

A Week in the Horn (01/06/2018)

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News in Brief

Africa and African Union

The deaths of one hundred and twenty-nine UN peacekeepers during 2017 were commemorated during the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers at the UN Headquarters in New York on Tuesday (May 29). The theme for the International Day of UN Peacekeepers for 2018 was “70 Years of Service and Sacrifice.” It paid tribute to the contributions of uniformed and civilian personnel in the work of the United Nations and honored the more than 3,700 peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving under the UN flag since 1948, including the 129 who died last year – six of them from Ethiopia. **(See article)**

The Department of Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Government of Togo organized the 4th Meeting of the Ministerial Working Group on the Single Africa Air Transport Market (SAATM) on Monday this week (May 28), in Lomé, Togo. **(See article)**

The Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) presented an African model of a National Financing Vehicle to promote green growth and climate resilience at an event last week (May 25) on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) in South Korea. The event highlighted Rwanda and Ethiopia's efforts to use public investment funding to bring in private sector investment in close cooperation with the GGGI. **(See article)**

A “Digital Trade in Africa: Implications for Inclusion and Human Rights” conference opened on Thursday (May 31) in Addis Ababa to discuss digital trade within the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area. The two-day conference is organized by the African Trade Policy Centre at the UNECA together with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights East Africa Regional Office, and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Geneva Office. It is expected to inform development of joint on digital trade, inclusion, privacy and human rights and offer policy recommendations for the second phase of the AfCFTA negotiations. The event is being attended by experts from the African Union Commission, civil society organizations, Regional Economic Communities, academia, international organizations, private sector, and women and youth representatives.

Ethiopia

President Dr. Mulatu Teshome and Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed led Ethiopia's celebrations its National Day on Monday (May 28), Ginbot 20, urging Ethiopians at home and abroad to renew their commitment to address contemporary challenges in their country. National Day this year was the 27th anniversary of Ginbot 20 marking the final defeat of the previous Derg regime. This year's theme was "Enhanced National Consensus and Democratic Unity for Enhanced National Success." (See article)

President Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and current Chairperson of the African Union, made a two-day state visit to Ethiopia on Friday and Saturday last week (May 25-26). During his visit he held talks with Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed and visited the Industrial Park at Hawasa. (See article)

UK Prime Minister Theresa May spoke with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on the telephone on Thursday (May 31), thanking Prime Minister Abiy for the release of prisoners including British national Andargachew Tsige. She congratulated Dr. Abiy on his recent appointment and said the UK firmly supported his reform and reconciliation efforts. They also discussed development assistance, and how the two countries could deepen their trade links and ways UK expertise in infrastructure and financing could support Ethiopia's economic development agenda.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy received South Sudanese President Salva Kiir on Wednesday (May 30). During the meeting, the two leaders discussed bilateral as well as regional peace and stability. Both leaders agreed that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-mediated peace process offered a viable option to put an end to the ongoing conflict.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy briefed heads of the National Defense Force of Ethiopia on national and current affairs on Friday (June 1).

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu met Sudan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, El-Dardiri Mohamed Ahmed today (June 1). Their discussion covered bilateral, regional and international issues including the South Sudan and Somalia peace processes.

Dr. Workneh held a very cordial and fruitful discussion with the Prime Minister of Somalia, Hassan Ali Khayre on Sunday (May 27). They agreed to work more closely together to further deepen and strengthen the brotherly relationship between the two countries.

Dr. Workneh conferred with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Republic of Ecuador, Maria Fernanda Espinosa on Tuesday (May 29). Dr. Workneh praising Ecuador's continuous commitment in sustaining the four decades long diplomatic relations with Ethiopia noted Foreign Minister Maria's visit would certainly add up to the countries' growing ties in investment as well as business sectors. Mentioning number of Ecuadorian investors that have engaged in floriculture and manufacturing of greenhouse and tunnels investment in his country, the Foreign Minister called for more Ecuadorian investors to exploit the attractive investment schemes in Ethiopia.

Dr. Workneh conferred with Mr. Rashes Al-Hajri, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Ethiopia and the Dean of Arab Diplomatic Corps on Wednesday (May 30). Upon welcoming the Arab Diplomatic Corps, Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh wished them and Muslims all over the world performing the processions of the Holy Month of Ramadan a Ramadan Mubarak. In their discussion, the two sides touched upon the issue of Palestine. As a country that is both a founding member of and committed to the endeavors of the African Union and the United Nations, Dr. Workneh reiterated that "Ethiopia has been working closely with the AU and the UN towards resolving the Israeli-Palestine conflict peacefully through negotiation and political dialogue."

