



A Week in the Horn

12.04.2024

Strengthening Ethiopia-Japan Relations: A Multifaceted Approach

Efforts for the Dignified Repatriation of Nationals in Saudi

Ethiopia-Kenya Trade and Investment Forum Held in Nairobi

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and First Lady Zinash Tayachew paid a two-day (Saturday (April 06) – Sunday (April 07)) official visit to Kigali, Rwanda and conferred with President Paul Kagame and First Lady Jeanette Kagame on ways of further enhancing multifaceted diplomatic ties.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie on Monday (April 08) conferred at his office with Dutch counterpart Hanke Bruins Slot on ways of further strengthening cooperation between Ethiopia and The Netherlands, especially in the areas of trade, investment and development cooperation. They also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

In an interview that appeared in Ethiopian News Agency on Sunday (April 07), Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, Gebremeskel Chala disclosed that, Ethiopia will hold its pivotal fifth-round World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in a bid to expedite the accession process. According to Gebremeskel, the meeting is scheduled for next month.

A high-level Ethiopian delegation led by State Minister of Resources and Services of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, on Sunday (April 07) met with Saudi authorities led by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Al-Yousef, in Riyadh and exchanged views on ways of repatriating undocumented Ethiopian migrants from Saudi Arabia and enhancing the bilateral relations of the two countries.

On Tuesday (April 09), Ethiopia and Japan held their inaugural political consultation session in Tokyo. The session co-chaired by by State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Mesganu Arga, and Japanese Parliamentary Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kiyoto Tsuji. The deliberations, among others, facilitated a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and constructive dialogue on various regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern. The PC was lauded as a pivotal step in deepening the bond between the two countries, paving the way for enhanced collaboration and mutual prosperity in the years to come (**See Article**).

“Startup Ethiopia Exhibition” officially opened on Monday morning (April 09) at the Science Museum in the presence of high-level government officials including Labor and Skill Minister Muferihat Kamil, Minister of Industry Melaku Alebel, Innovation and Technology Minister Belete Mola and others. Speaking during the opening ceremony of the Exhibition at the Science Museum in Addis Ababa on Monday (April 09), State Minister of Finance Eyob Tekalegn said, the Government is increasingly seeking to broaden startup ecosystems and encourage innovation in the country.

The Asian African Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized the 6th *Global Business Leadership Forum* in Mumbai, India on Saturday (April 6). On the occasion Ethiopian Ambassador to India, Demeke Atnafu, addressed the participants and highlighted the ample investment opportunities in Ethiopia in priority sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, mining, ITC, and tourism.

The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) on Thursday (April 11) released its inaugural *Financial Stability Report (2023)* that is geared towards addressing risks and promoting financial stability in the country Ethiopia by examining progress and challenges in the country’s economy and in the financial sector in particular during the post-COVID-19 recovery phase. NBE is tasked with the prime responsibility of upholding a sound financial system in Ethiopia to continuously mitigate potential vulnerabilities and ensure macroeconomic and financial stability.

Djibouti

38 Ethiopian migrants *en route* to Yemen from Djibouti died after a boat transporting them capsized off the coastal town of Obock.

Eritrea

President Isaias Afwerki on Sunday (April 07) met with Chinese Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Xue Bing at the Denden Guest House and discussed bilateral ties as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest including peace and security.

Kenya

President William Ruto and First Lady Rachel Ruto over the weekend paid a 24-hour visit to the Central African Republic (CAR). During the short trip to the Capital Bangui, President Ruto conferred with his counterpart Faustin Archange Touadera on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest. Ruto is the first Kenyan President to have ever visited the Great Lakes country.

Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Musalia Mudavadi on Monday (April 08) received and held discussions with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Ahmed Attaf, who was an official visit to Nairobi. They discussed further deepening cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, tourism, energy, and education for mutual benefit.

French Minister of European and Foreign Affairs, Stéphane Séjourné, on Saturday (April 06) visited Nairobi, in his maiden trip to Africa to discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the East African country. During his visit, he met with PCS and CS Musalia Mudavadi and during a joint press conference afterwards, FM Séjourné told the media corps, his country is interest “to renew and build balanced, mutually respectful partnerships with African countries, for the benefit of all countries.”

