

Newsletter

Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels



2 January 2014
Weekly Issue N° 17



Ambassador Teshome Toga in Estonia, last month.

Dear Reader,

We are very pleased to send you the first 2015 edition of our newsletter, where you can read fresh news and insights about recent developments concerning Ethiopia. You will also find the season's greetings from Ambassador Teshome Toga attached to this newsletter.

We wish you all a happy and successful new year for you, your family and the people close to you.

Sincerely,

The Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels

Content

Ugandan President Museveni in Ethiopia for a three day official visit

Ethiopia set to double its hydropower in July

Mekelle University undertaking expansion with close to 3 billion birr

Addis Light railway to go operational next month

Ethiopian Connecting Africa to the world

Agenda

Ugandan President Museveni in Ethiopia for a three day official visit

A high level delegation of Ethiopia and Uganda, led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni held consultation on Friday December 26 at National Palace on bilateral, regional and global matters of mutual interest. Prime Minister

expressed his gratitude to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and his delegation for the accepting the invitation to visit Ethiopia, in order to strengthen the “exemplary relations” between the two countries. He also said that the President’s official visit would be instrumental in promoting and broadening cooperation on bilateral, regional, continental and global issues of common interest. He further noted that both countries enjoyed historic and peaceful bilateral relations and expressed Ethiopia’s keenness to the furtherance and reinforcing of its ties with Uganda. He also stated that relations on political and social areas were commendable, exemplifying excellent cooperative partnership. He further said that the two peoples of the two countries enjoy long history of shared culture, languages, among other things and belonged to one river basin, the Nile. The Prime Minister said “Uganda has a clear stand on the equitable utilization of the Nile water resource by all countries of the Basin,” adding that Ethiopia appreciates and recognizes the role played by Uganda and the leadership of President Museveni on the Nile issue. He also indicated that this shared vision had been shown “through out the negotiation sessions of the Nile Basin Initiative which culminated with the signing of the Cooperative Framework Agreement.” He further emphasized that “With the imminent ratification of this Agreement by all its signatories we will enjoy



President Museveni (L) and First Lady Janet Museveni (2nd L) exchange documents with Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and First Lady Roman Tesfaye in Addis Ababa on Sunday. PHOTO BY PPU

unprecedented opportunities to use our comparative advantage for the betterment of the peoples of our sub-region.” He also noted that meager expansion of infrastructure heavily reduced trade and investment ties in the sub-region, stressing that both countries need to undertake projects aimed infrastructure linkages as bridges of closer cooperation and partnership through bilateral cooperation and through the implementation of the IGAD Minimum Integration Plan. Noting the significance of the completion of GERD for the development of Ethiopia and the region, the Prime Minister said ‘Our power interconnection project with Kenya and beyond is certainly going on the right direction with funds from our development partners.’ He also expressed his hope that Uganda would be part of this interconnectivity and share the benefit of clean and cheap energy. The region was facing both new threats and encouraging results, stressing

that fighting terrorism, poverty political crisis in the region necessitated practical cooperation between Ethiopia and Uganda. He also extended his thanks Uganda’s role in bringing stability to Somalia and to South Sudan under IGAD framework. He also promised that Ethiopia would continue supporting the South Sudanese political groups reach a negotiated peaceful settlement. He also pledged that Ethiopia has a firm stand to support Somalia in its effort to bring durable peace and stability. President Museveni on his part noted the ancient linkages amongst the two countries’ peoples, similar geography, most notably; their shared resource the Nile and ideological fraternity between the leaders characterized the relations of the two countries. The President added that cooperation between the two countries had so far yielded meaningful results in regional peace and stability and other areas of engagement but, he said, much remained to be done. He said that Uganda is keen to work together with Ethiopia in the areas of infrastructure, tourism, cross-border investment and trade. Following the consultation, the two leaders witnessed the signing ceremonies of MoUs on energy, transportation, health, and the establishment of sister city cooperation between Addis Ababa and Kampala.

Source : MFA Ethiopia

Ethiopia set to double its hydropower in July

Addis Ababa, 1 January 2015 (WIC) - With commissioning of Ethiopia's second biggest electricity project, 1870 Megawatts (MW) Gilgil Gibe III hydroelectric dam in the coming July, the country is set to double its current electric hydropower production. The country has completed 89 percent of Gibe III hydropower project, according to Miskir Negash, external communications director at Ethiopian Electric power, (EEP) the country's public state utility firm.

Currently Ethiopia is generating some 2000 MW of electricity from hydropower stations. "The Project which lies in southwestern Ethiopia, on Omo River a major tributary to Lake Turkana has 10 turbine units each generating 187 MW," he said. Ethiopia currently has its

biggest hydro project at Blue Nile River, 40 kms from the Sudanese border, with an electricity production capacity of 6,000 MW, and is currently 40 percent complete.

Negash also revealed that Ethiopia's first ever Waste-To-Energy facility, the 50 MW Repi (Koshe) site in Addis Ababa is 58 percent complete. He further surmised that Ethiopia is also embarking on wind projects with the 153 MW Adama II wind power project 82 percent complete. An earlier 51 MW Adama I wind power project was finished two years ago and is currently operational.

