



## A Week in the Horn

16.02.2024

*Ethiopia at the 44<sup>th</sup> Executive Council of the African Union*

*The 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethiopia-Rwanda Joint Ministerial Commission*

*Addis Hosts Ethio-Türkiye Investment and Trade Promotion Forum*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Africa and the African Union

The 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union was conducted from Wednesday (February 14) to Thursday (February 15) under the theme *“Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa.”* During the opening ceremony Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie delivered his remarks along with Chair of the Executive Council and Comorian Foreign Minister Dhoahir Dhoulkamal, AUC Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat as well as the UNECA Executive Secretary, Claver Gatete.

The AUC 12-13 February 2024 at its Headquarters hosted the biannual *Statutory African Governance Architecture – African Peace and Security Architecture* (AGA-APSA) meeting at the Technical and Political level.

On the margins of the ongoing 37<sup>th</sup> AU Summit, the AUC in partnership with UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (UN-OHCHR) and UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) the World Bank Group and the Institute of Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), hosted an Event: *‘Ensuring the right to equitable and inclusive quality education to break and prevent cycles of violence in Africa’* on Tuesday, 13 February 2024 in Addis Ababa.

The Information and Communication Directorate's AU Media Fellowship Programme (AUMF), in partnership with Gordon Institute of Business Science's Media Leadership Think Tank and GIZ-AU, hosted a Media Roundtable under the

theme "The Future of Media in Africa: Shaping our Narratives" at the margins of the 37th African Union Summit 14-15 February 2024.

## **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Wednesday (February 14) received at his office, US Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Mary Catherine "Molly" Phee and Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Michael A. Hammer, and deliberated on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

The Chief of General Staff of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), Field Marshal Berhanu Jula, on Thursday (February 15) welcomed and held discussions with his Italian Chief of the Defense Staff, Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, in Addis Ababa on matters pertaining to fostering collaboration to enhance the historical amity between the two military establishments.

The 3rd Ethiopia-Rwanda Joint Ministerial Commission was held from 11 to 13 February 2024 in Addis Ababa co-chaired by Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie and Rwandan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Dr. Vincent Biruta ([See Article](#)).

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie took part in the 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union that convened at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14-15 February 2024([See Article](#)).

On Thursday (February 15) during a bilateral meeting on the margins of the 44<sup>th</sup> Executive Council of the AU, Ethiopia and South Africa signed a *Strategic Partnership Agreement* effective immediately. The agreement was signed by Foreign Minister Amb. Taye Atske Selassie on the Ethiopian side and Minister of the Department of the International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Naledi Pandor, on the South African side.

FM Ambassador Taye on Wednesday (February 14) on behalf of the People and Government of Ethiopia sent out a condolence message to the Peoples and Governments of the UAE and Bahrain in light of the recent casualties due to terrorist attacks on military officers of the aforementioned countries on a training mission in Somalia. He said, the attack is a despicable criminal act that Ethiopia condemns in the strongest possible terms.

The Ministry of Finance, on Thursday (February 15), held an in-country review of the *Horn of Africa Initiative (HoAI)* to showcase Ethiopia's commitment to promoting regional integration and cooperation through this additional layer of platform. Senior government officials, agency heads, and civil society representatives attended the gathering.

The *Ethiopia- Türkiye Investment and Trade Promotion Forum* was held on Thursday (February 15) at the Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa. In her remarks, Ethiopian Investment Commission Commissioner Hanna Araya Selassie, highlighted the multifaceted opportunities Ethiopia offers to investors with its large and growing domestic market, fastest-growing economy, and strategic location as a gateway to Africa, the Middle East, and Europe ([See Article](#)).

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ambassador Mesganu Arga on Thursday (February 15) conferred with Kenyan counterpart Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei on bilateral and regional issues including the upcoming Joint Ministerial Commission and the need to expedite agreements reached in the energy, telecommunications, aviation, maritime and security sectors, on the margins of the 37<sup>th</sup> AU Summit.

