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Ethiopia

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed urged all African leaders and people to heed the call to unity issued by the Organisation of the African Union's founding fathers. In his remarks at the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of Africa Day on Thursday (May 25), Prime Minister Abiy shared his best wishes to all fellow Africans. The Premier recalled that unity and freedom, in particular, were common themes that the Founding Fathers of the OAU proclaimed leading up to its formation and emphasised thereafter.

In a statement released on Monday (May 22), the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that 'Ethiopia notes with dismay that the resolution adopted by the recent Summit of the League of Arab States echoed Egyptian hostile rhetoric regarding the GERD. The response comes a few days after leaders of the Arab League States meeting in Saudi Arabia told Ethiopia to refrain from taking unilateral actions that would harm the water interests of Egypt and Sudan. Ethiopia said the league's decision undermines the AU and its member states ongoing efforts to resolve the Nile disputes. Ethiopia commended those Member States of the League of Arab States that cautioned against Egypt's attempts to escalate the matter.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen, is paying a five-day official visit to China. The Ethiopian delegation led by Demeke arrived in Beijing on Wednesday (May 24), where it received a warm welcome by senior Chinese Government officials at Beijing International Airport. Demeke's visit came following the Chinese Foreign Minister, Qin Gang's, visit to Ethiopia in January 2023 as a continuation of the annual tradition of Chinese foreign ministers visiting Africa at the dawn of every New Year for the last three decades. (**See article**)

The Vice President of Colombia, Francia Elena Márquez, led a delegation of 65 members on May 17 and 18, 2023, during an official visit to Ethiopia. This visit is significant as it marked

the first high-ranking delegation from Colombia to visit Ethiopia and the African continent. The primary objective of the visit was to broaden Colombia's diplomatic relations beyond the Americas and strengthen ties with Ethiopia. Prior to their visit to Ethiopia, the Vice President also visited South Africa and Kenya. **(See article)**

Ethiopia is set to launch a tender for a second international telecom licence next month as part of plans to expand the sector in the country. The industry regulator confirmed the plans on Monday (May 22). It will provide the country with a third mobile operator, along with state-owned Ethio Telecom and Safaricom Ethiopia, which is a subsidiary of Kenyan operator Safaricom.

Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's leading aviation group, announced that it has been crowned the winner of the Best Overall in Africa award at the 2023 APEX Passenger Choice Awards at a ceremony held in Dublin, Ireland, on Thursday (May 25). As the "Best Overall in Africa" winner, Ethiopian has taken the accolades for 'Best Cabin Service', 'Best Entertainment', 'Best Food and Beverage', 'Best Seat Comfort' and 'Best Wi-Fi' in Africa. The largest African passenger and cargo carrier, Ethiopian Airlines, operates in more than 130 destinations worldwide. The Airline has racked up multiple global and continental awards for its unprecedented services to its customers.

The Government of Italy announced on Thursday (May 25) funding of two million euros for the preservation and enhancement of the Axum archaeological site in the Tigray regional state. Ambassador Agostino Palese made the announcement during his visit to the city of Axum and the adjacent UNESCO World Heritage archaeological site, where there are the ruins and obelisks of the Axumite kingdom dated between the first and thirteenth centuries A.D., bearing witness to one of the major ancient kingdoms of its time along with the Eastern Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Persia.

Buckingham Palace declined a request to return the body of an Ethiopian prince who was buried in Windsor Castle in the 19th century to his homeland, Ethiopia. Responding to the request in a statement, a Buckingham Palace spokesperson told the news outlet that exhuming the prince's remains from the catacombs of St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle could disturb others who have been laid to rest there.

An Ethiopian delegation led by Fetene Teshome, Director General of the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute, is participating in the Nineteenth World Meteorological Congress (WMO Cg-19) that is being held from May 22 until June 2, 2023, at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG), Switzerland. During the high-level panel dialogue held on May 22, 2023, Dr. Abraha Adugna, State Minister for Water and Energy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, made a statement on the Early Warning System for All initiative (EW4All) on accelerating and scaling up action at the country level. **(See article)**

Moscow schools will teach Amharic to children starting in September 2023. The Sputnik International News Agency and Radio held a roundtable on Russia-Africa: Prospects for Economic Cooperation. During the round table discussion held on Wednesday (May 24), it was announced that teaching African languages in Moscow schools starts in September. Speaking about fostering expert and analytical personnel's competencies in Russian-African cooperation, Director of the Institute of Asian and African Studies Alexei Maslov announced

that "for the first time, at least four Moscow schools will teach Swahili and Amharic for children starting September 2023 as part of the new special programme."