Somalia

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) in its first quarter report released on Wednesday (April 10) raised alarm on rise of maritime piracy of the coast of Somalia. The Q1 report indicated that there is a continued threat of Somali piracy incidents with 33 reported so far to the Bureau. These incidents were attributed to Somali pirates who demonstrate mounting capabilities, targeting vessels at great distances, from the Somali coast, the report read.

Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre on Sunday (April 06) announced a cabinet reshuffle within the administration including the filling of some dockets that had remained vacant for a while due to several reasons. Accordingly, PM Barre appointed Ambassador Ahmed Moallim Fiqi as Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ali Yusuf Ali Hoosh as Minister of Internal Affairs, and Gen. Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail Faratag in charge of Security, among others.

South Sudan

President Salva Kiir Mayardit on Monday (April 08) held a meeting with the newly appointed IGAD Special Envoy to Sudan, Lawrence Korbandy, and discussed the peace and security situation in the Sudan.

Chairperson of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), Peter Gatwech Kulang, on Monday (April 08) launched the National Humanitarian Coordination Operation Center to streamline humanitarian response and provide disaster risk information.

Africa and the African Union

The African Union Commission (AUC) through the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) and in collaboration with the Rwandan Embassy in Ethiopia observed the 30th Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda (Kwibuka30) under the theme “Remember-Unite-Renew” at the AU Headquarters on Sunday (April 07).

Strengthening Ethiopia-Japan Relations: A Multifaceted Approach

In a significant milestone for diplomatic relations, Ethiopia and Japan convened their inaugural political consultation on April 9, 2024, in Tokyo. The meeting was co-chaired by State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Mesganu Arga and Japanese counterpart and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kiyoto Tsuji.

After the opening remarks by the co-chairs, participants engaged in a robust exchange of views, delving into the domestic landscapes of both nations and exploring avenues to strengthen bilateral ties. Discussions encompassed diplomatic and economic relations, as well as broader Japan-Africa relations.

Ambassador Mesganu underscored Ethiopia's profound commitment to nurturing its relationship with Japan, highlighting the pivotal role of platforms like political consultations in bolstering bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Emphasizing the importance of seizing available opportunities, he advocated for the enhancement of trade and investment links, recognizing the mutual benefits such collaboration could yield.

State Minister Tsuji echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the economic dimension of Ethiopia and Japan's bilateral relations. Stressing Japan's aspiration for a more robust partnership with Ethiopia, he underscored the indispensable role of a stable Ethiopia in the broader African context.

The deliberations also saw a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and constructive dialogue on a broad range of regional, global and multilateral issues of mutual interest and concern. The meeting concluded on a positive note, with

both sides reaffirming their commitment to strengthening the longstanding ties and cooperation between Ethiopia and Japan.

Reflecting on their historical ties, dating back to milestones like the signing of the *Treaty of Amity and Commerce* in 1930, marked by Emperor Haile Selassie's visit to Japan, Ethiopia and Japan highlighted the enduring friendship between the two nations. Japan's invaluable support in various sectors, including infrastructure and healthcare, has solidified the bilateral relations, further strengthened by the establishment of the Ethiopian Embassy in Tokyo in 1956.

The Consultation reiterated both parties' commitment to fostering mutual prosperity and peace, exemplified by fruitful discussions during Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali's visit to Japan for *The Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development* (TICAD7) Summit. The recent visit of the former Foreign Affairs Minister of Japan, Yoshimasa Hayashi, to Ethiopia underscored the ongoing momentum in bilateral relations, signaling mutual dedication to advancing the partnership.

The Ethiopia-Japan Political Consultation laid the groundwork for continued cooperation and collaboration, underscoring the enduring friendship and shared goals between the two countries. Both Ethiopia and Japan emerged as strategic partners, collaborating on regional and international issues of mutual interest, particularly on platforms like the United Nations.

The Consultation also showcased their commitment to fortifying bilateral and multilateral engagements. Discussions centered on enhancing the partnership between Ethiopia and Japan, spanning political, security, economic, and socio-cultural aspects while fostering deeper people-to-people connections.