## **Djibouti**

President Ismail Omar Guelleh on Wednesday (February 14) held a tête-à-tête meeting with his Guinea-Bissau counterpart Umara Sissoco Embalo on issues of common interest. President Embalo was in the Horn of African nation for two-day official visit upon the invitation of the former.

President Ismail Omar Guelleh during an exclusive interview with *Asharq Al-Awsat* on Monday (February 12) disclosed that his country has been cooperating with major powers, including Saudi Arabia, to ensure safe passage for international shipping in the Bab El-Mandeb and the Gulf of Aden.

## **Kenya**

The Executive Office of the President, in the aftermath of a cabinet meeting chaired by President William Ruto at State House Nairobi on Wednesday (February 14) released a Despatch highlighting the proceedings of the meeting. The Despatch noted, the meeting considered various Bills, Policies, Treaties, Conventions, and Agreements to anchor the implementation of various State Programmes and Projects as set out under the *Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)*.

Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Wycliffe Musalia Mudavadi, on the sidelines of the 44<sup>th</sup> EC of the AU, attended a high-level policy dialogue on ocean governance and blue economy co-sponsored by Comoros, Seychelles, Portugal, Africa-Europe Foundation, African Union Commission and European Union. While participating at the EC meeting, PCS and CS Mudavadi “defended Kenya’s human rights record and the integrity of the police service”, the Foreign Office revealed.

Cabinet Secretary for Defense Aden Duale during a visit to Washington DC over the week stated, that Kenya is staying in the US-led international coalition to fight

Yemeni Houthi rebels. The CS said, Nairobi will continue playing on the side of the US when it comes to counter-terrorism and marine navigation safety.

Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Korir Sing'Oei disclosed on Thursday (February 15) that the Government is ready to support opposition leader Raila Amolo Odinga's candidacy for the seat of the Chairperson of the AUC. In a post, the PS said, facilitating the candidature of qualified Kenyans to regional and international organizations is one of the mandates of the Foreign Office and Kenya is on a "standby to support this quest of a well deserving national."

## **South Sudan**

A high-level delegation led by President Salva Kiir Mayardit on Thursday afternoon (February 15) arrived in Addis Ababa to take part in the 37<sup>th</sup> AU Summit.

During a meeting with Governor of Warrap State on Thursday (February 15) at the Office of the President in the Capital Juba, President Kiir ordered Governor Kuol Muor Muor to restore peace and stability in the area in light of the recent intercommunal clashes. Warrap is a state in the Bahr el Ghazal region, North-West of the country.

## **Sudan**

International Organization for Migration (IOM) in its monthly *Displacement Tracking Matrix* (DTM) released on Tuesday (February 13) stated that the ongoing war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in multiple cities across the country have hitherto close to 6 point 3 million persons have been displaced.

The Horn of African country's telecommunications services partially restored on Monday (February 12) after government-owned *Sudani* company set up a temporary data centre in Port Sudan.

---

## Ethiopia at the 44<sup>th</sup> Executive Council of the African Union

The 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union convened at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14-15 February 2024. A high-level delegation led by incoming Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie Amde, took part in the ministerial meeting.

Speaking during the Opening Ceremony of the 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive, FM Ambassador Taye stressed, the crucial importance of the theme of this year's AU Summit " *"Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa"* " He said, it profoundly resonates with the quest for progress and development of the African Peoples. The theme, Minister Taye noted, underscores the urgent need to build resilient education systems that provide increased access. He added, it also aspires to promote inclusivity, to champion lifelong learning, and to ensure quality education for all children in Africa.

Speaking of the special emphasis accorded to by the Government to the key sector, he stated, over the last five years, the Government has prioritized investment to enhance quality education. Through our nation-wide school feeding programs, feeding over six million students daily, he added, we have ensured participation and witnessed the positive impact education can have on the lives of our people. Through a deliberate policy intervention, the Government increased the number of public boarding schools and remote learning centres, thereby enhancing inclusive and quality education the FM disclosed.