The Ethio-South Korea international business forum was held in Busan city, South Korea at the end of last week. Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation, Dr. Abreham Tekeste, briefed the participants on the business opportunities in Ethiopia. He also expressed his hope that this business forum would create a chance for Korean companies to make a pre-investment visit to Ethiopia and explore its business opportunities.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mrs. Hirut Zemene bade farewell to the first Qatari Ambassador to Ethiopia, Abdulaziz Sultan Jasim al Rumaihi on Wednesday (May 30). Mrs. Hirut thanked the Ambassador for his tremendous contributions in expanding the relations of the two countries. Over the past couple of years, added Mrs. Hirut Ethiopia and Qatar have enjoyed a noteworthy relationship mapping out mutually beneficial schemes in the areas of investment, health, education and people-to-people relationship. The State Minister praised the high-level exchange of visits and the signing of the diplomatic visa-waver agreement, that had added meaningful impact to the ever-growing ties. Mrs. Hirut stressed Ethiopia would continue to work more closely with Qatar in a bid to strengthen the bilateral relationship further.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Aklilu Hailemichael received UK Business delegation on Friday (June 1). Dr. Aklilu expressed the huge investment opportunities in Ethiopia along with the rich natural resources in the country, adding that the government fully supports and encourages investments in the mining sector. Members of the delegation reflected on Ethiopia's untapped potential in the mining sector, and expressed their keen interest to invest in graphite exploration and production, adding: "Ethiopia could be a world class graphite producer".

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Professor Afework Kassu met Ms. Leena-Kaisa Mikola , Director General of the Department for Africa and the Middle East in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland at his office on Tuesday (May 29). The two sides dealt at length on ways of further enhancing the longstanding ties and bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Professor Afework took note of the current bilateral cooperation and stressed the need to strengthen investment and trade ties between the two countries. The State Minister called on Finish Investors to exploit the lucrative investment opportunities in Ethiopia.

Professor Afework held discussions with the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Dr. Kituyi Mukhisa on Thursday (May 31), focusing on further strengthening the cooperation between Ethiopia and UNCTAD. Professor Afework commended the role the UNCTAD plays in Ethiopia's nationwide efforts to alleviate

poverty and become a middle-income country according to the aspirations envisaged in the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP).

Professor Afework conferred with Japan's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Shinichi Saida on Thursday (May 31), during which the two sides emphasized the need to further enhance bilateral cooperation. The State Minister underlined the long-standing relations between Ethiopia and Japan dating back to the 1930s. He accentuated the fact that the two countries share ancient history and civilization. Touching upon the bilateral and economic relations that two countries have shared, the two sides deliberated at length on ways to strengthen cooperation in the manufacturing, tourism, trade and education sectors.

Ambassador Nega Tsegaye, Director-General for Public Diplomacy and Communications held discussions with the Ethiopian Public Diplomacy Team on Thursday (May 31). The discussion focused on the composition and organizational structure of the team.

Ethiopia's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Ambassador Tebeje Berhe said an agreement between the UAE and Ethiopia to protect the rights of domestic workers will be formalized by the year's end. The agreement is one of several that Ethiopia has made with other Middle Eastern countries after a series of high-profile cases in the region concerning abuse of domestic workers. The Ambassador added, "It's very important for the rights of domestic workers and at the same time for employers."

Djibouti

Foreign Minister Mahamoud Ali Youssouf held talks with the visiting Somali Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Ambassador Ahmed Isse Awad, on Thursday May 31). The discussions focused on strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation "as well as deepening understanding on regional and international issues". The ministers signed several agreements, including one on security to establish a framework for promoting constructive cooperation between the two countries. The Somali delegation paid a courtesy visit to the President of Djibouti, and also visited the Parliament and the Diplomatic Institute.

Eritrea

The week-long celebrations of the 25th anniversary of independence ended on Thursday last week (May 24) with a parade at the Asmara Stadium and a speech from President Isaias who promised "vision through toil" and spoke of the need to implement programs for development, highlighting water conservation, fishing, industrialization and energy, infrastructure, public transportation, fiscal and monetary reforms, restructuring local governance, education and greater Diaspora participation.

