

Press release:

Launching of the European Parliament-Ethiopia Friendship group

On 3 March 2016, the EP-Ethiopia Friendship Group was officially launched in the presence of about 30 guests, including Members of the European Parliament, officials from the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS), as well as diplomats from several neighboring countries, ACP Secretariat and friends of Ethiopia. This event was organized by the Embassy of Ethiopia in Brussels, in collaboration with the office of MEP Louis Michel, Co-Chair of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

This launching comes at a critical time, as the European Union and Ethiopia just celebrated the 40th anniversary of their cooperation and partnership. The past months were marked by significant initiatives: on 11 November 2015, both partners signed a joint Declaration for a Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM), reflecting the importance of Ethiopia as a key country to tackle irregular migration to Europe; EU High Representative for peace and security and VP, Federica Mogherini visited Ethiopia for the first time in October 2015, and Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom, in turn, visited Brussels in January 2016. Moreover, both parties agreed to elevate the level of their relation to a "Strategic Engagement", the engagement declaration is expected to be signed in April 2016.

The aim of this friendship group is to maintain close cooperation and constructive dialogue with the European parliamentarians, to forge understandings and build consensus. In doing so, the EP would accompany Ethiopia constructively on its way towards strengthening of democracy and a better understanding of its endeavor and challenges.

There would also be an opportunity to share concerns and opinions with them about different issues, even the most difficult ones, such as human rights, fight against terrorism, peace and security, economic development, climate change and participation of civil society.

It is our firm believe that the launching of the friendship group will pave the way to a continuous dialogue between Ethiopia and representatives of the European people through regular meetings, exchange of information and visits in order to enhance people to people relations. The initiative was warmly welcomed by participants attending the event, who expressed their congratulations and stated that the group will be a way to implement a fruitful and respectful dialogue and cooperation between the European Parliament and Ethiopia. In his concluding remarks, MEP Louis Michel assured the participants that the group will certainly achieve its goals, evolve and develop in the future. The people and Government of Ethiopia seize this opportunity to thank the true friendship and partnership of Honorable Louis Michel to Ethiopia in particular and to Africa in general

Embassy of Ethiopia

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