

## NEWS

### PM Meles Says Ethiopia Well-Poised to Witness Marked Economic Growth

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has characterized the current budget year as one well-poised to see a repeat for a fourth-year in a row of economic leap-frogging with forecasts pointing to a 10.1 percent growth.

In a mid-year report the Prime Minister presented to the 22nd regular session of the House of Peoples' Representatives,



Meles said the agricultural sector has registered a 10.9 percent growth contributing the lion's share for the overall national economic growth.

In terms of rate of growth, the manufacturing industry sector has taken the lead outpacing the agricultural sector for the first time, with its 12.5 percent current record from the previous year's 8.1 percent growth, Meles said.

#### **Prime Minister Meles Zenawi presenting the report to the House**

He said his government recognizes the need to intervene and stabilize the inflation, especially the surge in food price through supplies from government food reserve and if need be by importing from outside.

With regard to Somalia, the Government, he reported, will carry on providing the necessary support to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, while enhancing Ethiopia's preparedness to forestalling possible aggression which the Government of Eritrea has been threatening, and which is not unlikely provided Asmara's track-record of rash attempts.

Prime Minister Meles referred to the attempt by the Eritrean Government to destabilize the region citing the recent kidnapping of innocent civilians at an area near the border as only a case in point.

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He said Ethiopia will support the TFG of Somalia in the realm of politics as well as in providing its army with training, provided they ask for it. Two-third of the Ethiopian army in Somalia had pulled out and the remaining will do so as planned.

### **Ministry: Kidnapped Ethiopians, Europeans victims of terrorism**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its statement issued on March 14, 2007 said the five Europeans and eight Ethiopians, who have been abducted and taken to Eritrea while site seeing in Afar State were victims of terrorism.

The Ministry disclosed that among the hostages, the five Europeans were freed in Asmara on Tuesday, 13th March 2007 and expressed its satisfaction over the safe release of the European hostages.

However, the Ministry expressed its anxiety over the fate of the eight Ethiopian hostages who have been kidnapped along with the Europeans but have not been released.

According to the statement there is no doubt that the crime of abduction was masterminded and executed by the Eritrean government notwithstanding the fact that the Ethiopian government has discovered this truth, the focus was on securing the safe release of these abducted individuals.

The statement further said that this criminal act is part and parcel of the terrorist activities the Eritrean government has been undertaking. It is to be recalled that the Ethiopian government has disclosed the terrorist acts committed by the Eritrean government in different cities and towns in Ethiopia including Addis Ababa.

Through these terrorist acts, the Eritrean government carried out bomb attacks against hotels, market areas and public transports targeting civilians.

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In particular in its latest terrorist act, the Eritrean regime had planned to disrupt the 8th African Union Summit, which was successfully held in Addis Ababa. This terrorist act was foiled by the joint anti-terror taskforce of the federal police and National Intelligence and Security Service with the active participation of the public.

The international community is fully cognizant of the fact that the Eritrean government is perpetrating terrorist activities aimed at destabilizing the region, the statement said.

The Ministry's statement recalled the Report of the UN Security Council Monitoring team on Somalia which revealed the fact that the Eritrean government has been training, organizing and providing weapons to terrorist groups in Somalia.

The statement added that the anti-peace activities conducted in Somalia by the Eritrean regime in collaboration with the Afghan trained al-Qaeda extremists, the like of Colonel Hassen Dahir Aweys, Abdellah Al-Sudani, Adan Hashi Ayro, Muktar Robo and other extremists was thwarted by the Ethiopian defense force.

It is clear that the Eritrean regime is bent on reorganizing the remnants of the Islamic Courts in order to send them in yet other terrorist missions, it said.

Thus, it has become manifestly evident that the Eritrean regime not only supports and propounds terrorism but is also directly involved in active terrorism, the statement said.

The Ethiopian government has reiterated its commitment to securing the well-being and safe release of the hostages and that it has been exerting utmost efforts to this end, the statement noted.

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### **Tekeda: Somalia Needs Broad Based Government**

State Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tekeda Alemu said there is absolute need for broad based government in Somalia.

While conferring with a UN delegation here, Tekeda said the representation of all political forces, civic groups, and communities among others is vital for lasting peace and stability in Somalia.



He said, the Somalia Transitional Federal Government deserves the support of the international community, adding that it is important to bring on board some elements of Somalia who feel marginalized.

#### **Tekeda briefing the UN delegation**

Representatives of the UN delegation on their part said broad based, all-inclusive representation is necessary for Somalis to feel secured.

They appreciated the firm stand of Uganda for its timely deployment of part of African Union peacekeeping troops.

International community should help the Transitional Federal Government given its determination for tranquility in that country.

### **EMFNS Calls Diplomats to Play Key Role for Millennium Festival**

Ethiopian Millennium Festival National Secretariat /EMFNS/ called upon Ethiopian diplomats to contribute their part for the colorful celebration of the Ethiopian Millennium.

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In a briefing given to newly assigned diplomats and employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs /MoFA/, Seyoum Bereded, Director of the secretariat said Ethiopian missions abroad are expected to facilitate condition whereby Ethiopians and Ethiopians in origin could attend the Millennium celebration in the country.