Kenya

President Kenyatta held talks on Wednesday (May 30) with visiting Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi. The presidency said they discussed bilateral issues and security matters including the continued support for AMISOM. They updated each other on shared security concerns as well as

progress in regional efforts, and discussed multilateral issues including Kenya's bid for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council

Somalia

Somalia President Mohamed Abdullahi made a one-day visit to Kenya on Wednesday (May 30). He discussed bilateral relations and further cooperation on key security, trade and diplomatic ties with President Kenyatta. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation of ministers and senior government officials.

President Mohamed Abdullahi attended the swearing-in of Bashe Yussuf Ahmed, the new Chief Justice on Tuesday (May 29). His predecessor Hassan Ibrahim Idle Suleiman was dismissed two days earlier. The President said this was the first stage in reform of the justice sector and would be followed by the formation of the Judicial Service Commission. The President said Mr. Ahmed's first task would be to implement transparent and equitable justice.

Deputy Prime Minister, Mahdi Mohamed Guled on Tuesday (May 29) held talks with Danish Ambassador Knudsen on bilateral relations and development projects. Ambassador Knudsen pledged her government's support for the Somali government in restoring peace and stability.

Ambassador Knudsen, Denmark's Ambassador to Kenya, Somalia, Eritrea and Seychelles, paid a visit to AMISOM headquarters in Mogadishu on Monday (May 28). The Ambassador held talks with AMISOM leadership and pledged Denmark's continued support for AMISOM, for stabilization and the transition plan in Somalia

Italy this week contributed another €1 million to the Somalia Infrastructure Fund, bringing its contributions to about US \$3.2 million. It is now the second-largest contributor to the fund after the African Development Bank. Contributions to the Fund now amount to US \$29.7 million, 44% of the total pledged. The Somalia Infrastructure Fund is a Multi-Partner Fund to support Somalia to rebuild institutions, rehabilitate key infrastructure, and reinforce economic governance. Administered by the African Development Bank, it aims to contribute to the efforts to establish basic institutions of a functioning state, and accelerate inclusive and sustainable economic recovery and development.

South Sudan

The IGAD Council of Ministers held its 62nd Extra-Ordinary Session on Thursday (May 31) in Addis Ababa. The session followed last week's meeting of the IGAD High-Level Revitalization Forum on South Sudan, and opening the meeting, Ethiopian Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu emphasized that the Revitalization Process on South Sudan had now reached a decisive moment. **(See article)**

Sudan

Foreign Minister El-Dardiri Mohamed Ahmed on a visit to Cairo this week said there was broad agreement in principle between Sudan and Egypt, and Ethiopia, about ending the deadlock in

talks over GERD. He said; "We are determined to overcome our differences on issues pertaining to the Renaissance Dam on a tripartite level between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia." Mr. Ahmed said a bilateral summit would be held between President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi and President Omar El-Bashir in October.

National Day celebrated across Ethiopia

Ethiopia celebrated its National Day on Monday (May 28), Ginbot 20, with strong messages from President Dr. Mulatu Teshome and Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed urging Ethiopians at home and abroad to renew their commitment to address contemporary challenges in their country. National Day this year was the 27th anniversary of Ginbot 20 marking the final defeat of the previous Derg regime, and the theme of this 2018 anniversary was “Enhanced National Consensus and Democratic Unity for Enhanced National Success.”

President Mulatu Teshome congratulated Ethiopians at the closing of a ceremony of the celebration attended by high-level government officials, the diplomatic community and invited guests. Dr. Mulatu said, “Ginbot 20 is a day on which the foundation of democratic unity was laid in the country,” adding, “We should seize the moment of the celebration as a good opportunity to renew our commitment for more national consensus and growth.” The President said the government would be doing more to protect the rights of Ethiopians living abroad and widen the political space for competing political parties inside Ethiopia. He said: “Parties which have been operating outside the country joined us in today’s celebration and this testifies that national unity is growing in the country.” The victory of Ginbot 20 was the result of the sacrifices paid by the nations, nationalities, and people of Ethiopia who wanted to build a democratic system, said the President. It laid the foundation for the new Ethiopia. The President called on all Ethiopians to stand united to build Ethiopia’s peace and stability on firm foundations.