FM Taye also called upon the participants to support the proposition by Ethiopia for the inclusion of Amharic as the official language of the African Union. Sensibly realizing this aspiration has the potential further empower indigenous African languages in the fruition of the Continent's progress and would gradually honour Africa's linguistic diversity and strengthen our collective identity as Africans, he stated.

On the margins of the Executive Council meeting, Ambassador Taye, held several discussions with counterparts from Tunisia, the Central African Republic, Portugal, Angola, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Cameroon, South Africa; Nabil Ammar, Sylvie Baïpo-Temon, João Gomes Cravinho, Tete Antonio, Ambassador Frederick Shava, Ambassador Albert Shingiro, Lejeune Mbella Mbella and Naledi Pandor, respectively, on bilateral, regional and global issues of common interest. Ethiopia as a result has signed *General Cooperation Agreement* with Angola and a *Strategic Partnership Agreement* with the southern African country, South Africa. In the same token, State Minister for Foreign Affairs a held bilateral side meeting with Libyan Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammed Issa.

## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethiopia-Rwanda Joint Ministerial Commission

The Third Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) meeting between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Rwanda was held from 11 to 13 February 2024 in Addis Ababa. The Ministerial meeting held on 13 February was preceded by a two-day of high officials and experts meeting held on 11 and 12 February 2024.

The Ethiopian delegation at the JMC was led by Foreign Minister Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie while the Rwandan side was headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Dr. Vincent Biruta. The meeting was attended by high government officials and experts sourced various parastatals of both countries.

In the three-day ministerial deliberation, the participants discussed on ways of further bolstering cooperation between Ethiopia and the Great Lakes state in the political, peace and security, economic, socio-cultural, natural resources management, environment and climate fields, among others.

Both heads of delegations in their opening remarks commended the excellent relations and partnership that exists between the two countries and reiterated their commitment to take the multifaceted cooperation to greater heights. Ethiopia and Rwanda are strategic partners collaborating in regional and international fora since establishing diplomatic relations.

Ethiopia and Rwanda also champion a firm stance on the need to institute a cooperation regime that ensures a fair and equitable utilization of transboundary resources. In this regard, both countries have signed and ratified the Nile Basin [Cooperative Framework Agreement](#) (CFA) and are committed to work in collaboration on the development and management of the basin for the benefit of the peoples of all the riparian states.

At the conclusion of the three days meeting, five Memoranda of Understanding on political consultation, investment cooperation, trade facilitation, cooperation in sports as well as in disaster reduction and risk management were signed by high officials of the respective institutions, expanding the areas of cooperation to further exploit available opportunities.

## Addis Hosts Ethio-Türkiye Investment and Trade Promotion Forum

On Thursday (February 15), Addis Ababa hosted the *Ethiopia-Türkiye Investment and Trade Promotion Forum* at the Skylight Hotel. The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) in collaboration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia and

the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations (ECCSA) organised the *Ethio-Türkiye/Sakarya Investment and Trade Promotion Forum*.

During the forum, a comprehensive overview of investment prospects in Ethiopia was provided for Türkiye investors, complemented by insights from EIC Commissioner, Hanna Araya Selassie, who explained on the government's reform initiatives and pledged steadfast support from the EIC for prospective investors. Commissioner Hanna highlighted the multifaceted opportunities Ethiopia offers to investors with its large and growing domestic market, fastest growing economy and strategic location as gateway to Africa, the Middle East and Europe. She also reaffirmed the Government's continued commitment through the EIC to provide end-to-end services facilitating ease doing business in Ethiopia.

ECCSA President Melaku Azeze, in his remarks stressed, the longstanding relationship between the two countries in particular in trade, investment and tourism sectors.

Technology transfer and best practices in tech and innovation between the two countries was also touched upon by the forum.