Eritrea

Eritrea celebrated its 32nd Independence Day on Wednesday (May 24). In his keynote speech, President Isaias said, "Our Independence Day this year (2023) is being celebrated at a historical juncture when our independence, sovereignty and national cohesion have become more reinforced and our inexorable march to achieve development and economic growth is proceeding at an accelerated pace."

Djibouti

On Thursday (May 25), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a grant agreement with the Government of the Republic of Djibouti in Djibouti City to provide grant aid of up to 590 million yen for the Project for the Improvement of Medical Equipment at Tertiary Hospitals in Djibouti City.

Kenya

The Government is committed to documenting all citizens to enhance service delivery. President William Ruto said effective and inclusive governance of public services requires accurate citizen data. The Government, he added, is working towards the implementation of a vital statistics system that meets the demands of a new digital era. He said the Government has also instituted measures to ensure 100% registration of births and deaths by 2026. "We need accurate information on the essential attributes of citizens to accurately allocate resources," he said. Speaking during the 7th Identification for Africa Conference held in Nairobi, President Ruto said proper identity systems will boost democracy in Africa.

The media reported on Thursday (May 25) that a three-judge bench had dismissed an application by the Government seeking to allow Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) foods into the country. Justice Mohammed Warsame, Ali Aroni and John Mativo indicated that the application lacked merit and that the public interest test had not been met. "We see nothing for the court to preserve and it cannot be said that the substratum of the appeal will be eroded," the court noted. The ruling does not mean that the order barring the government from importing or distributing GMO crops and food stands until a case filed at the high court by the Kenyan Peasants League, a social movement, is heard and decided.

Somalia

Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre said on Tuesday (May 23) that the state requires dedicated financial mechanisms to support economic reforms and recovery, enabling them to effectively address fragility drivers such as climate change. Barre made his announcement during the annual meetings of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) 2023, taking place in Sharm El Sheikh from May 22 to 26.

The director of the National Intelligence and Security Agency [NISA] Mahad Salad is in the US on an official working visit, his first since taking the office last year. The spy chief is reported to have been invited to America for talks with FBI and CIA officials in Washington

and New York on counterterrorism in Somalia, where hundreds of US Special Forces are currently based.

Uganda's Minister of State for Defense, Oleru Huda, presided over the commissioning parade for Somali soldiers in her country on Friday (May 19). The troops—an estimated dozens—have been trained in a military camp in the Kiruhura district and readied to fight Al-Shabaab, the Al-Qaeda-linked militant group in Somalia. Huda said that the soldiers received special training and important skills in fighting terrorism and stabilizing Somalia, where troops from Uganda operate under ATMIS.

On May 17, 2023, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the fifth review of the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement for Somalia. The completion of the review enables the immediate disbursement of SDR 7 million (about US\$ 9.4 million), bringing Somalia's total disbursement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) and the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to SDR 285.4 million (about US\$ 386.1 million).

South Sudan

South Sudan's capital, Juba, hosted the third LAPSSET Corridor Development Project Programme Ministerial Meeting held from May 17 to 19, 2023, under the theme 'Fast-tracking LAPSSET Implementation for Peace, Growth, Sustainable Development, and Regional Integration'. The meeting gave the two countries an opportunity to reflect on the necessity of infrastructure for socio-economic transformation. **(See article)**

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia agreed to offer capacity-building training at the Ethiopia Institute of Foreign Affairs to fifty (50) South Sudanese diplomats. This came up during the meeting between South Sudan's acting minister of foreign affairs and international cooperation, Deng Dau Deng, and the Ethiopian ambassador to South Sudan, Nabil al Mahdi. Addressing the media on Tuesday (May 23) after the meeting in Juba, Mahdi said Ethiopia remains committed in all areas, including capacity building, as can be demonstrated by the training slated for July.

Sudan

It has now been a little more than five weeks since the eruption of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in Sudan on April 15, 2023. As each day goes by with the guns not silenced, the number of casualties is increasing and the destruction of property, including basic infrastructure, is mounting. Civilians are caught in the crossfire. Sudan Doctors Union, a non-governmental body operating in the country, said in a statement it released on May 21, 2023, "the number of civilian deaths since the beginning of the clashes has risen to 863 with 3,531 injuries". The number of people displaced has surpassed a million, including the nearly 250,000 who crossed Sudanese borders to neighbouring countries. These unfortunate developments are disturbing and concerning for Ethiopia. Our sisters and brothers in Sudan do not deserve this abysmal situation. **(See article)**

AU Commemorates the 60th Year of Establishment

The 60th Anniversary of the Founding of the Organisation of the African Unity/African Union (OAU/AU) was colourfully commemorated on May 25, 2023, at the African Union Headquarters under the theme "*The Road Towards an Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa: AU for the Benefit of Its People*".