In his congratulatory message, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, urged Ethiopians to extend love and forgiveness to others while celebrating the victory day. He also called on the public to show their commitment for reading, cleansing their environment and protecting national values during the celebration.

Different Ethiopian Embassies and other bodies in different parts of the world have also colorfully celebrated the occasion along with Ethiopian nationals, diplomats and prominent personalities of different countries during this week.

Countries from all corners of the world sent congratulatory messages. Mike Pompeo, US Secretary of State, said that “On behalf of President Trump and the people of the United States, I send my best wishes to all Ethiopians as they celebrate their National Day on May 28.” He said, “The United States and Ethiopia share a long and deep friendship based on our commitment to sustainable development, democracy, human rights, peace, and good governance, as well as on our important and influential population of Ethiopian-Americans, who contribute so much to our own country.” He added, “Congratulations to your new Prime Minister, Dr. Abiy Ahmed, who

has our full support in his determination to bring greater political openness to Ethiopia and to continue the great economic gains made in recent years. I offer best wishes for a joyous and safe holiday, and I reaffirm the commitment of the United States to our enduring friendship.”

King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the King of Saudi Arabia and Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, also sent cables of congratulation to President Dr. Mulatu Teshome. The King wished the President constant good health and happiness and his people steady progress and prosperity. The Crown Prince also wished the President constant good health and happiness and steady progress and prosperity for the people of Ethiopia. UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan also sent message of congratulations to President Dr. Mulatu. Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Cameroon's President Paul Biya and President of Cuba Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez were among many others who sent messages of congratulations to the people of Ethiopia.

This year’s celebration of National Day carries greater weight for Ethiopians in and outside the country as the Government is currently undertaking a whole series of noteworthy reforms across all sectors of the country’s institutions. Over the last 27 years, under the leadership of EPRDF, the country has registered unprecedented double-digit economic development with major results registered in infrastructure development, education, health services, industrial development, agriculture and other sectors. With its major role in peace keeping and as a non-permanent member of the UN, Ethiopia has achieved global recognition, and it has become the best investment and tourist destination in Africa and one of the fastest growing economies on the continent.

Equally, a lot remains to be done in terms of ensuring democracy, good governance and equity. Now, at the forefront of the Prime Minister’s agenda is the widening of democratic space and national unity, and the Government has already begun implementing many of its pledges, not least the release of many prisoners, among them those charged with treason and terrorism. Ginbot 20 this year, with its theme of enhanced national consensus and democratic unity can certainly provide all Ethiopians with the real hope, inspiration and reconciliation to achieve enhanced national unity and development, as well as the peace, democracy, justice and economic equity they deserve.

President Kagame’s State Visit to Ethiopia

President Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and current Chairperson of the African Union, arrived in Addis Ababa on Friday last week (May 25) for a two-day state visit to Ethiopia. Upon arrival at Bole International Airport, he was warmly welcomed by Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed subsequently received President Paul Kagame at the National Palace. The welcoming ceremony in honor of President Kagame included presentation of a bouquet of flowers followed by the salutations of the National Guard of Honor, the performance of the national anthems of Rwanda and Ethiopia, followed by a 21-gun salute and a musical performance by a cultural troupe from Ethiopia's National Theatre. Following this, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy and President Kagame held private discussions on ways of further enhancing the diverse, longstanding, and historic relations between Ethiopia and Rwanda, against the backdrop of the existing strong and close people-to-people ties. . The two leaders made a commitment to strengthen relationships in key sectors, including defense and air services. Ethiopia and Rwanda signed 11 bilateral agreements across multiple sectors last year during the visit of Ethiopia's former Prime Minister, Hailemariam Dessalegn, to Rwanda.

Later in the day, the Prime Minister accompanied President Kagame on a visit to the city of Hawasa, capital of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, and to the Hawasa Industrial Park. The visiting delegations led by, Premier Dr. Abiy and President Kagame respectively, arrived at Hawasa Airport where they were welcomed by Regional Government officials. At the Hawasa Industrial Park, dubbed “the first sustainable textile and apparel park in Africa”, officials from the Ethiopian Investment Commission gave President Kagame and his delegation a general overview of the Park development. President Kagame, accompanied by Prime Minister Dr. Abiy, then had a comprehensive tour of the Park, visiting, among others, JP Textile, PBH and Ontex companies.

