



A Week in the Horn

26.04.2024

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Vision for Clean and Comfortable Cities: A Renewed Commitment to Urban Sanitation

Ethiopia Takes Part in the 2024 Spring Meeting of the IMF and the WBG

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10th Meeting of the BRICS Working Group on ICT Security Issues

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Friday morning (April 26) unveiled plans to construct modern, clean, and dignified public restrooms, with a strong emphasis on community involvement in their construction. The initiative, named '*Clean Ethiopia*,' includes a fundraising component under the theme '*Clean Cities – Healthy Lives*', the Office of the Prime Minister disclosed (**See Article**).

Premiere Abiy Ahmed welcomed at his office Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Al-Dbeibeh on Thursday (April 25) and discussed regional peace and stability, economic cooperation, workforce exchange, and other areas of mutual interest.

Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen met at his office with the African Urban Forum National Coordinating Committee on Tuesday (April 23) to discuss the upcoming *African Cities Sustainability Forum* slated for September 2024 in Addis Ababa. In his social media updates in after the discussions, DPM Temesgen stated that, as a historic country and a founding member of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, is prepared to fulfill its African responsibility by organizing this forum of African brothers.

On Wednesday evening (April 24), Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, welcomed to Addis Ababa visiting Prime Minister of Libya Abdul Hamid Al-Dbeibeh, who came to Ethiopia to meet with senior Government officials

including Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, on Monday (April 22) conferred with the former Foreign Minister of Algeria and current Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres for the Sudan, Ramtane Lamamra, on the importance of a coordinated and harmonized Sudanese-led and Africa-supported peace process to find solutions to the conflict in the Sudan.

Foreign Minister Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie on Wednesday (April 24) hosted the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Jane Mohammed, in Addis Ababa and discussed the 4th *UN Financing for Development Conference*. During the session, the Foreign Minister reaffirmed the Government's singular commitment to successfully host the preparatory meeting for the Conference. The dignitaries also exchanged views on consolidating partnerships, SDGs, developments in the Horn and the *Summit of the Future*, among others.

State Minister for Political and Economic Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Mesganu Arga, during an exclusive interview with the *Ethiopian News Agency* (ENA) on Wednesday (April 24) stated that, Ethiopia has embarked on rigorous economic reforms aimed at opening up and connecting it with the global economy under the rubric the *Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda*.

State Minister for Economic Cooperation at the Ministry of Finance, Semereta Sewasew, on Thursday (April 25) conferred with the UNAIDS Directory of Regional Support Team (RST) for Eastern and Southern Africa on Sustainable Health Financing Strategy on the challenges, good practices, and areas of improvement in the health sector particularly with the global aim of ending AIDS and the strides the Government has made so far.

On Wednesday (April 24), an *Ethio-Slovenia Political Consultation* was conducted at the Headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. The consultation was aimed at evaluating the status of existing relations, consulting on further enhancing the bilateral relations of the two countries and exchanging views on current regional, continental, and global issues of common interest. Director General for European and American Affairs of MFA Ethiopia, Ambassador Zenebe Kebede and Director General for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovenia, Mateja Norčič Štamcar, co-chaired the meeting.

Ethiopian Embassy in Pakistan in partnership with the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Thursday (April 25) organized an *Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum* at the LCCI Headquarters to encourage the business community to invest in the various fields in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Embassy in Djibouti disclosed on Tuesday (April 23) that 21 Ethiopian migrants perished at sea after a boat carrying 77 people capsized off the coast of Djibouti. The Embassy noted, the search and rescue of missing persons continues and stressed the tragic nature of the accident adding that as a similar incident claimed the lives of 38 Ethiopians two weeks ago.

Eritrea

President Isaias Afwerki on Thursday (April 25) met with United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres' Special Envoy for Sudan, Ramtane Lamamra, at Denden Guest House in the Capital Asmara to discuss the ongoing conflict in the Sudan.

Kenya

President William Samoei Ruto on Sunday (April 21) led the nation in according the later Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) of the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF), General Francis Ogolla, a national sendoff, who was laid to rest in Siaya County. General Ogolla recently passed away after being involved in a fatal helicopter crash in the North Rift while on a mission to assess the security situation in the area.