Source : New business Ethiopia

Mekelle University undertaking expansion with close to 3 billion birr

Addis Ababa, 2 January 2015 (WIC) – The Mekelle University in Tigray Regional State said it is undertaking expansion project in its all campuses with close to 3 billion birr. University President Kindeya Gebrehiwot told WIC the expansion project includes construction of dormitories, cafeterias, classrooms, research and community service centers, laboratories, libraries, workshops, offices, sport academies, social centers, model community schools, among others.

He said the expansion project would enable the university to increase its enrollment capacity. The university enrolled 32, 000 students this academic year, of which 24,000 are regular students.

According to Kindeya, the university is training 2, 400 students in masters and 24 students in PhD program.

In order to ensure education quality, the university is undertaking special and continuous activities, including a modular system which enhances learning

by providing students with intensive and focused time on each topic, he said. Kindeya further said the university is building teachers' capacities to maximize the quality of education. Out of the total 1,637 teachers in the uni-versity, 1,245 teachers are second and above degree holders.

He added that some 125 instructors were also hired from foreign countries to maintain the quality of the master's programs being offered by the university. The university is applying 1-to-5 network in all departments, where one student responsible for tutoring five slow learners, so that students can contribute their share to ensure education quality, he said.

Mekelle University aspires to become one of the top 25 universities in Africa by 2025, it was learnt.



Addis Light Railway to go operational next month

The Addis Ababa's light rail way project worth \$475m would be completed by the end of January, the project manager told reporters. The project manager, Behailu Sintayehu, said that 80% of the track has been laid and the rail way would be completed at the end of January 2015. The commissioning period is going to take another three months for the first passengers to be on board, he stated. The light rail way consists of two lines running for a total distance of 32km. It will have underground and over ground sections, 39 stations, and two operators that are the Ethiopian Railways Corporation and Shenzhen Metro. The \$475m cost of the



scheme is mostly being met by a loan from China's Exim Bank, and the construction work has been undertaken by the China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC). The

light rail way of Ethiopia will be the first urban metro light rail scheme to be built in a sub-Saharan country outside of South Africa.

Source : MFA Ethiopia. Picture : Dilemma-x.net

Ethiopian Airlines connecting Africa to the world

Since taking over as Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Airlines in 2011, Tewolde Gebremariam has been busy overseeing Vision 2025 - an ambitious 15-year strategic - programme that calls for Ethiopian to become the largest carrier in Africa, with a USD 10 billion annual turnover

the right direction. In 2013, Ethiopian became the largest African carrier by revenue and profit according to IATA, with revenues topping USD 2.3 billion - the first time in its 69 year history the Ethiopian flag carrier has overtaken rival South African Airways.

Capital's Teguest Yilma talked to Tewolde while he was attending in New Delhi the first Star Alliance Chief Executive Board Meeting (CEB) hosted by Air India (who joined Star Alliance group in June this year) about his company's vision. Excerpts:

Capital: What does Air India joining Star Alliance mean for Ethiopian Airlines?

Tewolde Gebremariam: It means quite a lot because India has a big global aviation market, in fact the fifth largest. The connection between India and many African nations is not as strong as it used to be and with Ethiopian Airlines now serving both New Delhi and Mumbai daily and India being a big subcontinent with many domestic connections that are critical, Air India joining

and four hubs to cover the four corners of the continent. These are some tough targets, but progress has been in

the group has increased that much connectivity for passengers. Now you know, passengers connecting from



any part of India, like Mumbai, New Delhi, and other regions can access 49 destinations in Africa, it's as simple as connecting to any flight from anywhere to everywhere.

Capital: How has Ethiopian benefited from joining Star Alliance?

Tewolde: Network wise, there is quite a lot of benefit because we have 84 destinations in five continents and a lot of this growth has occurred over the last eight years. Star Alliance has more than 18,500 flights a day to 193 countries to 1,321 airports, so that gives us the coverage that we would not be able to have on our own, no matter how fast we grow. Simple things like connectivity bring enormous benefits. There are 27 Star Alliance members and we all share costs. Last summer we started operating in terminal 2 of Heathrow Airport (London) so that all Star Alliance members are in one terminal there and it's the same thing in Beijing; and this brings cost-sharing advantages. Joint sourcing is another initiative. The exchange of mileage is a huge benefit for our customers because they can purchase tickets from different member airlines with miles earned on other airlines. They can also upgrade and purchase free tickets and that is a huge advantage to our customers. For gold members, being able to share lounge space globally is a big advantage. You can wait for your flight in any Star Alliance lounge whether it is in New York or Washington or LA or London or Frankfurt, you can use the lounges of any member airlines.

Capital: Ethiopian is recording a very fast growth which in a way forced the expansion work that is currently being undertaken on the Addis Ababa International airport. What about the new airport project planned at a lower altitude so as to maximize aircraft performance? Any development in that area?