The Hawasa Industrial Park is Ethiopia's flagship industrial park, a state-of-the-art facility constructed on a land area of 1.4 million square meters. It is the largest vertically integrated textile and apparel park on the continent. Currently, it hosts over 18 leading global companies that are now operational. They have an anticipated export value of USD 1 billion. Among the many apparel and textile manufacturing companies currently housed at the Park are PVH Corp, Wuxi Jinmao Co., TAL Apparel, JP Textile and Indochine International, helping to ensure the sustainability of high-quality supplies to world class brands such as PVH, Gap, JC Penney, VF, Petco, Mark & Spencer, Tommy Hilfiger, Levi's, Ralph Lauren and others.

Following the visit to the Hawassa Industrial Park, the Ethiopian and the Rwandan delegations held a working dinner in honor of President Kagame at the Haile Resort. The ceremony was embellished with mutual exchange of gifts and the performance of a folk music from different parts of the Region. Speaking on the occasion, Premier Dr. Abiy expressed his personal appreciation for President Kagame, who he underscored, is not only the President of Rwanda but also an influential African leader with far-reaching contributions such as peace and security. He described the President as “a freedom fighter, great gift for the people of Rwanda and for the continent. After fighting for freedom, it is difficult to establish institutions, but when you go to Rwanda you can see how this leader has changed the country” Touching upon the affinity that binds Ethiopia and Rwanda together, the premier underscored, that the peoples of the two countries have common beliefs and cultures with an intertwined future. President Kagame, who expressed his gratitude for the warm hospitality accorded to him on his visit, noted the visit was marked by the way people from both countries connected at the level of heart-to-heart links.

The Prime Minister also revealed that Ethiopia would “very soon” follow Rwanda’s example allowing all Africans to travel to the country without visas. The policy will open up the east African country to African visitors, and it will undoubtedly ease the free movement of African nationals and boost tourism. On 1 January this year, Rwanda started implementing its new visa regime under which nationals of all African countries get a visa upon arrival without prior application. The issuance of visa-on-arrival for all countries was widely celebrated across the continent, and on social media. African countries are beginning to act on the implementation of the African Union’s 2063 Agenda for “a continent with seamless borders” to help facilitate the free movement of African citizens. Several countries in the past year have started implementing the 30-day visa-on-arrival policy recommended by the AU, including Kenya, Ghana and Zimbabwe. The AU has urged member states to champion the visa-on-arrival initiative describing it as “critical to facilitating and encourage intra-African trade and investments, as well as tourism” The African Development Bank also recommends that African countries should promote more visa-free regional blocs, push for greater reciprocity, and introduce more visa-on-arrival policies for Africans.

The IGAD Council of Ministers’ Extra-Ordinary Session on South Sudan

The IGAD Council of Ministers held its 62nd Extra-Ordinary Session on Thursday (May 31) in Addis Ababa. The session followed last week’s meeting of the IGAD High-Level Revitalization Forum on South Sudan, and opening the meeting, Ethiopian Foreign Minister Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu emphasized that the Revitalization Process on South Sudan had now reached a decisive moment.

Present were Mr. Mohamoud Ali Youssouf, Minister for Foreign Affairs Djibouti; Dr. Al-Dirdiri Mohamed Ahmed, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sudan; Henry Okello Oryem, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda; Mrs. Hirut Zemene Kassa, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia; Abdulqadir Ahmed Khair, State Minister of Somalia; George Orina, Charge d’affaires of the Kenyan Embassy in Ethiopia representing the Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Kenya. Ambassador Berhanu Kebede, Chief of Staff of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) representing Festus Mogae, the Chairperson of JMEC; Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, IGAD Executive Secretary, Ambassador Ismail Chergui, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, and Ambassador Ismail Wais, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, were also in attendance as were representatives of the UN, the EU and the Troika (Norway, UK and US) as well as of China, Co-Chairperson of the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF).

Dr. Workneh noted it had been almost a year since the Council of Ministers had been tasked by the IGAD Heads of State and Government to revitalize the 2015 South Sudanese Peace Agreement. The IGAD Summit of June 12, 2017 firmly instructed the Council members to work for the realization of a permanent ceasefire, an inclusive peace process and a realistic time-line for democratic elections in the Republic of South Sudan. The Chairperson said that since that date the Council along with the Special Envoy and other important stakeholders, had exerted

tremendous efforts and dealt with many challenges to move the peace process forward. In this Forum, added Dr. Workneh, “we have made sure no one is left behind and the process would reflect inclusivity.”