The event was attended by the AU Chairperson and Comoros President Azali Assoumani, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, the AU Commission and the leadership of other organs and specialised agencies, the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC), senior officials of the Government of Ethiopia, regional economic communities, as well as women and youth representatives, among others. A photo exhibition celebrating the contributions of the founding fathers of the Union, jointly organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Press Agency, and a tree planting exercise were among the commemorative activities that added flavour to the celebration.

In his remarks, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that sixty years after the founding of the OAU/AU, Africa is the second most populous continent in the world with an estimated population of 1.4 billion. He added that it is expected that by 2050, more than half of the global population growth will occur in Africa. In this regard, he noted, paying due attention to Africa means paying attention to a continent that, by 2050, will be home to one in four humans, an unprecedented opportunity that we all need to harness.

Paying homage to the founding fathers, Haile Selassie I and Kwame Nkrumah, to mention a few, the Premiere mentioned the perennial fact that unity and freedom were common themes that our Founding Fathers championed leading up to the formation of the continental entity and have been emphasised ever since.

Alluding to the manifold natural and man-made challenges Africa faces, Prime Minister Abiy urged leaders to continue unearthing the untapped potential of our people to transform our continent into the **Africa We Want** by fighting corruption, creating conducive environment for local and international investments, and awakening the service delivery potentials of respective bureaucracies. As African nations blessed ample natural endowments, he called upon fellow Africans: "We must mobilise the productive capacities and inventiveness of our youthful population in transforming our agriculture, manufacturing, technological innovation and food self-sufficiency." A case in point is Ethiopia with regards to this area.

Lastly, the Prime Minister called upon all African leaders and peoples to heed the call of unity declared by our great Founding Fathers as we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Organisation of African Unity.

The commemorative activities of the OAU/AU at 60 years, apart from showcasing the diversity of the continent, created an opportunity to celebrate and recognize the roles and pivotal contributions of our Founders, many other African men and women, and those in the African Diaspora, who have greatly contributed not only to the political liberation of the continent but also to the socio-economic emancipation of its people. As such, the occasion served as a platform on which information, knowledge and best practices from our past were accentuated, geared towards inspiring posterity to take on the vision and steer the realization of the "Africa We Want" as per the aspirations ushered in by the declarations of Agenda 2063.

DPM and FM Demeke Mekonnen's visit to China: A reflection of Ethiopia, China trusted Partnership

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen, is paying a five-day official visit to China. The Ethiopian delegation led by Demeke arrived in Beijing on Wednesday (May 24), where it received a warm welcome by senior Chinese Government officials at Beijing International Airport. Demeke's visit came following the Chinese Foreign Minister, Qin Gang's, visit to Ethiopia in January 2023 as a continuation of the annual tradition of Chinese foreign ministers visiting Africa at the dawn of every New Year for the last three decades.

During his stay in China, Demeke met with Foreign Minister Qin Gang, cut the ribbons of the newly refurbished Ethiopia's embassy building in Beijing, discussed with the Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), and attended a book launching ceremony in a Chinese university where Amharic is taught in collaboration with Ethiopia's Addis Ababa University.

Meeting with Foreign Minister Qin Gang

During his conversation with the Chinese Foreign Minister on Thursday (May 25), Demeke stated that Ethiopia is committed to further strengthening the existing bilateral ties between the two countries. As a leading source of FDI, Ethiopia's largest trading partner and development financier, Demeke, noted that China has a big role in Ethiopia's future growth. Demeke emphasised that the Chinese people and government have proven to be reliable partners for the Horn of Africa and Africa as a whole.

His Chinese counterpart, for his part, said Ethiopia is a trusted partner and his Government is desirous to work with Ethiopia to achieve new progress. There is new opportunity to enhance economic relations and deepen trade and investment ties in particular, he said. He said China supports the reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in Ethiopia. The two delegations also agreed to work in tandem in multilateral forums to play a constructive role on regional and global matters of mutual concern.

