considered by the AUPSC in the course of the month. The AUPSC is scheduled to hear briefings from the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to consider and understand better the nexus between conflict and issues of governance.

The open session on 12 November 2020 will be dedicated to the theme of “Youth, Peace and Security”, specifically focusing on “advancing youth roles and capacities for silencing the guns in Africa” which is in line with the African Union theme for the year 2020. The session is expected to take briefings on activities undertaken within the framework of the Youth, Peace and Security including on issues related to advocacy and mobilization of the youth with regard to the theme of the year.

This will be followed by another thematic discussion on 17 November 2020, which will be discussing the status of implementation of the “AU Master Roadmap for Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020” together with the “AU Theme of the Year 2020-SilencingtheGunsinAfrica:

Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development”. This important session is expected to provide a platform to review the implementation of activities relating to the theme of the year. It may also reflect on the possible revision of the “AU Master Roadmap for Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020” as the year is coming to an end very soon. Eventually, the outcome of these deliberations would likely feed into the preparations for the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union which will be dedicated to the theme of the year and scheduled to be convened in December 2020.

The protection of children in conflict situations in Africa will be discussed on 19 November 2020. This session is expected to highlight the vulnerability of children in conflict, which is inevitably compounded by the COVID-19 and other humanitarian emergencies.

The last PSC session during Ethiopia’s Chairmanship of the month will be dedicated to the discussion on the transitions in the Horn of Africa, with a specific focus on how best to support the transitions in Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan. This meeting is envisaged to create a better synergy of stakeholders and partners in supporting the transitions with a view to maintaining the positive momentum in the Horn of Africa.

It should be noted that the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AUPSC) is the standing decision-making organ of the African Union for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. It is 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.