Among the promising results of the revitalization process, the Chairperson noted that it had created an all-inclusive forum for the first time in years, bringing in armed or non-armed groups that had previously been left out of any discussions. The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement with the necessary provisions for punitive actions on violators had also been reactivated. Dr. Workneh added that the Forum had also seen that the Parties had been very disciplined in making use of all the opportunities provided by the mediated discussions, shuttle meetings and proximity talks. The new opposition parties had also managed to form a coalition. He thanked all stakeholders and international partners for their goodwill and hard work to bring the situation to this critical juncture.

Dr. Workneh indicated there were two “important issues” that were vital for the successful conclusion of the rejuvenated peace effort as well heralding what he dubbed “a critical moment.” First, he underlined, all Parties must agree that it was time to accept IGAD’s bridging proposal to move forward. He reiterated that all the Parties to the Process should “realistically stick to the bridging proposal and beef it up to the level that it can further accommodate the basic interests of the Parties.” The bridging proposal covers outstanding governance issues including composition and structure of the transitional government, responsibility sharing, the number of states, and the size and composition of the national parliament. It also embraces security issues like a permanent ceasefire and transitional security arrangements, the timeframe for reintegration of forces and the formation of a national army, security for Juba during the transition, demilitarization of civilian centers, cantonment of forces and security sector reform, as well as other issues. Secondly, Dr. Workneh underlined that the parties should immediately recommit to silence the guns and, once and for all, stick to the document they had signed again in December 2017. He underscored that IGAD would act on those that have violated the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

IGAD’s Special Envoy for South Sudan, Ambassador Ismail Wais gave a status update of the activities of the High Level Revitalization Forum since its commencement in December last year. He reiterated the Chairperson’s call to use wisely the bridging proposal that was prepared taking into account the different views forwarded by all Parties to the Process.

Ambassador Berhanu, on behalf of the JMEC Chairperson, Festus Mogae, recalled the progress since the recommitment of the Cessation of Hostilities and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection of civilian, up to the encouraging talks on responsibility-sharing and security arrangement mechanisms. Expressing his firm belief that the bridging proposal would provide the necessary platform to once and for all solve the enduring conflict in South Sudan, Ambassador Berhanu urged intransigent groups to adhere to the new proposal. Ambassador Ismael Chergui, representing the AU Commission, said despite all the efforts to ensure peace in South Sudan, peace remained elusive. Meanwhile, he noted, the South Sudanese were longing for a meaningful result of the peace talks that would finally bring an end to their sufferings. Against this backdrop, silence should not engender a wrong signal to parties and individuals who prefer to continue fighting, he said.

After listening to the Progress Report of the IGAD Special Envoy on the Revitalization of the

Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict on South Sudan (ARCSS), and the Report of Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements' Monitoring Mechanism Chairperson, General Ibrahim Abduljelil, and exchanging views, the Council acknowledged the commendable work of CTSAMM and JMEC in monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The Council condemned violations of the Agreement and the resulting human rights violations and humanitarian consequences. The Council recommended the Chairperson of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government to consult with members of the Assembly on convening an Extra-Ordinary Summit of the Assembly and to arrange for a face-to-face meeting between Salva Kiir Mayardit and Dr. Riek Machar Teny before the next Summit of the Assembly of the African Union, due to be held on 1 and 2 July in Nouakchott, Mauritania. The Council decided to make a final decision on the effective participation of Dr. Riek Machar Teny in the ongoing peace process. It also determined to submit a request to the IGAD Assembly to delegate the Council to decide on actions to be taken against violators of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on the Assembly's behalf.

The Council also approved the request of the Republic of Poland to join the IGAD Partners Forum.

UN honors fallen Ethiopian peacekeepers at a New York ceremony

Six peacekeepers from Ethiopia were among the 129 military, police and civilian personnel who lost their lives in peacekeeping operations during 2017. The fallen UN peacekeepers were commemorated during the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers at the UN Headquarters in New York on Tuesday (May 29). The theme for the International Day of UN Peacekeepers for 2018 was "70 Years of Service and Sacrifice," and it offered a chance to pay tribute to the contributions of uniformed and civilian personnel to the work of the United Nations and to honor the more than 3,700 peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving under the UN flag since 1948, including the 129 who died last year.