The enduring relationship, highlighted by the *Exchange of Notes* signed in November 1971, encompasses various forms of development assistance. Ethiopia expressed gratitude for Japan's support, particularly in critical areas such as agricultural and rural development. In this regard, the Ethiopian side reiterated its call for increased development aid and adoption of programmatic approaches to bolster predictability and foster greater national ownership. Ethiopia also further advocated for aligning its *10-Year Economic Plan* (2020-2030) with Japan's *Development Cooperation Charter* to facilitate mutual economic diversification.

The diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Japan signify a partnership built on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared values, contributing to peace, stability, and prosperity in both countries and beyond. In light of this, Ethiopia reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening its partnership with Japan, emphasizing the need for UN Security Council reform to better represent African interests. The Ethiopian side briefed latest developments regarding the progress of implementation of the

Pretoria Peace Agreement. Recalling the commendable assistance that Government of Japan extended to the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission, both sides exchanged views on ways and means of exploring Japan's increased support to rehabilitation and post-conflict socio-economic recovery efforts as well as the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process.

Additionally, the Ethiopia-Japan Trade and Investment Forum held on April 10, 2024, in Tokyo, marked a significant milestone in the bilateral economic relations. Delegates from both countries engaged in fruitful discussions and explored opportunities for enhancing trade and investment cooperation. The forum, in particular, highlighted Ethiopia's vast investment potential, showcasing its strategic location and abundant natural resources. The Ethiopian delegation emphasized the country's commitment to creating an enabling environment for foreign investors, offering incentives such as tax holidays and duty exemptions. The Japanese investors on their part expressed their keen interest in exploring business prospects in Ethiopia, citing the country's favorable investment climate and government incentives.

Generally, the forum demonstrated the mutual commitment of Ethiopia and Japan to deepening their partnership and unlocking the full potential of their economic relations. The events underscored Ethiopia and Japan's mutual commitment to fostering closer ties across various fronts, paving the way for a future of mutual prosperity and cooperation. As both nations navigate the complexities of the global landscape, they stand united in their pursuit of shared goals and aspirations.

Beyond the twin political and business engagements, State Minister Ambassador Mesganu convened a constructive discussion with Head of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization Investment and Technology Promotion Office (UNIDO ITPO) Tokyo, Fumio Adachi. The gathering took place at the UNIDO ITPO Tokyo office, where Ambassador Mesganu and his delegation received a warm welcome.

Throughout the discussion, Ambassador Mesganu emphasized Ethiopia's wealth of trade and investment opportunities, shedding light on the government's ongoing reform initiatives aimed at enhancing the business environment. He underlined the nation's committed endeavors to foster a more conducive atmosphere for investment. Besides, he stressed the significance of fortifying cooperation with UNIDO ITPO Tokyo to fully harness these opportunities.

In response, Adachi, sharing Ambassador Mesganu's reflections, dwelled on the robust collaboration between UNIDO ITPO Tokyo and Ethiopia highlighting positive feedback received from the Office's team in Ethiopia during their recent review, and affirming the fruitful partnership between the two entities. Adachi

expressed optimism about the continued momentum of their collaboration in the future.

UNIDO ITPOs, situated across various global regions, serve as pivotal hubs for advancing investment, technology transfer, and industrial development in their respective areas. They play a crucial role in facilitating partnerships between local industries, international investors, and technology providers to drive sustainable industrial growth and economic development. These offices offer a spectrum of services, including investment promotion, matchmaking, capacity building, and policy advice, with a focus on fostering inclusive and environmentally sustainable industrialization.

