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DIPLOMATIC NEWS

Meles, Brown to co-chair new high-level Advisory Group on Climate Change

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and his British counterpart Gordon Brown will co-chair a new high-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing to mobilize the finance promised for climate change during the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen last December.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced establishment of the advisory group at video conferencing held with the two officials. The group includes Heads of State and Government, high-level officials from ministries and central banks, as well as experts on public finance, development and related issues.

With a balance in representation between developing and developed countries, the Group members will be appointed for 10 months and are expected to produce a final report containing recommendations before the next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Mexico in Dec. 2010.



Prime Ministers Meles and Brown during the G-20 summit in London

As part of its work, the Group would develop practical proposals on how to significantly scale-up long-term financing for mitigation and adaptation strategies in developing countries from various public as well as private sources. While some of the existing mechanisms can be scaled up, the Group would in particular focus on the need for new and innovative long-term sources of finance, in order to fill the gap in international climate financing.

It will assess alternatives to secure 100 billion USD annually to support in particular vulnerable countries as of 2020. The group will present report in May or June to UNFCCC. It will also finalize its final recommendation before the negotiation to be held in Mexico, the secretary-general said.

The Group would be guided by an overall framework for new financing mechanisms, studying how new financing is raised, and on how new resources are being delivered. The Group would provide views and suggestions that are based on the best possible analysis, which are politically and technically feasible.

Meles on the occasion said financing is significant for developing countries to enable them prevent the challenges of climate change and benefit from technology. He said the number of countries, which announced their plans in support of the Copenhagen agreement, has reached 66. Meles expressed beliefs that the group will complete its activities successfully, according to the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency.

Source: ENA

Meles Holds Talks with JICA's Senior Vice President



Prime Minister Meles receiving Vice President Oshima in his Office

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi held talks with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Senior Vice President Kenzo Oshima. The talks between the two officials centered on strengthening the development cooperation between Ethiopia and JICA, according to a Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Senior Vice President told Meles that JICA is ready to share its best practices and experiences it attained in the areas of development in general and investment in particular. He said Japan is also desirous to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation existing between JICA and Ethiopia. Oshima also expressed appreciation to the commitment Ethiopia has demonstrated to development.

Meles told the JICA official that the bilateral development cooperation between Ethiopia and JICA has been growing significantly. Meles said Ethiopia is keen to draw lessons from Japanese best practices and experiences in the areas of geothermal, capacity

building, agriculture, and development best practice.

Source: ENA

State Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Japan attended AU Executive Council Session

A high level Japanese government delegation led by H.E. Mr. Tetsuro Fukuyama, State Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Japan, visited Ethiopia to attend the 16th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union which was held from 28-29 January 2010.



State Secretary Fukuyama discussing with Chairperson Ping

In the message he delivered to the Council, H.E. Mr. Fukuyama said that “Japan attaches great

importance to Africa” and reaffirmed the Hatoyama Administration’s desire to fulfill Japan’s commitment at TICAD IV including the doubling of ODA to Africa and the facilitation of trade and investment by 2012.

Commenting on the choice of Information and Communication Technologies as the theme of the AU Summit, H.E. Mr. Fukuyama said that Japan also wants to capitalize on its cutting-edge science and technology including ICT to contribute to African development.

During his brief stay in Ethiopia, H.E. Mr. Fukuyama had met and discussed with H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union.

Source: report compiled by Embassy

14th AU Summit held in Addis Ababa

The 14th Ordinary Summit of the African Union was held from 31 January to 2 February in Addis Ababa. The Summit was attended by over thirty Heads of State and Government from across the

continent as well as other invited guests including the current Chairperson of the European Union, Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of Spain, and the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.



Group Picture of African Heads of State and Government who attended the AU Summit

The Summit, organized under the theme "Information and Communication Technologies in Africa: Prospects and Challenges for Development" passed a number of important decisions beginning with the election of the new Chairperson, President Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi. In his acceptance speech, President Mutharika stressed his intention to focus on agriculture and on mobilizing the continent towards achievement of the goal of

food security in Africa within the next five years.