In a message, UN Secretary-General António Guterres paid tribute to the 14 peacekeeping missions currently endeavoring to protect people and advance the cause of peace around the world. He said: "United Nations peacekeeping is a proven investment in global peace, security and prosperity. Together, let us pledge to do all we can to enable that mission to succeed." He expressed his gratitude to the more than one million men and women who have served the United Nations' cause, bringing peace and stability through the years. Over 3700 have fallen in the seventy years since the first UN peacekeeping efforts in 1948. All were remembered and honored on Tuesday.

Involved in UN peacekeeping since the days of the UN and its foundation in 1945, Ethiopia is the largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping. With over 8300 military and police personnel to the UN peace operations in Abyei, Mali, Sudan and South Sudan, Ethiopia is the largest contributor to UN peacekeeping forces, currently supplying 8% of those involved.

Secretary-General Guterres spent International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers in Mali, expressing his solidarity with the United Nations Peacekeeping force in Mali. Last year, 21 troops serving with UN Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) lost their lives, together with seven civilians. At a ceremony in Bamako, the Secretary-General laid a wreath to pay tribute to the fallen peacekeepers at a MINUSMA base. Mr. Guterres told the peacekeepers, they had demonstrated they were capable of all forms of sacrifice. He said: “I want to thank you very much for this effort, these sacrifices, to pay tribute to you, and to say how proud I am to work with you”. He added: “As peacekeepers, you are the foremost symbol of the United Nations itself”.

The General Assembly established the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers in 2002 to pay tribute to all men and women serving in peacekeeping, and to honor the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace. The Assembly designated 29 May as the Day because it was the date in 1948 when the first UN peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, began operations in the Middle East.

UN peacekeeping is a unique and dynamic instrument developed to help countries torn by conflict to create the conditions for lasting peace. Since 1948, UN forces have participated in 71 peacekeeping operations, and today UN peacekeeping deploys more than 100,000 military, police and civilian personnel in 14 peacekeeping operations on four continents with personnel from 124 Member States. UN peacekeeping is truly a global partnership and has proved to be a solid investment in global peace, security, and prosperity. It is a flexible, evolving instrument that brings together political, security and technical tools to assist countries make the difficult transition from conflict to peace. In March this year, the Secretary-General launched a new initiative, “Action for Peacekeeping,” aimed at improving performance and ensuring peacekeeping operations will be fit for their purpose in the face of ever more complex and dangerous theatres of operation. The initiative calls on Member States, the Security Council and troop- and police- contributing countries for a refocusing of peacekeeping with realistic expectations, mobilizing greater support for political solutions and, making peacekeeping missions stronger and safer by deploying well-equipped and well-trained forces.

Ministerial meeting on the Single African Air Transport Market in Lomé

The 4th Meeting of the Ministerial Working Group on the Single Africa Air Transport Market (SAATM) on Monday this week (May 28), held in Lomé, Togo, was organized by the Department of Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Government of Togo. The Ministerial Working Group is composed of African Member States that have signed the Solemn Commitment, Benin, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo and Zimbabwe. Those attending included members of the African Union Commission; representatives of SAATM Member States including ministers in charge of air transport and Directors-General of Civil Aviation; Airline CEOs; members of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and of Regional Economic Communities (RECs);

members of the Monitoring Body of the Yamoussoukro Decision and of NEPAD's Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA); as well as representatives of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA); The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), of ICAO and IATA-Africa; and of AfDB and the World Bank.

In line with the African Union's efforts to ensure that African countries fully implement the key measures needed for the Single Africa Air Transport Market to operate effectively, the meeting took stock of the implementation status of the Market and explored ways to accelerate the harmonization of air service agreements between the Member States of the Single Market. Participants renewed their commitment to implement the decision establishing the Single Africa Air Transport Market and to harmonize all Bilateral Air Services Agreements to ensure the removal of any restrictions that run counter to the Yamoussoukro Decision. The meeting also provided a platform for Member States, currently without any air service agreements, to consider Yamoussoukro Decision-compliant BASAs as appropriate.

