

# Newsletter

**Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels**



6 March 2015  
Weekly Issue N° 26



View from the Simien Mountains. Picture: Hulivili

**Dear Reader,**

We are very pleased to send you this newsletter as each week. In addition to providing you with fresh news about Ethiopia, this newsletter includes two background articles on important topics regarding the development of our country: why investors should get interested in Ethiopia, and why Ethiopia has much potential for tourism. We hope you will be interested to read them and share them.

Sincerely,

**The Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels**

## CONTENT

### POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Government supporting parties to reach the public  
ACP Health Ministers meeting in Brussels  
Ethiopia values Norway's partnership in green economy  
Commemoration of the Battle of Adwa  
U.S. keen to support Ethiopia's role in stabilizing South Sudan

### ECONOMY

Invest in Ethiopia

Ethiopia to build oil and gas pipelines  
Notice for investors

### TOURISM

Ethiopia, a unique place to visit

### READER'S QUESTION OF THE WEEK



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<http://ethio.be/ethiopiayou>

## POLITICAL AFFAIRS

### Government supporting parties to reach the public



While briefing journalists last week, Government Communications Affairs Office (GCAO) Minister Redwan Hussein said the government has given the parties free airtime and print space so that they can promote their agenda to the public. Political parties that were given the airtime and print space to carry out election campaign need to abide by the election code of conduct and use it effectively, he further said. Asked about political space, the Minister declared that that is was enough and wider compared to the previously held four elections. Some political parties' accusation of lack of enough space is groundless, he further said, citing the increased number of political parties

that registered to contest in the upcoming elections and also the increased number of voters registration.

Regarding the drawing of lots to determine the number of candidates that compete in polling station to 12 in Addis Ababa, it is an international standard and practice which prioritizes party from individual. The government will do everything it can to make the election peaceful and democratic, according to the Minister, further calling contesting political parties and the public to play their part for the success of the election.

Since the coming to power of EPRDF, Ethiopia has organized four national elections with an increasing number of political parties and voters' participation. In the 2015 round of election, 57 political parties have been registered and over 60,000 candidates are going to contest in the election. The voter's registration has reached 34,445,392 (96 %) out of which the number female voters registered is 16,579,491. This accounts for about fifty percent of the voters.

Read the news on Walta Information Center:  
<http://ethio.be/1NoACwu>

### ACP Health Ministers meeting in Brussels

On 25-26 February 2015, Ministers of Health from African, Caribbean and Pacific countries concluded their second meeting after two days of deliberations on health objectives in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. The meeting also focused on preventive and control measures for viral epidemics, such as Ebola Virus Disease. The Ministers re-affirmed that the 2000 Millennium Declaration and its associated Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remain a formidable global development framework, with sustainable international political support. They underlined the need for future goals in health to be adaptable to national, sub-regional and regional realities, with clearly defined interventions and indicators. The Ministers underlined that ACP countries endorse Universal Health Coverage (UHC), with

sustainable financing, as the over-arching health goal of the health sector among the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The next meeting of ACP Health Ministers will be held after 2020.

Read the press release on the ACP website:  
<http://ethio.be/18nvmBT>

In addition to participating to the ACP Health Ministers meeting, the Health Minister of Ethiopia Dr. Keseteberhan Admasu held an interview with journalists from Euractiv, in which he outlined major aspects of the Ethiopian health policy. You can read the article (<http://ethio.be/1Beeej8>) or watch the video interview (<http://ethio.be/1DZH6g9>)

## Ethiopia values Norway's partnership in building a green economy



Ethiopian Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom met with members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense of the Norwegian Parliament on 26 February. He told the delegation that the Government of Ethiopia cherished the bonds of development partnership between the two countries for building a Climate Resilient Green Economy by 2020 and the growing Ethio-Norwegian ties. Among other topics, Dr Tedros briefed the delegation on Ethiopia's role in stabilizing the region and on the progress being made in the country's socio-economic development. He also described the successful preparations being made

by the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia to ensure that the May 2015 national election would be peaceful, democratic and fair. Noting Ethiopia had witnessed rapid and sustainable annual economic growth over the last decade, he said the country's development agenda was geared towards the transformation of the structure of the economy in order to lay the foundations for a manufacturing based economy. One aspect of this was the development of micro and small scale enterprises which had successfully generated substantial employment. Ms. Huitfeldt, head of the Norwegian delegation, said that this first official visit to Ethiopia by the Standing Committee underscored the growing relationship between Ethiopia and Norway. She said Norway was highly appreciative of Ethiopia's role in working for lasting peace and security in the Horn of Africa region and on the rest of the continent. She also appreciated Ethiopia's rapid economic development, which, she said, contributed to progresses in electrification of the country, in social affairs, in education and to a more equal distribution of wealth.