Tewolde: Let me put it this way, the airlines has been growing very fast but the infrastructure has to grow along with it. Three years ago, we sat down with the Ethiopian Airports Enterprise, and we formulated a vision for 2025. This involved estimating the number of passengers, aircraft and daily departures and we determined we needed to expand the airport capacity. The first phase, which started a couple of months ago, was to expand the ramp. In Addis, the ramp has been expanded to accommodate 51 airplanes at one time. That was a major project that will be completed in the next 3 years and that will enable Addis Ababa Bole terminal to accommodate 22 million passengers compared to the seven million now. And if you compare all the Star Alliance member carriers now, you will not find an airport that is as high in altitude as in Addis. That is a huge penalty for an airline; on average you lose about 10 tons per flight. If a 787 takes off from sea-level and from Addis, the difference is 10 tons. Higher altitude also increases engine maintenance, because the higher the altitude it puts a lot of pressure and stress on the engine. Hence building a new airport is

necessary but is something that will happen in the future.

Capital: What does this loss represent financially?

Tewolde: Just relocating the airport will save us about USD 84 million a year. We are looking for an airport location around Mojo that is on level land and right now we are forming a team of all stakeholders to plan the project.

Capital: Do you have an idea of when that could happen?

Tewolde: I think the first thing will be the study team's recommendation, so I would expect the team to submit its recommendation in the next 3 months.

Capital: Ethiopia has a great tourist potential which has not really been tapped. And with the fast growth of the airline and plans to triple passengers in the next couple of years, what is Ethiopian doing to attract more tourists? And how is ET Holiday's performance in the last two years?

Tewolde: As you know, this is a new initiative, we want to depend on the entire tour operator network in Ethiopia, and we are, but we want to complement that initiative as we work with each and every tour operator in Ethiopia, to generate enough tourist flow into Ethiopia. We have also decided to do our own operations, which is ET Holidays. It has been growing in the last couple of years and now we have many countries already signing; we have partners in the US, UK, Germany, and it's still growing. As you say, Ethiopia has so much tourist potential that it has not made use of. So it's time now to do so with the growth of the airlines, because tourists will find it easier to visit Ethiopia from all over the world with the direct flights available now. Ethiopia's international image has improved, so we expect the flow of tourism and investment to increase, but we need to drive that to increase the rate.

Capital: Djibouti has plans to work with Ethiopian Tourism Authorities to have tourists visiting Ethiopia to continue on to Djibouti. Do you think that association will have a positive influence?

Tewolde: I think Ethiopia and Djibouti can complement each other because Ethiopia doesn't have a beach destination. Diving for European tourists is very popular in Djibouti. So, a regional combination could work, especially not only with Djibouti but with Kenya and Tanzania as well. Ethiopia is more of a historical, cultural, natural and to a certain extent wildlife destination. But Djibouti has scenery and the combination can attract more tourists because they can visit two countries, and also there are quite a significant number of marine bases because they are guarding sea transport who could visit Ethiopia. It's in the early stage but I hope we will form a very good partnership.

Capital: Any development regarding Ethiopian's hotel as well as office headquarters building projects?

Tewolde: The hotel is already under construction. We've also finished the contracts for office construction. The contractor is a Chinese company, Avic and the Exim Bank of China is financing the project with USD 65 million, but I don't remember the exact figure.

Capital: Ethiopian has recently set up hubs in Malawi and Togo and you are planning to open a similar hub in Juba, South Sudan; what is the status with that project?

Tewolde: We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the South Sudanese government and we are going to own 49 percent of

agreed on and more details have to be negotiated. As soon as we finish the negotiations we will start the work, but peace and stability in the nation has been a big issue.

The last 3-4 months has been tough on the continent's airlines, for all of us, because unfortunately the western media has exaggerated the issue of Ebola. Only three nations are affected by Ebola on the western coast of the continent: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. But unfortunately, somehow because of the media influence, the perception in the rest of the world is that the continent has been affected. So because of this people limited their travel to Africa, whether for leisure or business, and many conferences were cancelled.

Capital: How much was traffic to Africa reduced by this?

Tewolde: In terms of revenue reduction, we saw about USD 8 million loss per month. But now things are improving, the countries that are highly affected, especially Liberia and Guinea, are also doing better in terms of controlling and containing the disease. So, we expect traffic flow to increase again.



the carrier to be established and the South Sudanese government will own 51 percent. That modality has been Source : Capital Ethiopia

Agenda

The Embassy will be participate to the Tourism Fair Luxembourg on 16-18 January
More information: <http://eventegg.com/expo-vakanz/>

About the Embassy

Working Hours: 9:00 – 13:00 & 14:00 – 17:00

Consular Service: Monday – Friday 09:00 – 13:00

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Season's Greetings



On behalf of my colleagues in the Ethiopian
Embassy in Brussels, of my family and on my
own behalf, I wish you all

*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year*

Teshome Toga
Ambassador



Simien Mountains, Ethiopia. © Bernard Gagnon