Meeting with CIDCA Chairman

Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, conferred. During his discussion, with Luo Zhaohui, Chairman of China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), in Beijing on Thursday (May 25, 2023), Demeke commended China for providing Ethiopia both monetary and non-monetary assistance based on the principles of mutual benefits with no conditions on internal political issues.

China is making valuable contributions to Ethiopia's development endeavours in the spirit of South-South cooperation, Demeke noted. He said that the Pretoria Peace Agreement is being implemented, and it is high time for China to support Ethiopia's rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

Luo Zhaohui, on his part, said that Ethiopia is not only a great partner of China but also an influential country in Africa that deserves necessary support in areas such as agriculture, education, and riverside development, among others.

Inauguration of Embassy's Building

On Thursday (May 25, 2023), the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia and the State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, officially inaugurated Ethiopia's new embassy and residential building in Beijing.

In his speech at the inauguration ceremony, Demeke Mekonnen said that the new look of the embassy is a concrete demonstration of a step taken to further strengthen Ethiopia's partnership with China. He said that the longstanding relationship between Ethiopia and China laid the foundation for the deep economic, cultural, and people-to-people ties between the two countries. He also expressed his belief that Ethiopia and China will stand together on bilateral, regional, and multilateral platforms to enhance their mutual benefit.

China's Foreign Minister Qin Gang said that the construction of the new embassy will further strengthen the relationship between Ethiopia and China. The State Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, thanked China for its tireless cooperation from the beginning to the completion of the embassy building. Ethiopia's ambassador to China, Tefera Derebew, said that the construction of the embassy is a monument of friendship between Ethiopia and China.

Amharic Language in China

While attending the Beijing Foreign Studies University's launch of Amharic books for Chinese students, Demeke Mekonnen, Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, called for collaboration between Ethiopian and Chinese higher education institutions. According to Demeke, it is critical for Ethiopian higher education institutions to exchange knowledge with Chinese research institutions. He stated that the Amharic language collaboration between Addis Ababa University and Beijing University of Foreign Studies will help to strengthen people-to-people ties even further.

Gia Wengian, the university's vice president, stated that the introduction of the Amharic language in China is critical to promoting Ethiopia's culture and history. Three Amharic textbooks were launched at the ceremony, and Chinese Amharic language students read Amharic poems.

Vice President of Colombia, Francia Elena Márquez Pays a Visit to Ethiopia

The Vice President of Colombia, Francia Elena Márquez, led a delegation of 65 members on May 17 and 18, 2023, during an official visit to Ethiopia. This visit is significant as it marked the first high-ranking delegation from Colombia to visit Ethiopia and the African continent. The primary objective of the visit was to broaden Colombia's diplomatic relations beyond the Americas and strengthen ties with Ethiopia. Prior to their visit to Ethiopia, the Vice President also visited South Africa and Kenya.

During the visit to Ethiopia, the Vice President had meetings with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, President Sahle-Work Zewde, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen. The discussions held during these meetings were primarily centered on the objective of strengthening bilateral relations and exploring opportunities for cooperation in various fields.

The Vice President emphasized Ethiopia's significant influence in Africa and the region as a key factor behind Colombia's decision to reopen its embassy in Addis Ababa after it had been closed for 50 years. She further expressed Colombia's preparedness to collaborate with Ethiopia on regional, continental, and multilateral platforms.

The Vice President further expressed Colombia's interest in strengthening a people-to-people relationship with Africa, particularly with Ethiopia, with the aim of introducing citizens of African descent in Colombia to their historical roots. Additionally, she conveyed Colombia's desire to collaborate with Ethiopian Airlines in order to facilitate connections between the people of Colombia and Africa as a whole, leveraging Ethiopia as a transit hub. This initiative further aims to foster increased trade and tourism between the two countries.

Furthermore, she held a meeting with the Deputy Commissioner of the African Union to discuss and identify areas where Colombia can enhance its relations with Africa.

Demeke Mekonnen, during the bilateral discussions, expressed appreciation for Colombia's decision to reopen its Embassy in Addis Ababa and emphasized the need to coordinate actions in international forums. He conveyed Ethiopia's interest in collaborating with Colombia in trade, investment, tourism, aviation, and technology, as well as in the field of engineering capacity building.

The visit helped in identifying areas of cooperation in a range of sectors, including cooperation in experience sharing to enhance coffee productivity, collaboration in renewable energy production, technology, and innovation, joint efforts to address climate change, and cooperation on multilateral platforms within the framework of the global South. Given that Ethiopia and Colombia share similar values such as democracy, peaceful conflict resolution, and adherence to the rule of law, the dignitaries from both countries engaged in an exchange of views on how to share their respective experiences in finding sustainable solutions to internal challenges.