The contribution of Ethiopian diplomats in positive image making is immense, he said.

Mulugeta Asrate, Deputy Director of the Secretariat on his part expressed the conviction of the secretariat to cease this opportunity for promoting the extraordinary, historical, cultural and natural attractions of Ethiopia.

The Millennium celebration is a continuation and a kick-start for democracy, good governance and development than an event of mere entertainment.

## Ethiopia Keen to Cooperate With FAO

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tekeda Alemu said that Ethiopia is committed to cooperate with the World Food and Agricultural Organization /FAO/.



**Tekeda receiving FAO Sub-regional  
Coordinator for East Afrca**

While receiving the credential of FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Eastern Africa, MAFA E. Chipeta, Tekeda said, Ethiopia would do whatever possible to assist FAO.

He said the cooperation would be further strengthened in the interest of Ethiopia and the sub-region.

Agriculture occupies central point in the development of Ethiopia, Tekeda said.

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Mr. Chipeta on his part said he count on the full support of the Ethiopian Government during his tenure here.

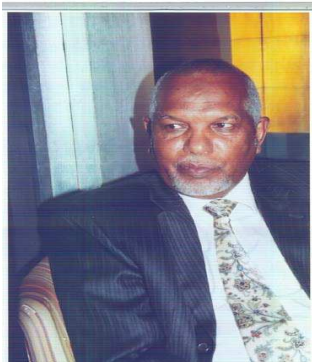
The new sub-regional FAO coordinator reaffirmed the strong commitment of FAO to make a difference in the sub-region in general and Ethiopia in particular.

He said, "Ethiopia is one of the oldest country in Africa with a recent history of showing dramatic changes by overcoming all Challenges."

### Speaker Says Ethio-Sudanese Relations Excellent

Speaker of the Sudanese National Assembly Dr. Ahmed Ibrahim El-Tahir said the relations between Ethiopia and the Sudan has reached its highest level.

Dr. Ahmed, who paid a working visit to Ethiopia leading a delegation of Sudanese MPs told MoFA Newsletter that the Sudanese Assembly and the House of Peoples' Representatives should coordinate their activities in the international agenda.



He added the Houses of both countries should work towards achieving the common goods of their people.

The speaker said that during his stay in Addis Ababa he had the opportunity of witnessing the various socio-economic development activities underway in various parts of the country.

The cordial relations between Ethiopia and the Sudan have a significant contribution to sustainable peace in the region of the Horn of Africa, he said.

#### **Dr. Ahmed Ibrahim El-Tahir**

The Sudanese delegation met and held talks with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, President Girma Wolde-Georgis, and other senior government officials of the country and also visited flower farms in areas surrounding Addis Ababa.

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### **Ethio-China Joint Commission Seals Agreement**

The Ethio-China Joint Commission on economic, technical, scientific and trade signed various development agreements.

At the conclusion of the Joint Commission Meeting held in Beijing, China from March 19-25, 2007 Ethiopian delegation led by State Minister of Finance and Economic Development /MoFED/, Mekonnen Manyazewal and Chinese officials signed various development projects that are in line with the Five Years Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development /PASDP/ plans on agriculture, health, education and capacity building.

Asia, Australasian and Middle East Directorate told MoFA Newsletter that a grant agreement is also signed to provide 20 million RMB to Ethiopia.

The delegation met with the Vice Mayor of Shanghai, Shanghai Development and Reform Commission Officials among others and exchanged experience.

The next meeting of the Commission will be held in Addis Ababa.

### **Ethiopian Ambassadors Present Credentials**

The Newly appointed Ethiopian ambassadors to Malawi and Jordan presented their credentials to leaders of the respective countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

Nairobi-based Ethiopian ambassador to Malawi, Disassa Dribssa, presented his credential to Malawian President Bingu Wa Mutharika.

Ambassador Disassa said the two countries are expected to sign and implement agreements on trade, economy, culture, technical cooperation and double taxation avoidance, among others

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President Mutharika on his part appreciated the efforts Ethiopia is exerting to bring peace and stability in East Africa and the continent as a whole and invited President Girma and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to pay official visit to Malawi.

Meanwhile, Cairo-based newly appointed Ethiopian ambassador to Jordan Ibrahim Idris presented his credential letter to the Jordanian king Abdullah II bin Al Hussein.

Ambassador Ibrahim said Ethiopia is keen to forge diplomatic and trade relations with Jordan.

King Abdullah on his part said his country is desirous to create strong relations with Ethiopia.

## **Embassy promotes Ethiopia's Investment Opportunities**

Some members of the National People's Congress of China and the Chinese media have been briefed by the Ethiopian Embassy in Beijing on the conducive investment opportunities in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian coffee ceremony gave an enchanting milieu to the event, which saw the participation of Kenyan and Tanzanian embassies .

The event was organized by the Embassy in collaboration with Wango Coffee and Produce Co. Ltd and Voice of China, an advertising agency.

The event was broadcast by the Chinese media.