On the theme of Information and Communication Technologies, the Summit adopted a Declaration reiterating its commitment to strengthen national programmes and regional cooperation for the development and interconnection of broadband infrastructures and the improvement of rural area connectivity.



The 16th Ordinary session of the Executive Council of the African Union which preceded the AU Summit

On peace and security, the Summit passed decisions on, inter alia, conflict situations in the Horn of Africa and Madagascar. On Somalia and regional stability, the Summit welcomed UN Security Council's

imposition of sanctions (Resolution 1907 (2009)) on Eritrea, including the arms embargo, travel restrictions and an asset freeze; it called upon the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee to urgently designate the relevant Eritrean military and political leaders and other persons and entities to allow for an effective sanctions regime to be implemented as soon as possible; and urged the Security Council to speedily act on the AU's earlier request for the imposition of a no-fly zone and the blockade of sea ports to prevent the entry into Somalia of foreign elements and the supply of logistical and other support to the insurgency.

As Coordinator of the Conference of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), Prime Minister Meles Zenawi reported the outcome of the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol held in December 2009 in Copenhagen. The Summit overwhelmingly adopted the recommendations of the Report, with the exception of Egypt which objected to the endorsement of the

Copenhagen Accord arguing that its operation and activities should remain under review. The position was not shared by the majority of states that intervened on this issue, and the Summit endorsed the provisions of the Copenhagen Accord. It strongly reaffirmed that the Accord constituted a solid basis for moving forward and negotiating a legally binding agreement that will uphold Africa's interests in terms of mitigation and adaptation. It instructed the Chairperson of the Commission to register the AU as a party to the Copenhagen Accord. In an unequivocal endorsement of Prime Minister Meles's efforts at Copenhagen, the Summit extended his position as Coordinator of CAHOSCC for the Conferences of Parties to be held in Mexico this year and in South Africa in 2011.

The Summit offered its deepest sympathy and solidarity to the people of Haiti for the tragedy of the devastating earthquake of January 12th. It requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission, in collaboration with the African Development Bank, to set up an African Humanitarian Fund for Haiti to which all states were asked to contribute, and to send a mission to Haiti. During the closing ceremony, Prime Minister

Ralph Gonsalves of Saint Vincent and Grenadines made a heartfelt plea to African leaders to participate in the conference to be organized in the Dominican Republic and dedicated to the reconstruction of Haiti.

The Summit also expressed its deep regret and sorrow for the loss of life caused by the tragic crash on January 25th of Ethiopian Airlines Flight 409 flying from Beirut to Addis Ababa. It conveyed its heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the people and Government of Ethiopia, Ethiopian Airlines and the families of the victims. Ethiopia conveyed its appreciation to the Summit and to all member states for the outpouring of sympathy it had received.

Source: excerpt from Week in the Horn

Ethiopia Signs Grant Agreements with Japan

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Government of Japan signed a Grant Agreement amounting to 1.13 million US dollars (approximately 14.5 million birr), at a ceremony

held at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED).



State Minister Ahmed and Ambassador Kumano speaking during the signing ceremony

As stated in the Agreement, the Grant will finance the purchases of Services for detailed design to implement Rural Water Supply project in Tigray Region. H.E Ato Ahmed Shide, State Minister of MoFED, and H.E. Mr. Kinichi Komano, Ambassador Extraordinary of Japan to Ethiopia, signed the agreement on behalf of the Ethiopian Government and the Japanese Government respectively.

Source: MOFED

Bureau, KOICA sign agreement to construct model primary school

The Addis Ababa Education Bureau and the Ethiopia Office of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) signed agreement to construct model primary school in Akaki-Kality sub-city of Addis Ababa City at a cost of two million USD.

Bureau head Dilamo Otores and KOICA chief Representative, Dr. David InYeup SONG signed the agreement. According to the agreement, the Korean government will construct the school, which has 32 classrooms within two years. The school, which will be constructed on 3000 square meters land, will have a capacity to enroll up to 2000 students at a time.