In order to further strengthen the relationship, Colombia and Ethiopia signed Memorandum of Understanding on political consultation and a Declaration of Intent regarding Spanish language training as a foreign language.

Additionally, Ministers and Deputy Ministers from Colombia held meetings with their Ethiopian counterparts to explore opportunities for collaboration. The Colombian delegation engaged with various Ethiopian officials, including the Minister of Culture and Sports, the State Minister for Education, the State Minister for Tourism, the President of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority. The purposes of these discussions were to identify specific areas where the two countries could work together for mutual benefit.

The Vice President's visit to Ethiopia exemplifies Colombia's dedication to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation opportunities. The discussions and outcomes of

this visit have laid a solid foundation for a stronger partnership between Ethiopia and Colombia, fostering collaboration across various sectors and promoting mutual understanding and exchange.

Reaching a Peace Deal on Sudan`s Crisis is Critical for Regional Peace

It has now been a little more than five weeks since the eruption of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in Sudan on April 15, 2023. As each day goes by with the guns not silenced, the number of casualties is increasing and the destruction of property, including basic infrastructure, is mounting. Civilians are caught in the crossfire. Sudan Doctors Union, a non-governmental body operating in the country, said in a statement it released on May 21, 2023, "the number of civilian deaths since the beginning of the clashes has risen to 863 with 3,531 injuries". The number of people displaced has surpassed a million, including the nearly 250,000 who crossed Sudanese borders to neighbouring countries. These unfortunate developments are disturbing and concerning for Ethiopia. Our sisters and brothers in Sudan do not deserve this abysmal situation.

Borders, blood, history, culture, and resources link Ethiopia and Sudan. Like yesterday, Ethiopia stands in solidarity with the brotherly and sisterly people of Sudan. It has been receiving Sudanese who have left their homes for safety. This has been a tradition between the two countries. Both countries have been through thick and thin together, holding each other up. Ethiopia will do its level best, in collaboration with international stakeholders, to continue providing safety to those crossing the border.

The representatives of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Force, on May 20, 2023, have inked an "Agreement on a Short-term Ceasefire and Humanitarian Arrangements" in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The ceasefire, as a temporary step towards peace, is signed as a seven-day humanitarian truce. The signing of the ceasefire by itself is promising, as the two parties are once again at the negotiating table. The ceasefire has offered hope for civilians, and it would serve as a stepping stone to ending the violence. Ethiopia welcomes this development.

If the two parties comply, we hope the ceasefire will provide an opportunity to take confidence-building measures such as providing aid to the needy, treating the wounded, and burying the dead. In this context, Ethiopia appeals to the two parties to take measures that would encourage the troops under their respective command to disengage to get rid of the agony of the people of Sudan. However, it is concerning to see reports of breaches of the truce and the continuation of fighting in different places in the country, which would dash the hope of the people of Sudan.

A sustainable solution to the problem could only be found through peaceful dialogue and political settlement. That is why silencing the guns is critical. Complying with the terms of the May 20, 2023, ceasefire would help move the next step towards ending the violence. For

the safety and stability of the people of Sudan, young and old, men and women, ending the violence is, therefore, on the shoulders of the two parties. Building on the wisdom of the proud people of Sudan, it is possible to overcome the existing problem.

As the crisis in Sudan is prolonged, it will have a spillover effect on the rest of the region, which has more than enough problems to deal with. The peace and stability of Sudan is the peace and stability of the entire region. Therefore, a coordinated approach by the neighbouring countries to support efforts for peace will help the Sudanese parties resolve their differences in a process they own. The urgency rings at the doors of the region's countries.

Juba Hosts Third LAPSSET Corridor Development Project Ministerial Meeting

South Sudan's capital, Juba, hosted the third LAPSSET Corridor Development Project Programme Ministerial Meeting held from May 17 to 19, 2023, under the theme 'Fast-tracking LAPSSET Implementation for Peace, Growth, Sustainable Development, and Regional Integration'. The meeting gave the two countries an opportunity to reflect on the necessity of infrastructure for socio-economic transformation.

The Ethiopian delegation, led by Dr. Eyob Tekalign, State Minister of Finance of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, was accompanied by Dhengi Boru, State Minister of Ministry of Transport; Ambassador General Bacha Debele, Ethiopian Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya; and Ambassador Nebil Mahadi, Ethiopian Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan. Other higher officials of the Ethiopian Government also took part in the meeting.

