



A Week in the Horn

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Ethiopia Participates at the BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the Situation in the MENA Region

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The Second Ethio-Slovenia Political Consultation

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopia

A high-level delegation led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Monday (April 29) took part in the *International Development Association (IDA) 21 Replenishment Summit* in Nairobi, Kenya. The Summit sought to emphasize to IDA donors and other partners the crucial priority areas for development financing in Africa, urging donors to strongly consider increasing funding for the IDA21 cycle.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, hosted at his office on Monday (April 29) Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, Alexandra Hill Tinoco and the ministers exchanged ideas on issues that would enable them to strengthen their bilateral relations and their cooperation in multilateral forums within the South-South framework.

Foreign Minister Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, on Tuesday (April 30), held a productive discussion at his office with United Nation Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Catriona Laing, on bolstering cooperation in the maintenance of regional peace and security.

On Tuesday, Minister of Water and Energy, Habtamu Itefa, along with Ethio-Engineering Group CEO, Ambassador Suleiman Dedefo and Czechia company, Aprimoso, representative Milan Tkadlec, signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* aimed at streamlining the importation, assembly, and manufacturing of cutting-edge water filtration machines.

Minister of Peace, Binalf Andualem, speaking at the opening of a training organized for members of the House of Peoples' Representatives, the House of Federation as well as members of regional councils and speakers on Wednesday (May 01), stressed the importance of a continuous national Consultation and common understanding to pave the way for durable peace and development in Ethiopia.

State Minister for Economic Cooperation at the Ministry of Finance, Semereta Sewasew, on Monday (April 29) held discussions with French Development Agency (Afd) representatives at her office to solicit support for renewable, integrated, sustainable energy, and digitalization in Ethiopia.

The House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) on Thursday (April 18) ratified the new IGAD Treaty. IGAD lauded the decision as a crucial step that marks a significant milestone in the process of renewing the existing IGAD treaty, which has been in effect for the past 36 years (**See Article**).

On Wednesday (April 24), an *Ethio-Slovenia Political Consultation* was conducted at 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. (**See Article**).

Djibouti

President Ismail Omar Guelleh, on Monday (April 29), held talks at the Palace with IGAD Executive Secretary Workneh Gebeyehu and IGAD Special Envoy for Sudan, Lawrence Korbandy, to take stock of the situation in Sudan.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, on Sunday (April 28), received at his office Deputy Executive Secretary of IGAD, Mohamed Abdi Ware, along with the Special Envoy for Sudan, Lawrence Korbandy discussed the current situation in Sudan.

Kenya

President William Samoei Ruto on Monday (April 29) participated at the *International Development Association (IDA) 21 Replenishment Summit* in the Capital Nairobi co-hosted by the Government of Kenya and the World Bank Group.

On Tuesday (April 30), President Ruto officiated the launch of *the 24th Annual Supplement of the Laws of Kenya*, a publication prepared by the Attorney General and contains the revised edition of the Laws of Kenya for the period 1995 to 2022. The Annual Supplement was gazetted as a *Legal Notice No. 221 of 2023* on 22 December last year and commenced on the 30 January 2024.

Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Wycliffe Musalia Mudavadi, arrived in the Danish Capital Copenhagen on Wednesday evening (May 1) to participate in the 21st *Nordic-Africa Foreign Ministers* meeting schedule 2-3 May 2024.

Somalia

President Hassen Sheikh Mohamoud on Tuesday (April 30) hosted at Villa Somalia, the Director of the National Intelligence Organization of Türkiye (*Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı*), İbrahim Kalın, to discuss cooperation in the security sector.

A delegation headed by President Sheikh Mohamoud joined fellow African Heads of State and Government at the *International Development Association (IDA) 21 Replenishment Summit* in the Capital Nairobi co-hosted by the Government of Kenya and the World Bank Group.

South Sudan

President Salva Kiir Mayardit on Friday (April 26) presides over inauguration ceremony of newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ramadan Mohamed Abdallah Goc Ayuel, at the Office of the President in the Capital Juba.

President Kiir on Monday (April 29) met at his office with UN Special Representative to South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom and the Head of the African Union liaison office in South Sudan, Amb. Joram Mukama Biswaro, to discuss the country's readiness to conduct general elections at the end of the transitional period.

Sudan

Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of Sudan, Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan and Commander of the Rapid Support Forces, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo "Hemedti", on Wednesday (May 1) held separate telephone conversations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, to discuss the current situation in the country.

Africa and the African Union

Information and Communication Directorate of the African Union issued a press release on Wednesday (May 1) with regards to the upcoming celebration of the 20th *Anniversary of the African Union Peace and Security Council* under the theme "20 Years of the AU PSC as a Standing Decision-Making Organ Peace and Security: The Next Two Decades". The activities for May 2024, will include an *Open Session on May 15th* to

review the implementation of the Protocol establishing the AU PSC, and a High-Level Colloquium as the main commemorative event coinciding with African Day, on May 25th, the press release read.