Somalia

Newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, on Tuesday held discussions with a delegation led by the Director-General for Eastern and Southern Africa at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Türkiye, Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen, on a range of bilateral and regional issues of common interest.

South Sudan

President Salva Kiir Mayardit on Thursday (April 25) met with the Head of Mediation of the South Sudan Peace Talks in Nairobi, General Lazaro Sumbeiywo, to discuss the peace initiative focused on bringing about peace with the Holdout Groups.

President Kiir on Thursday (April 25) appointed immediate former Deputy Foreign Minister, Ramadan Abdala Goc, as the substantive Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Goc replaces James Pitia Morgan, who at the moment has been appointed by the President as Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, state broadcaster, South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC) disclosed.

Africa and the African Union

The African Risk Capacity (ARC), in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (DARBE), the coordinating Department within the African Union (AU) Commission for ARC Agency matters, hosted the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties (CoP 14) at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa Monday-Tuesday (April 22-23).

The African Union Headquarters on Monday (April 22) hosted the *Fourth African Union and China Dialogue on Human and Peoples' Rights*. This important event availed the two parties the opportunity to discuss and make concrete recommendations to pressing human rights concerns in both regions, the AU revealed in a press statement.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) during an inaugural meeting at its office in Addis Ababa on Thursday (April 25) disclosed the commencement of two pioneering projects: *the Integrated Genomic Surveillance and Data Sharing Platform (IGS)* and *Integrated Genomic Surveillance for Outbreak Detection (DETECT)*, that could potentially to reinforce the *Africa Pathogen Genomics Initiative (Africa PGI 2.0)* thereby enhancing the capacity of Member States for molecular detection of outbreaks, AMR genomic surveillance, and timely data sharing across Africa. The kick-off meeting was jointly organized by Africa CDC and the European Commission Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) with the aim of strengthening disease outbreak detection and surveillance throughout the Continent.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Vision for Clean and Comfortable Cities: A Renewed Commitment to Urban Sanitation

In order to make our cities clean, green, and conducive to residents' well-being, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has spearheaded transformative efforts over the past six years.

These efforts include city-wide road cleaning campaign, urban/backyard agriculture demonstrations, and the annual Green Legacy program; which saw the planting of not only saplings for food security but also plants and flowers to enhance the aesthetic appeal of our urban areas.

Recently there has been a focus on enhancing pedestrian-friendly infrastructure in various neighborhoods. To that effect, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has directed efforts towards cleaning and revitalizing the main corridors of our city.

Currently, development activities are underway in five key corridors, with a focus on modernizing public amenities and enhancing overall urban livability.

Central to this initiative is the announcement of a new movement, under the theme ‘*Clean Cities – Healthy Lives,*’ to construct modern, clean, and dignified public restrooms, with a strong emphasis on community involvement in their construction which will address the lack of public toilets in our city.

Ethiopia Takes Part in the 2024 Spring Meeting of the IMF and the WBG

A high-level Ethiopian delegation led by Minister of Finance, Ahmed Shide, and comprised of the Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia, Mamo Mihretu, State Minister of Fiscal Policy and Public Finance, Eyob Tekalegn, Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister, Teklewold Atnafu, Ambassador to the US, Sileshi Bekele, had fruitful discussions with the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials during the *2024 Spring Meetings* held in Washington DC, USA.

The delegation met with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, the World Bank’s VP for Eastern and Southern Africa, Victoria Kwakwa, the World Bank’s VP for IDA Akihiko Nishio, the Bank’s MD for Operations, Anna Bjerde, as well as Executive Directors at the IMF and WB.

The two sides discussed Ethiopia’s economic situation, prospects, and ongoing macroeconomic reforms critical for restoring macro-fiscal stability, growth, and jobs, including addressing distortions, boosting productivity, and enhancing ease of doing business for private investment, among others.

Both institutions commended Ethiopia for the critical steps taken to stabilize the economy and tame inflation as well as the broad-based reform program planned under Ethiopia’s second phase Home-Grown Economic Reform agenda. The meetings discussed the way forward on how the IMF and the WBG can jointly support the country’s ambitious economic program that is designed to unlock Ethiopia’s full economic potential.