## Commemoration of the Battle of Adwa

Last Monday, the Ethiopian people celebrated the memory of the Battle of Adwa which was fought 118th years ago, in 1896. It marked a decisive victory of Ethiopia against Italy. The Battle of Adwa is of huge significance for Africa in that the decimation of the continent could not be completed. Based on a mistranslation of a treaty between the two countries, Italy waged war on Ethiopia, to transform it into its protectorate.

Though Ethiopia as a country counted many different ethnic groups, Emperor Menelik was able to convince all of them to put aside their differences and contribute 100,000 troops to face down the invaders. The Italians suffered about 7,000 killed and 1,500 wounded in the battle and subsequent retreat back into Eritrea, with 3,000 taken prisoners; Ethiopian losses have been estimated around 4-5,000 killed and 8,000 wounded. What can be

achieved by an Africa united was demonstrated then, at the Battle of Adwa.

The prominent African-American historian, Professor Molefi Asante, opines on the significance of Adwa: "After the victory over Italy in 1896, Ethiopia acquired a special importance in the eyes of Africans as the only surviving African state. After Adwa, Ethiopia became emblematic of African valor and resistance, the bastion of prestige and hope to thousands of Africans who were experiencing the full shock of European conquest and were beginning to search for an answer to the myth of African inferiority."

Read the complete story on Walta Information Center:

<http://ethio.be/1H4DRow>

## U.S. keen to support Ethiopia's role in stabilizing South Sudan

Speaking to African journalists on 26 February 2015, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, said that the U.S. was committed to continue to support Ethiopia's role in stabilizing South Sudan. She said the U.S. Government was also extending support to the AU Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia. The US Assistant Secretary of State, who noted that as 15

African countries, including Ethiopia, were making preparations to hold elections this year, also said the US government would be cooperating with them all to help ensure the elections were free, fair and democratic.

Read the story on the MFA's website:  
<http://ethio.be/1aPD3JG>

## ECONOMY

### Invest in Ethiopia



#### Labour cost in Ethiopia is relatively low compared to the African average.

Ethiopia is becoming an investment destination in the sub-region for the fast paced economic progress it has been experiencing, for the lucrative business opportunities it provides, and for its attractive investment incentives. The country is located in the north-eastern part of Africa, commonly known as the Horn of Africa, at the cross-roads between Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The country has a stable political and economic environment. Thanks to its large population, Ethiopia is potentially one of the largest domestic markets in Africa. By virtue of its membership of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), embracing 19 countries with a population of over 400 million, Ethiopia also enjoys preferential market access to these countries. Ethiopia qualifies for preferential access to European Union market under the EU's Everything-But-Arms (EBA) initiative and to USA markets under the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA). Accordingly, most Ethiopian products can enter into these markets quota and duty free. Furthermore, a broad range

of manufactured goods from Ethiopia are entitled to preferential access under the Generalized System of Preference (GSP) of the USA. No quota restrictions are placed on Ethiopian exports falling under 4800 products currently eligible under the GSP.

The Ethiopian economy is based on agriculture, which contributes about 42.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP), about 90 % of foreign currency earnings and 85 % of employment. However, the industrial sector's share is growing from year to year. The country is among the top growing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa: for the last ten years, real GDP grew by an average of about 11 percent per year. Ethiopia is endowed with abundant natural resources. Altitude in Ethiopia ranges from 125 meters below sea level in the Danakil depressions of the Afar region to 4,620 meters above sea level in the Amhara region. Thus the country has 18 major and 49 sub agro-ecological zones, each with its own agricultural and biological potential. Overall, 74.3 million hectares of

land are suitable for agriculture (45% of the total area), of which only about 18 million hectares are currently utilized. The climate is suitable for growing over 146 types of crops. Ethiopia possesses one of the largest and most diverse genetic resources in the world. Besides, it has the soils and the climate suitable for the production of a variety of food crops.

The labour law of Ethiopia, prepared in conformity

line with market-oriented economic policy, the investment regime has been liberalized through a series of Government legislations. Since 1992, the investment code has been revised three times to ensure the participation of more foreign investments in various sectors of the economy.