On Tuesday (April 30), the AU Commission and Government of Kenya signed a host- agreement ahead of the *Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit* to be held in Nairobi Kenya from 7 to 9 May 2024. The host agreement was signed by Ambassador Josefa Sacko on behalf of the AU and Kenyan Ambassador to Ethiopia, George Orina, on behalf of Government of Kenya.

Ethiopia Participates at the BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the Situation in the MENA Region

A meeting of BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region was held on 25th of April 2024 in Moscow, Russia. Member States convened on their annual deliberation to exchange views on the current peace and stability situation in the Region, focusing on Gaza, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, the Red Sea, Libya and the Sudan.

An Ethiopian delegation led by Ambassador Mesganu Arga, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Ethiopia's Sous Sherpa to BRICS, took part in this annual gathering organized under the auspices of the peace and security pillar of the BRICS platform.

Ambassador Mesganu, in his statement delivered at the meeting, noting the complex challenges the world is facing, stated that convening on the situation in Middle East and North Africa region that is grappling with multiple and serious crises is valuable to voice our collective concern with a positive spirit of contributing to common solutions while respecting appropriate UN and regional mechanisms.

He also expressed that the on-going conflict between Israel and Hamas, Gaza's catastrophic humanitarian crisis, maritime insecurity on the Red Sea, and regional tensions are threatening regional and global peace and security. These crises have continued to aggravate the lingering post-pandemic challenges, he added. The continued war in the Sudan is a source of grave concern, exacerbating the agony of millions of Sudanese civilians. It also poses a threat for regional peace and security.

In its balanced and principled position on the matters, Ethiopia called for all key regional actors to exercise utmost restraint and choose the path of de-escalation and calming tensions. As the Middle East is home to ancient civilizations, Ethiopia

believes adherence to the spirit of tolerance and wisdom is greatly needed at this critical juncture.

Ethiopia underscored the need for prioritizing effective preventive diplomacy at the very core of engagements to avert a disastrous regional conflict. A historic sense of shared responsibility is key to break the vicious cycle of violence, based on the principles of the UN Charter. Moving away from an endless politics of confrontation to a new strategic culture of peaceful coexistence is a fundamental prerequisite. For this to prevail, Ethiopia reiterated its call for the surge of dialogue and diplomacy to address the multiple crises and to stop the dangerous road of slippery slope.

Regarding the Israeli- Hamas conflict, Ethiopia's position clearly set that, addressing the conflict in Gaza is the key to de-escalate the expanding regional crises and tensions in the broader Middle Eastern region. Addressing the unfolding humanitarian crisis is critical. Ethiopia stressed that, finding a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on principle of "*A Two-State Solution*" and reaching a ceasefire, according to the UN resolution is important.

On the Red Sea security situation, Ethiopia expressed its concern in light of attacks against commercial vessels as well as the increasing foreign military competition. The spill over impacts of the crisis on the Horn of Africa and Red Sea region affects peace and stability, and commercial navigation. Therefore, the de-escalation of tensions in the region is critically vital. In this regard, Ethiopia underscored that Red Sea should be a zone of cooperation through de-escalation, negotiation, and inclusive consultations among all stakeholders.

Regarding the situations in Sudan, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, Ethiopia advocated for an inclusive nationally-owned political processes while ensuring their political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

On the situations in Sudan, Ethiopia reiterated its firm position on the need by the parties to reach an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. As it has been expressing its firm stance from the beginning of the conflict in Sudan a year ago, Ethiopia reaffirmed the vitality of avoiding proliferation of multiple peace initiatives. Ethiopia underlined that the IGAD and the African Union are well positioned to mediate and provide an inclusive platform for the conflicting parties and other stakeholders. Therefore, all peace efforts should be harmonised and consolidated under the auspices of these regional mechanisms. To this end, Ethiopia called on the international community to support the peace efforts of IGAD and AU to reach a peaceful conclusion to the crisis. Ethiopia firmly believes that local remedies and respect for subsidiarity should be given due consideration. In this stance, Ethiopia underscored its firm position on the need to support a Sudanese-owned and IGAD political process.

On the meeting, Ethiopia also underscored its zero tolerance for terrorism, and condemns terrorism in any form. Ethiopia believes that the consolidation of multilateral frameworks is vital to promote peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa region and the globe at large. While reaffirming the primary role of the UNSC in maintaining international peace and security, Ethiopia particularly advocates for the reform of the UNSC to enhance its effectiveness and responsiveness to challenges to global peace and security.