Ethiopia was also represented by the delegation at the *Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable (GSDR)*, co-chaired by the IMF, WB, and Brazil as the G20 Presidency during the 2024 Spring Meetings. The meeting was attended by Paris Club and non-Paris Club creditors, debtor countries, and representatives of the private sector.

The discussion focused on progress on debt relief processes to date and measures that can be taken to accelerate debt restructuring and make them more efficient, including under the *G20 Common Framework*.

Minister Ahmed Shide expressed Ethiopia's position on the ongoing debt restructuring discussions under the Common Framework. He reiterated Ethiopia's appreciation of the Framework and efforts by creditors and partners to improve the debt treatment process, including the advocacy for automatic debt service suspension while underscoring the actions that can be taken now to provide timely debt relief for countries under debt distress, including alignment of interest between official creditors and private creditors (bondholders) as well as the need to shorten the timeline for debt treatment and avoid protracted negotiations on debt restructuring.

The meeting agreed the GSDR will continue to work closely together and with other partners to further support the international response to current debt challenges.

One of the delegation's major activities on the side-lines of the World Bank IMF spring meetings was the discussion with the WB's Regional Africa VP for International Finance Corporation (IFC) Sérgio Pimenta, and the VP and Chief Risk, Legal, and Sustainability Officer for Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency/MIGA, Ethiopis Tafara.

The meetings discussed Ethiopia's efforts and reforms to boost private sector investments, including the recent opening of the retail, financial, and other sectors to international investors. The VPs commended Ethiopia's efforts to create an enabling environment for investment while underscoring strategic areas of collaboration to further improve the country's investment climate and advance this agenda.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Ahmed, who also doubles up as the current Chair of the *Horn of Africa Initiative* (HOAI) co-chaired the 20th Ministerial Meeting of HOAI along with Victoria Kwakwa, Regional Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa in Washington DC.

Ministers of Finance of the Horn of Africa region and development partners, including the World Bank, AfDB, EU, Germany, and the UK, attended the meeting. Further, Minister Shide welcomed the growing interest from additional partners, including the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the Saudi Fund for Development, and special envoy representatives from the United States and Japan. He extended a call for some of the observers to formalize their engagement through the HoAI Participation Framework.

Five years into the implementation, Minister Shide commended the success of this resource mobilization effort while stressing the importance of furthering these endeavours. The discussions also delved into strategies for bolstering the financing of the remaining lending pipeline, which includes integrating proposals from South Sudan. He encouraged continued resource mobilization efforts, including

topping up funding for the MDTF as a priority to continue the momentum. He stated, “The HoAI original pipeline of projects is yet to be fully funded compared to the needs. Thus, we need to redouble our resource mobilization efforts.”

On the margins of these meetings, Minister Ahmed Shide, also met with UK State Minister for Development and Africa Andrew Mitchell. The discussions focused on Ethiopia’s economic prospects and resilience amidst local and evolving global challenges, UK’s investment interests in Ethiopia, as well as its support to regional stability and integration in the Horn. The UK Minister reiterated his country’s commitment and advocacy for an ambitious IDA21 replenishment. The finance minister expressed appreciation for UK’s continued support to Ethiopia’s humanitarian needs and development agenda, including on economic reforms, infrastructure, human development, and private sector investment. The two sides agreed on ways to deepen bilateral cooperation in strategic and priority sectors in Ethiopia.

Minister Ahmed and the accompanying high-ranking government officials also participated in the Ethiopian-American Business and Investment Forum hosted by the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington, D.C. in collaboration with Wafa Marketing and Promotion. In his opening speech, Ahmed highlighted Ethiopia's resilience in the face of recent challenges and its continuous economic growth.

Despite various internal and external challenges, Ethiopia's economy has persevered, largely due to extensive government reform efforts and significant investments in infrastructure, Mr. Shide said. He emphasized the pivotal role of these reforms and investments in sustaining economic growth.

Furthermore, he underscored Ethiopia's commitment to green initiatives to address climate change, achieve food self-sufficiency, enhance sustainable agricultural productivity, and resolve issues related to integrated water resources management. The Minister extended an invitation to American investors to explore Ethiopia's abundant investment opportunities first-hand.