The high-level meeting brought together representatives of government delegates, business communities, development partners and civil society organizations. Various representatives from the three countries, development partners, business community representatives, and scholars of the field presented and discussed numerous issues that are pertinent to contributing towards the realization of the LAPSSET Corridor Development Projects. Experiences and best practices had also been shared from some successful similar corridor development projects in Africa.

Launched on March 2, 2012, by the governments of Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan, the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia-Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor Project is one of the biggest regional development programmes on the African continent. As a multi-billion-dollar project, LAPSSET has aimed to facilitate the regional integration of the three sisterly countries. By linking the three countries through huge infrastructure projects such as ports, railways, roads, and oil pipelines, the project, when completed, will be instrumental in achieving sustainable development and socio-economic transformation in the region.

The third ministerial meeting in Juba showed the commitment of the three countries to realize this mega-continental project. During the meeting, the vital role infrastructure along the Lamu corridor plays in economically integrating the three sisterly countries was widely

shared. However, the financial constraints associated with finalizing LAPSSET was noted as the major challenge.

Dr. Eyob Tekalign, State Minister of Finance of Ethiopia and head of the Ethiopian delegation, highlighted in his remarks the importance of the LAPSSET project in enhancing economic cooperation and regional integration among the three sisterly countries. He also reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to the realization of the LAPSSET vision. In addition to highlighting various development projects successfully accomplished by Ethiopia, he has also unveiled Ethiopia's readiness to build key road corridor development infrastructure that connects Ethiopia with the Republic of South Sudan.

The third LAPSSET Corridor Programme Ministerial Meeting concluded with the adoption of the Juba Commitments and the road map for the implementation of the LAPSSET project. Considering the significance of the project to the region in particular and its huge contribution to achieving Agenda 2063, the role of development partners in financing LAPSSET would be critical. One way of reducing conflicts and enhancing cooperation is through economic development, which can only be achieved through the development of basic infrastructure.

Ethiopia participates in the Nineteenth World Meteorological Congress in Switzerland

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He highlighted the significance of the Early Warning System for All Initiative (EW4All) to Ethiopia, the efforts being undertaken so far by the government of Ethiopia in the area, Ethiopia's involvement in the initiative, and possible areas of cooperation between Ethiopia and the World Metrological Organisation to further advance the initiative. As Ethiopia is one of the countries that is facing climate-related disasters with increasing frequency and severity, which has made most of the responses focus on recovery efforts to tackle the challenges, such an initiative therefore means a lot to Ethiopia, said Dr. Abraha.

According to Dr. Abraha, Ethiopia's Green Legacy initiative would be instrumental in materializing the new EW4All initiative in Ethiopia. He said that as a result of the national green legacy initiative, during the last four years more than 25 billion seedlings have been planted, which by itself has multiple advantages in reducing environmental degradation as well as contributing to both climate adaptation and mitigation.

He also explained the work of the National Disaster Early Warning Council, which has been coordinating national disaster management for years at the national level. Thus far, effective results have been achieved throughout the impacted regions of the country, he said. However, he underscored that although there have been government efforts to develop and implement early warning systems together with preparedness actions, due to the severity of the impact of

climate change in the Horn of Africa region in general and in Ethiopia in particular, the current assessment on the ground shows the necessity of accelerated support from WMO and other partners. In this regard, he appreciated the EW4All initiative by WMO as very significant for Ethiopia in that it will potentially strengthen its efforts to ensure its citizens are protected from climate and water-related hazards.

According to Dr. Abraha, the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) is pleased and ready to further strengthen its work with WMO in the initiative to advance its development as well as operational applications in Ethiopia. He suggested WMO focus on capacity building for EMI staff members in multi-hazard forecasting, warning communication, and planning for response actions, strengthening hydro-meteorological monitoring networks, and supporting piloting preparedness and early action measures in selected communities.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Abraha said access to early warning systems for all, disaster-risk information, and sustainable financing are without any doubt of critical importance in reducing the impact of disasters on human life, economies, and infrastructure. Thus, he said the priority now should be given to doubling up efforts to implement this initiative and more sustainable development-oriented action by both states and other development actors.

Finally, he said he is confident that in these deliberations, the audience will address how Land Locked Developing, Least Developed Countries and Small Islands Developing States would have robust early warning systems that address multi-hazards and reach all alike.