After deliberating on the current situations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), region particularly on situations in Gaza, Sudan, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and the Red Sea, the meeting of BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the MENA issued a *Joint Statement*.

In the Joint Statement, BRICS Member States expressed serious concern over continued conflicts in the region, especially the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, that pose threats to regional and international peace, stability and security. They also expressed deep concern regarding the repercussions of the attacks on maritime navigation in Bab El Mandab and the Red Sea.

They reaffirmed their commitment to the basic principle that peace and security in the MENA region should be achieved and sustained in accordance with, and in full respect for, international law and the United Nations (UN) Charter. They reaffirmed the primary role of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in maintaining international peace and security. Furthermore, they advocated for the strengthening of multilateralism as a means to promoting and ensuring peace, stability and development in the MENA region.

Ethiopia renews commitment to IGAD by ratifying IGAD Treaty

The House of Peoples' Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia during its *21st Regular Session* ratified the IGAD Treaty signed during the Summit held in Djibouti on 12 June 2023. This makes Ethiopia the second member state to ratify the Treaty, after Djibouti. The Kenyan Council of Ministers has recently endorsed the Treaty referring it to the National Assembly for ratification.

IGAD has for long been engaged in the process of revising and amending the previous *Establishing Agreement* signed on 1996, acknowledging the need to update itself with sub-regional, continental, and global changes, and to come out as a viable regional body in the 21st Century.

The objective of the amended Establishing document being accelerating regional economic, social, environmental, and political integration, and cross border cooperation among the Member States, the Treaty expands areas of cooperation to

respond to the evolving needs of Member States and regional context and global realities.

The Treaty places emphasis on making IGAD a rule-based organization where ordinary Summits and Council of Ministers meeting are held regularly, and where the Chairmanship would be assumed in rotations with fixed tenure and in alphabetic order. Clauses related to membership, suspension, expulsion, and withdrawal are also included in the amended Treaty.

The clause on appointment of two deputy executive secretaries is another novelty which the Treaty has introduced to strengthen the structural capacity and further improve the effectiveness of the Secretariat.

A strengthened secretariat and enhanced performance of the regional organization would undoubtedly accelerate efforts at maintaining regional stability and ensuring sustainable development of the countries and citizens of Member States.

Ethiopia's ratification of the Treaty showcases its steadfast dedication to advancing the objectives of IGAD and is testament to its commitment to continue to contribute to the endeavours of IGAD to ensure sustainable peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

Ethiopia has been at the forefront in advancing regional integration agenda in its bilateral relations as well as through the mechanisms of the regional body. It remains firm in its commitments to see a stable, peaceful and prosperous Horn of Africa, where regional integration goals are achieved and the citizens of the region lead a peaceful, prosperous life.

Commending Ethiopia's ratification of the Treaty, the Executive Secretary, Workneh Gebeyehu encouraged member states to emulate Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya by initiating the ratification process of the establishing treaty. The Treaty enters into force after ratification by two-thirds of the Member States.

"The collective dedication to ratifying the IGAD treaty serves as a reaffirmation of the shared vision among member states to foster a stronger and more integrated region, ultimately benefiting all its constituents," the Executive Secretary added.

The Second Ethio-Slovenia Political Consultation

The *Second Ethio-Slovenia Political Consultation* was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 24 April 2024 at the level of Director Generals.

The Ethiopian side was led by Ambassador Zenebe Kebede, Director General for European and American Affairs and the Slovenian side was led by Mateja Norčič

Štamcar, Director General for Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovenia.

The consultation is aimed at exploring ways of strengthening political and economic cooperation and coordinate actions on regional and international issues of common interest.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Zenebe Kebede, emphasized that Ethiopia and Slovenia have built a solid foundation of friendship and cooperation based on shared values and aspirations. He noted that the consultation gives a valuable opportunity to deepen engagement and explore ways to further our collaborating in a variety of areas, including investment, commerce, technology transfer, education. He further emphasized the importance of bilateral consultation in strengthening cooperation and allow to learn from one another.

On the other hand, DG Štamcar stated that, such a platform and dialogue is very crucial to review and further improve the relationship between the two countries. She mentioned a Bee-keeping project in the area bordering Ethiopia and Kenya that is supported by the Slovene Government in collaboration with the World Food Program. Slovenia also wants to introduce *a Bee Day* in the UN. As Ethiopia is Africa's largest producer and exporter of honey, the assistance of Slovenian government in this area will help a lot. Slovenia has also identified digitalization as one of the areas of cooperation with Ethiopia.

The two sides further exchanged views on the current political and economic situation in the Horn of Africa region and Europe. The Political consultation was a sign of keen interest between the two countries to engage one another and explore ways of strengthening bilateral relations.

Slovenia is striving to prioritize its relations with Sub-Saharan African Countries.

– ENDS –

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.