Ethiopia Participates at the Abu Dhabi Renewable Energy Conference

The Fourteenth Session of the Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) convened in Abu Dhabi, UAE from 17 to 18 April 2024. The Assembly gathered global leaders and energy decision-makers to project a strategic way forward across individual countries, regions, and the world at large, considering into the findings of the first Global Stocktake at COP28 that was held last year in Abu Dhabi. The meeting was themed “Outcome of COP28: Infrastructure, Policies and Skills for Tripling Renewables and Accelerating the Energy Transition.”

On the sideline of the Assembly, various ministerial and high-level sessions were also convened as part of the Assembly session. The purpose of these sessions was to facilitate collaboration between decision-makers on important and urgent issues related to the energy transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy in the year 2030 and beyond, and to inform the future work of IRENA. In addition to the ministerial high-level session, several panel discussions were also part of the Assembly.

The Assembly was inclusive. Youth forum, the Legislators Forum and Public-Private Dialogue were also part of the Assembly. It has been said that the aim of these was to provide opportunities for awareness creation and discussions with and among different actors who have a stake for the collective ambition of the Agency in the process of achieving a just and inclusive future, based on renewables.

Topics such as *Tripling of Renewables*, *Geopolitics of Energy Security*, *Infrastructure for the Energy Transition: Utilities for Net Zero Alliance*, *Regional Energy Transition Outlooks for Africa - Setting a vision for a 1.5C pathway* and *Policies and Skills for an Accelerated Energy Transition* were discussed thoroughly both in the plenary and syndicate settings.

In the Assembly, Ethiopia was represented by Minister of Water and Energy Habtamu Itefa, accompanied by Ethiopian Ambassador to the UAE Oumer Hussien and delegates. Minister Habtamu delivered Ethiopia's national statement to the participants. Afterwards, he engaged in two panel discussion sessions as a panelist and highlighted the untapped potentials of our country in the renewable energy sector, the efforts made in developing our resources and the achievements our country has registered so far.

The minister also called for the developed countries to provide African countries, including our country in finance and technical supports in their endeavours to develop and utilize their renewables.

10th Meeting of the BRICS Working Group on ICT Security Issues

BRICS conducted a two-day (16-17 April 2024) meeting of its Working Group on ICT Security Issues, particularly cyber security, in the Russian Capital, Moscow. An Ethiopian delegation led by the Director-General of Information Network Security Administration (INSA), Tigist Hamid, actively participated in the deliberations.

In her remarks, DG Tigist highlighted the importance of international cooperation in securing ICT networks and emphasized the need for all countries to work together to address cyber threats effectively. She also stressed the importance of promoting innovation and research in the field of cybersecurity to stay ahead of cyber threats.

The discussions during the meetings covered a range of topics, including BRICS policies on cybersecurity, Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) cooperation, research and development in cybersecurity, and collaboration with international agencies to enhance security in the use of ICT. Delegates from Ethiopia contributed to these discussions by sharing their insights and experiences in these areas.

During the meeting, Deputy Director General of INSA, Daniel Guta, also delivered a statement outlining Ethiopia's commitment to aligning its policies with those of the BRICS nations. He emphasized the importance of collaboration and information-sharing in combating cybersecurity threats in an increasingly interconnected world. DDG Daniel also highlighted the need for innovative solutions to address the challenges posed by rapid advancements in the technology.

The BRICS Policy agenda discussed during the meetings focused on promoting a safer and more secure cyberspace for all. By working together, the BRICS nations, including Ethiopia, are committed to developing proactive strategies to address cyber threats and enhance cybersecurity resilience.

As we witness the ever-evolving landscape of technology and the increasing importance of securing our digital infrastructure, it is crucial for nations to come together and work towards common goals. By joining forces in research and development, we not only enhance our capabilities but also strengthen our collective resilience against cyber threats.

Collaboration among like-minded nations is crucial in ensuring the security, stability, and prosperity of our digital world. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of ICT, it is imperative that we stand together against potential threats and work towards collective resilience.

In addition to the productive discussions, the Ethiopian delegates also had the opportunity to visit the Cyber Security resilient Sberbank and its CERT. This site visit provided the delegate with a first-hand look at the advanced cybersecurity measures in place at Sberbank, showcasing the importance of investing in robust cybersecurity infrastructure to protect critical assets from cyber threats.

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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.