The AU Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat, in a statement to the meeting noted that the Single African Air Transport Market was the first of the thirteen Agenda 2063 flagship projects, considered as priorities for continental economic integration, to be launched in January this year. He commended the efforts of the Ministerial Working Group to develop a Roadmap of specific activities, both for the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision and the establishment of the Single Market as well as the establishment of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism. He urged Working Group to spearhead an advocacy campaign to encourage remaining AU Member States to join the single market and to abide by provisions of Yamoussoukro Decision. The AU Chairperson reiterated the commitment of the African Union to fast track what he called this important continental initiative. Chairperson Faki also called on the African Development Bank and other funding partners to expedite resource mobilization efforts towards the full operationalization of the Single African Air Transport Market.

Public-Private Partnerships open doors to climate finance in Rwanda and Ethiopia

The Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) presented an African model of a National Financing Vehicle to promote green growth and climate resilience at an event last week (May 25) on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) in Busan, South Korea.

The AfDB and GGGI have signed an Memorandum of Understanding to promote programs, conduct joint studies and research activities to accelerate green growth options for African countries, as well as to work together in the GGGI's cities programs and the AfDB's initiatives on clean energy, sustainable landscapes, green cities, water and sanitation, with the ultimate goal of strengthening climate resilience in Africa. The MOU was signed by Hyoeun Jenny Kim, deputy director general of GGGI and Amadou Hott, Vice-President, Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth, AfDB.

Ms. Kim said growth “We will focus on Africa, as we are seeing a huge potential in Africa,” adding, “So far, we’ve worked very closely and very extensively with Ethiopia and Rwanda throughout the comprehensive stages of designing and developing projects as well as mobilizing funds.” GGGI has so far worked with only a small number of countries but Ms. Kim said: “these climate funding success stories in Rwanda and Ethiopia have encouraged us to extend our reach to other Africa countries like Senegal, Uganda or Mozambique. She emphasized the need for adopting locally relevant green growth paths in Africa, as well as mobilizing funds. She said her experiences in OECD and in Senegal (where she was Korea’s Ambassador), she understood the need to adapt climate resilience and green growth initiatives to fit the particular condition of each African country.

The event highlighted how Rwanda and Ethiopia have used public investment funding to bring aboard private sector investment with close cooperation with GGGI. The GGGI-Ethiopia partnership aimed to design, develop and implement Ethiopia’s political commitment to its Climate Resilience Green Economy (CRGE) strategy, as well as assist its national financing mechanism, the Ethiopia Climate Resilience Green Economy Facility. This is the country’s primary financial instrument to mobilize, access and combine domestic and international, public and private sources of finance to support the institutional building and implementation of the CRGE Strategy. Fisseha Abera, Director General of the International Financial Institutions Cooperation in Ethiopia said: “As we are raising the green growth and climate resilient funding, especially from small and medium-sized business that constitutes about 90 percent of our business, so are the numbers of projects increasing.” GGGI has been working closely with the government of Ethiopia since 2010 to complement its CRGE strategy. GGGI supported CRGE to mobilize a 60-million-dollar grant from the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund, as well as another 75 million in climate finance. Most recently, GGGI helped mobilize 300 million dollars from the international private sector for the Mekele Water Supply Project. Ms. Kim said: “The CRGE model shows the importance of the government’s political commitment in which the government takes a holistic national approach. So our advisers are working closely with a wide variety of government functions.”

Hubert Ruzibiza, CEO of Rwanda’s Green Fund, revealed how Rwanda had successfully financed green growth and climate resilience through its National Fund for Environment and Climate Change (FONERWA). The Fund’s function is to identify and invest in the best public and private projects that have the potential for transformative change that aligns with Rwanda’s commitment to building a strong green economy. Mr. Ruzibiza said the Fund had created about 137,000 green jobs, rehabilitated 19,304 hectares of land against erosion, and connected about 28,000 families to off-grid clean energy. He said: “FONERWA has a global track record as the national financing mechanism by bringing together public and private sector investment.”

GGGI, headquartered in Seoul, Korea, has 28 member states and employs staff from more than 40 countries. Its areas of focus include green cities, water and sanitation, sustainable landscapes, sustainable energy and cross-cutting strategies for financing mechanisms. The President of the Assembly and Chairman of the Council of GGGI is former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