Dilamo on the occasion said KOICA has been providing support to the bureau during the past couple of years. The head said it has constructed HibretFire model primary school, dispatched volunteer teachers in different schools and colleges in Addis Ababa as part of the assistance.

Dr. SONG on his part said Korea is actively participating in safe water provision, educational and health sectors in Ethiopia. Korea has been providing support to Ethiopia with a view to enabling it achieve the MDGs, Dr. SONG said, adding, the school will help to improve learning teaching process in the sub-city.

According to the Agency's program coordinator, Biruk Zenebe, the Agency has been constructing four primary model schools in Oromia regional state at a cost of nearly 26 million Birr.

Source: ENA

NATIONAL NEWS

Multi-Billion Birr Hydropower Project Inaugurated



Prime Minister Meles and Foreign Minister Frattini cutting the ribbon during the inauguration ceremony

Gilgel Gibe II Hydro Power Project constructed at a point 250 kms south west of the capital at over 5.2 Billion Birr was inaugurated in the

presence of top government officials and resident Ambassadors.

The Gilgel Gibe II project, the largest ever built power station in the country, can generate 420 mega watt of electricity. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi along the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister, Franco Frattini inaugurated the project.

Speaking at the inauguration of the project, Meles said the victory of development has begun but not yet finished. Meles said “if we work together, there is nothing impossible that we can achieve.” The Prime Minister pointed out that using pollutant energy sources is not a must and added that it can be

possible to speed up development without polluting the environment.

Meles indicated that his government is committed to double the country's existing energy stock in the coming five years. He also expressed confidence that the entire Ethiopian people and the Italian government would stand on the side of the government for this achievement. He also expressed appreciation to those workers of the project who selflessly work for the success of the project. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Frattini said the Italian government was proud of financing such a huge power plant which has a significant importance in meeting the growing energy demand in Ethiopia. The Minister said the involvement of his government in the construction of this biggest energy power plant whose importance is unparalleled in changing the lives of the people of Ethiopia.

Pointing out that he remembers the speech delivered by Prime Minister Meles at the Developed Countries Summit in Italy, Frattini said the project is the living example of a clean environment which he said was undertaken in compliance with the decision of the summit.

He also expressed the Italian government readiness to continue to cooperate and work together with the government of Ethiopia by extending all the necessary support for similar power development project. Gilgel Gibe II (GG II) is a new hydroelectric power project that uses water, from the Gilgel Gibe I (GG I) hydroelectric power plant to the Omo River to exploit the large difference in altitude that exists between the two sites.

The Italian government had provided 220 million Euros in the form of loan for the construction of the project. The plant is also the first plant that puts into the grid extra kilovolts, through the two 400 kilovolt transmission lines that are already constructed-one from GGII to the newly constructed Sebeta II 400 kv substation and the other from GGII HE Plant to the newly constructed 400 kv Gilgel Gibe I Substation.

The project main structures were constructed at the intake and outlet. The intake is located some three kilometers downstream of GG I outlet and about 250km southwest of Addis Ababa on the Addis Ababa to Jimma road.

The outlet is located about 80 km south east of GGII intake and 250km south of Addis Ababa on the road that links Addis Ababa-Wolkite-Kosse in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.

The project was constructed by an Italian company known as Salini construction. Over 2,100 Ethiopians and expatriates from different countries participated in the construction of the project.

Senior government officials, resident ambassadors and invited guests attended the inauguration of the Gilgel Gibe II Project.

Source: ENA

Meles called upon society to complement efforts in making national elections credible, free, fair, democratic

Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi called upon the society to actively participate in the upcoming national elections to be conducted in May 2010. Speaking at the awarding ceremony of outstanding farmers held in Mekele town of the Tigray State, Meles said national elections

are indicators of the sovereignty of the public in a given country.

Meles also urged contesting political parties to compete for the seats of the federal and regional councils in line with the new electoral code of conduct and its implementation guideline during the course of the national elections.