In a nutshell, these are the top 10 reasons to invest in Ethiopia:



### Ethiopian leather is amongst the world's best

with international labour norms and standards, provides adequate provisions for the conclusion and termination of employment contracts with safeguards that do not infringe the rights of investors. Labour cost in Ethiopia is relatively low compared to the African average. The number of skilled workers and technicians is increasing steadily as a result of an increase in the number of universities, colleges, and vocational and technical training schools in the country. The Ethiopian Government has made commendable efforts, through legislative and procedural reforms, to improve the investment climate of the country and thereby attract more foreign direct investment. In

- Political and social stability;
- Macro-economic stability and growing economy;
- Adequate guarantees and protections;
- Transparent laws and streamlined procedures;
- Ample investment opportunities;
- Abundant and trainable labour force;
- Wide domestic, regional and international market opportunity;
- Competitive investment incentive packages ;
- Welcoming attitude of the people to FDI; and
- Pleasant climate and fertile soils

Read more on

## Ethiopia to build oil and gas pipelines

The Ethiopian Ministry of Mines announced that the country is preparing to build an oil and gas pipeline to export its natural gas produce abroad. Various studies have confirmed that there are about 4 trillion cubic meters of natural gas deposit in the Kalub and Hilala areas of Somali region. Ethiopia and Djibouti had signed a memorandum of understanding for the pipeline building project.

According to ENA, a company is also engaged in a study to build a pipeline for transporting oil import from Djibouti port into the country.

Read the complete story on Walta Information Center:  
<http://ethio.be/1NoLlaf>

## Notice for investors

Investors interested to invest in Ethiopia will have the opportunity to meet H.E. Teshome Toga, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Benelux and Baltic countries and EU. The meeting will take place on Monday 9 March at 15:00 at CBL-ACP in Brussels. Contact: Mr Tesfaye Tadesse +32 489 74 18 13

## Tourism

### Ethiopia, a unique place to visit



**The Simien Mountains National Park**

Ethiopia has a proud and long history extending to the known beginnings of humankind. The fossils of our species' earliest known ancestor was found in the Danakil Depression in north-east Ethiopia. The Axumite Kingdom was one of the great civilizations of the ancient world and has left behind the mystery of the great stelae found at Axum. In the late Middle Ages great religious civilizations flourished in many parts of the country, particularly at Lalibela where churches hewn out of massive monolithic rock testify not only to great faith but also to great architectural skills. And in the former

capital of Gondar many magnificent castles speak of the same legacy.

All these would be enough to make Ethiopia a fascinating place to visit and travel through, but Ethiopia has so much more to offer. Here you can find virtually all the faces of African culture and its landscapes and much of its wildlife. You can travel through high meadow lands reminiscent of Europe or trek across even higher moorlands – in the Simien and Bale mountains – and see unique forms of Afro-Alpine plants, which here grow to

**The rock-hewn churches of Lalibela**



independent Ethiopian people who have learned to live with their environment, even to benefit from it. Wherever you go on your journey through Ethiopia, you will find many things to enjoy and marvel over, and you can at all times be sure of the warm hospitality of the Ethiopian people.

Seven of Ethiopia’s magnificent historical sites are included in the world cultural heritage list: The Simien National Park, the Rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, the Castles of Gondar and other monuments of Gondar Style, the lower Valley of the Awash paleontological and prehistorical sites, Tiya proto-historical and archeological sites, Axum historical and archeologic, valley of the Omo

an astonishing size. You can explore great rivers and lakes including Lake Tana, the source of the majestic Blue Nile whose valley is one of the world’s greatest, longest and deepest gorges. You can discover the savannas and wetlands of our western region and visit the far south, which teems with wildlife and is home to fascinating ancient cultures. In the great Rift Valley a necklace of beautiful lakes lies beneath the splendid panorama of the Bale Mountains. And in the east, the walled city of Harar speaks of other old civilizations and great faiths, such as Islam. Many kilometers north of there lies the Danakil Depression, one of the world’s most inhospitable but nonetheless dramatic landscapes which is also one of the hottest places on earth. Yet it is home to proud and

paleontological and prehistoric sites. The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia extends its warm welcome and wholehearted support to visitors interested in



**Fasilides’ castle in Gondar**

our fabulous tourist attractions and to the investors needed as partners in the further development of

our tourism resources.



The Ethiopian wolf, living on the Ethiopian Highlands

## READER'S QUESTION OF THE WEEK

*« A couple of months ago, we heard that the registration for Diaspora House will start in Ethiopian Embassies located in different countries. Did it already start? – Ashenafi »*

Dear Ashenafi and all Ethiopians living in the Benelux countries,

The directives, rules and regulations concerning the House Scheme Program is underway. As soon as we will launch the registration program, you will be informed through our social media, website, and newsletter. In order to get the information online, keep on visiting our social media and website:



[twitter.com/EthiopiaEU](https://twitter.com/EthiopiaEU)



[facebook.com/EthiopiaEmbassyEU](https://facebook.com/EthiopiaEmbassyEU)

[www.ethiopianembassy.be](http://www.ethiopianembassy.be)

## ABOUT THE EMBASSY

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

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

**Legalization and Power of Attorney:** Monday – Thursday 9:00 – 13:00

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