Efforts for the Dignified Repatriation of Nationals in Saudi

The Ethiopian Government is currently closely working with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on the safe and dignified repatriation of 70,000 Ethiopian nationals going through harsh living conditions in the Gulf State. The repatriation is part of the bigger citizen-centred diplomacy endeavours of Ethiopia through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Embassies and Consulates overseas. Reports from our diplomatic and consular missions in Saudi indicate that, the number of Ethiopian migrants stranded in the various detention centers is increasing from time to time, currently reaching 70,000. To ameliorate the ever worsening condition, the Governments of Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia have a constant basis facilitated high-level discussions. Several diplomatic notes have also been exchanged to reach an agreement to bring back home undocumented Ethiopians languishing in various prisons in different regions of Saudi in a reasonable period of time.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs took the initiative to arrange a meeting for a discussion with pertinent governmental ministerial offices that are more responsible for the repatriation, reunification, and rehabilitation of returnees and decided to repatriate 1200 returnees per day and 4 days in a week by using 4 chartered flights. With this schedule it is expected to end the repatriation program within 3 months.

A High-level Ethiopian delegation drawn from various stakeholders and led by State Minister Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, Chair of the National Committee, went to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to make a discussion on the issue with high level governmental officials of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and simultaneously to visit and arrange necessary preparation of our mission on commencing the repatriation program on April 12, 2024.

Apart from this, The Ethiopian Government continues to work with various responsible stakeholders to control illegal border crossings of our nationals to Saudi

Arabia, especially illegal migration using Yemen as a route. And to achieve this objective, the government of Ethiopia is working with international organizations like IOM, UNHCR and other non-governmental organizations. In addition, the government has been increasing border checkpoints to control the trafficking of migrants and has been working to address the root causes of migration through youth employment and other initiatives by the support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabian Government.

One of the main strategy in Ethiopia's foreign policy is citizen-centered diplomacy. So, the government has been working on advancing the welfare of citizens and encouraging regular migration and continues its effort for a safe and dignified repatriation of irregular migrants.

Ethiopia-Kenya Trade and Investment Forum Held in Nairobi

The Ethiopian Embassy in Nairobi in collaboration with Kenya Association of Manufacturers organized *Trade and Investment Promotion Forum* at the Embassy's Premises, on 4th April 2024. The forum is attended by 35 companies operating in Kenya.

In his opening remarks, Gen. Bacha Debele, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Republic of Kenya, welcomed the participants. He recalled the long standing and friendly political and diplomatic relations that existed for the last sixty years between Ethiopia and Kenya. He also noted that their economic relations have remained far behind compared to the vast trade, investment, and tourism opportunities the two countries have to offer each other.

The Ambassador pointed out that the recent resumption of Ethiopia's supply of electricity to Kenya and Safaricom's investment in Ethiopia, has significantly improved the two nations' economic ties. He also stated that the seven MoUs signed during the 36th *Ethio-Kenya Joint Ministerial Commission* held in Addis Ababa from 19 to 21 February 2024, as well as the recent state visit of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to Kenya, are the significant steps to further strengthen the two nations' bilateral relations.

Representing Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) Joyce Njogu, Head of the Consulting and Business Development of the Association, appreciated the Embassy for hosting the Forum and working closely with KAM for success of the Forum. The Forum, she noted, will increase the awareness of participants on trade and investment opportunities available in Ethiopia. She also stressed that the trade and investment mission to Ethiopia will strengthen trade cooperation between Kenya and Ethiopia.

Deputy Head of Mission of Ethiopian Embassy in Kenya Amb. Workalemahu Desta, presented to the participants investment and trade opportunities in Ethiopia. In the presentation, he covered the investment and trade opportunities in various sectors; investment incentives, the flow of foreign direct investment to Ethiopia, development of industrial parks and other related issues. During the forum, participants gave comments and raised questions related to investment and trade environment in Ethiopia and the questions were addressed accordingly.

Kenya Association of Manufactures, which is one of the reliable partners of Ethiopian Embassy in Kenya, is highly reputed association which has more than 1,300 members that operate in the manufacturing sector in Kenya.

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A Week in the Horn is a weekly online publication dedicated to regional developments in the Horn of Africa. It aims to promote good will and fraternal relations among states of the region by highlighting major geopolitical events and publicizing news stories as well as feature articles. It features detailed commentaries, analyses and intelligent debate on weekly developments throughout the Horn of Africa region. It is an essential read for policymakers, the diplomatic community, think-tanks, academia, corporate executives and enthusiastic citizens, at large.

It is published by the **Spokesperson's Directorate General** of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, a leading diplomatic institution in Africa that boasts of inspiring Africa's future.