Meles said all political parties taking part in the coming national elections shall be abided by the new electoral code of conduct, which is endorsed by the House of Peoples' Representatives, since the new law creates equal opportunities to the contesting candidates. Hence, he said, both signatory and non-signatory political parties contesting in the coming elections shall observe the new electoral code of conduct during the process of the national elections.

Actually, the support and active participation of the society plays crucial role in making the upcoming national elections free, fair, and democratic as well as in making the elections credible on the part of the electorates, the premier noted.

Source: ENA

ECX Launches DST



Director General of ECX Dr. Eleni Gebremedhin briefing Journalists

The Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) said it has launched Direct Specialty Trade (DST), a new platform in which producers of specialty coffee can transact directly with international buyers seeking to purchase premium beans on a fully traceable basis.

CEO of ECX Dr. Eleni Gebremedhin said that DST is an innovative way to enable direct trade that is reliable, fully traceable, transparent, and sustainable. Dr. Eleni said by coordinating buyers and seller, DST adds value to farmers, who can benefit from greater competition and to buyers, who can discover truly special coffees.

DST also enables trade of certified coffees, such as Organic certified,

Fair Trade, RainForest, among others. She said DST is established as a monthly bidding session in which small farmer cooperatives and commercial growers may deposit specialty grade coffees in advance in ECX warehouses.

Dr. Eleni said international buyers pre-register for the DST session and are able to order samples and to participate in a cupping session prior to the bidding. A condition for participation in DST is that farmers will receive a minimum of 85 per cent of the final export price, a historic first for Ethiopia's coffee farmers who are considered to normally receive below 40 per cent, among the lowest share of the final price in the world.



International buyers and local producers of Direct Specialty Coffee during the Launch

“DST closes the real gap between farmers seeking to benefit from the

international market and buyers interested in tracing these coffees to their origin. DST also raises the visibility and profile of all Ethiopian coffee, and thus is a clear win-win for all” stated Dr. Eleni.

There are 44 lots of specialty coffee presented for sale in the first DST session, representing 35 primary cooperatives and nine commercial growers. More than half of the coffees are graded above specialty cupping score of 85, indicating top quality. There are 27 registered international buyers, representing coffee importers and roasters in North America, Europe, and Japan.

Source: ENA

Rice Processing Plant to be Established



Haile and Tanaka speaking during the signing ceremony

Saudi Star Agricultural Development Plc. and a Japanese company, Satake International Co. Ltd. have signed an agreement enabling to establish rice processing factory in Ethiopia at a cost of 125 million Birr. Saudi Star Agricultural Development Plc. Director-General, Haile Aseged and President of the Japanese Company, Shoichi Tanaka signed the agreement.

Haile said on the occasion that the agreement will enable Saudi Star Agricultural Development Plc. to process rice being developed through its project in Gambella Region. He said the plant enables to process 100,000 tons of rice. Nearly 350 million Birr budget is required to increase the amount to one million tons rice annually during the coming seven years. Tanaka on his part said his company will transfer its technology to other countries so as to enable them produce quality rice.

Source: ENA

Ethiopia's Tsegay wins Lake Biwa Marathon

OTSU, Japan - Yemane Tsegay of Ethiopia won the Lake Biwa marathon after running the final

third through the rain way ahead of the pursuing runners. The 24-year-old moved up the pace at around the 24 kilometre (15 mile) point to shuffle the nine-men front pack.



Athelete Tsegay crossing the finishing line

After the last pace-setter Samuel Ndungu abandoned the race at the 30km mark, Tsegay was alone for the rest of the race, crossing the finishing line in two hours nine minutes 34 seconds. "The course was good, but the weather was so bad that I had a foot problem caused by the water," said Tsegay. "I tried to set a new course record, but the bad weather was not good for me."

Japan's Tomoyuki Sato came in second in 2:10:07 to become a candidate for the Asian Games later this year, while Abraham Tadesse of Eritrea finished third in 2:10:46.

Source: AFP

FEATURE

Ethiopian Cities Keen to forge sisterly ties with their Japanese Counterpart¹

The aim of this article is to briefly introduce Ethiopia to the local government and cities in Japan and encourage them to establish sisterly ties with their Ethiopian counterparts with a view to strengthening people-to-people relations and cultural exchange between Ethiopia and Japan.



Lucy – one of the oldest human fossils discovered in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a country with many unique features and exceptionalities. It is a country where history, nature and culture mingle together.

¹ This is an article contributed by the Embassy to the Global Newsletter issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan on its website to promote local government relations



Tiya Stone Stele

Ethiopia prides itself as the cradle of all mankind where the oldest human fossils - Lucy (3.5 million years old) and Selam (150 thousand years older than Lucy) – were discovered. Recently, paleontologists have also formally announced the discovery of another relatively complete human fossil known as Ardi which is believed to have lived 4.4 million year ago.



Saint George Church- one of the rock hewn churches of Lalibela



The Axum Obelisk

Ethiopia is home to eight UNESCO registered world heritage sites which attest to its magnificent history. It is also the only African country never to have been colonized by any foreign nation.



Gondar Castles

Ethiopia still adheres to the Julian calendar which is seven years and eight month behind the Gregorian

calendar. The Ethiopian calendar divides the year into 12 months of 30 days each, and a 13th month of five days and six days in a leap year.



Ahmed Nejash Mosque

Ethiopia is also the only African country which has its own Alphabet letters and Numbers. The Ethiopian calendar and written language thus form part of the country's unique heritages.



Ethiopian Cultural Dance

Ethiopia is a melting pot of diverse cultures where people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds live together harmoniously. Ethiopia's renowned athletes are indeed a source of great pride and glory to the country. It is particularly gratifying to note that many Japanese people still have fond memory of the Legendary Ababa Bikila who smashed the marathon record during the Tokyo Olympic in 1964.



The legendary Ethiopian Athlete Abebe Bikila

On the other hand, Ethiopia's contrasting landscape, which range from the rugged semien mountain 4200 meters above sea level to the Danakil depression 120 meters below sea level, is awe-inspiring.



Erta Ale Active Volcano Lake

The active volcano lake in the north eastern part of the country known as *Erta Ale* attracts many tourists who are interested in enjoying nature. Ethiopia's national parks and the Great Rift Valley are also home to a diverse variety of flora and fauna some of which are endemic to the country.



Harar Jugol

Over the last two decades, Ethiopia has opened a new chapter with regard to its politics and

development. The introduction of multiparty democracy has heralded a new era of peace and stability in the country. Ethiopia will be holding its national and regional legislative elections in May 2010 for the fourth time since the introduction of multiparty democracy in the country.



Ethiopian national parks are home to a variety of wildlife

On the other hand, the country has been exerting massive effort to tackle poverty and ensure sustained development. The double digit economic growth that Ethiopia has managed to register over the last seven consecutive years is testimony to the fact that the country is indeed on the right development trajectory. The plan of the government is for Ethiopia to join the ranks of lower middle income countries over the coming two decades.



Semien Mountain

Having stated the aforementioned facts by way of an introduction, it is also worthy to note that Ethiopia and Japan share a lot of similarities in terms of their long history and rich culture. For instance, the traditional Ethiopian Coffee ceremony shares a lot of common features with that of the Japanese tea ceremony.



Ethiopia has a rich variety of birds

Of course, Ethiopia and Japan enjoy longstanding diplomatic relations

which has been further cemented by the exchange of high level visits



Ethiopian Red Fox

between the two sisterly countries in the last couple of years. In the framework of the TICAD process, Japan has expressed its commitment to strengthen its

relations with Africa in multifaceted fields.



Traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony

The Embassy believes that fostering closer ties between local governments and cities of Africa and Japan will no doubt make significant contribution in bringing the peoples of Africa and Japan closer to each other and establish a solid ground for the consolidation of relations between Africa and Japan.

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