

Newsletter

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Leaders of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia after signing the Declaration of principle on the 23 March 2015

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POLITICAL AFFAIRS



Declaration of principle signed by Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan

On 23 March 2015, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan have signed in Khartoum a declaration of principle in a step to put an end to a four-year dispute over Nile water sharing arrangements among Nile Basin countries. Ten principles are outlined in the document signed by the three countries.

The three leaders welcomed the agreement in speeches in Khartoum's Republican Palace, and watched a short film about the Grand Renaissance Dam that highlighted how it could benefit the region.

Prime Minister Hailemariam underlined that the

development to which riparian countries aspire in the basin could only be materialized through dialogue and continuous cooperation that ensures mutual benefit for all. Noting that the Nile is a matter of survival and prerequisite for the economic development of the Nile Basin countries, he stressed GERD is a project which catalyzes cooperation that

can be a base for regional integration. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir said Sudan understands and gives due attention to the necessity of cooperation and collaboration on Nile waters issue. There should be confidence and trust building mechanisms to realize development and peace in the Nile Basin. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said Egypt does not stand against Ethiopia's right to develop and use its natural resources. "We have chosen to cooperate on any issue regarding to Nile waters", he said.

The signing of the Declaration of Principles followed meetings of the Ministers of Foreign affairs and Water Resources of the three countries of the eastern Nile Basin, Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia, hosted by the Sudan which produced a document to govern principles of cooperation between them over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The document aims to overcome concerns and issues that might affect the downstream states of Sudan and Egypt over the dam. The Declaration will also provide the basis for detailed agreements on the technical issues between the Eastern Nile Basin states on the benefits of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

In April 2011, Ethiopia began to build the 6,000 MW dam, which will be Africa's largest when completed in 2017. The project to construct the 1,780 meter long and 145 meter high dam will cost an estimated \$4.7 billion. Ethiopia remains fully committed to ensure fair, equitable and reasonable utilization of Nile waters for the mutual benefit of all Nile riparian countries.

FULL TEXT OF THE DECLARATION

Agreement on Declaration of Principles between

The Arab Republic of Egypt,

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

And

The Republic of the Sudan on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project (GERDP)

Preamble

Mindful of the rising demand of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Sudan on their transboundary water resource, and cognizant of the significance of the River Nile as the source of livelihood and the significant resource to the development of the people of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, the

three countries have committed to the following principles on the GERD:

I - Principles of Cooperation

To cooperate based on common understanding, mutual benefit, good faith, win- win and principles of international law.

To cooperate in understanding upstream and downstream water needs in its various aspects.

II - Principle of Development, Regional Integration and Sustainability

The Purpose of GERD is for power generation, to contribute to economic development, promotion of transboundary cooperation and regional integration through generation of sustainable and reliable clean energy supply.

III - Principle Not to Cause Significant Harm

The Three Countries shall take all appropriate measures to prevent the causing of significant harm in utilizing the Blue/Main Nile.

Where significant harm nevertheless is caused to one of the countries, the state whose use causes such harm shall, in the absence of agreement to such use, take all appropriate measures in consultations with the affected state to eliminate or mitigate such harm and, where appropriate, to discuss the question of compensation.

IV - Principle of Equitable and Reasonable Utilization

The Three Countries shall utilize their shared water resources in their respective territories in an equitable and reasonable manner.

In ensuring their equitable and reasonable utilization, the Three Countries will take into account all the relevant guiding factors listed below, but not limited to the following outlined:

- a. Geographic, hydrographic, hydrological, climatic, ecological and other factors of a natural character;
- b. The social and economic needs of the Basin States concerned;
- c. The population dependent on the water resources in each Basin State;
- d. The effects of the use or uses of the water resources in one Basin State on other Basin States;

- e. Existing and potential uses of the water resources;
- f. Conservation, protection, development and economy of use of the water resources and the costs of measures taken to that effect;
- g. The availability of alternatives, of comparable value, to a particular planned or existing use;
- h. The contribution of each Basin State to the waters of the Nile River system;
- i. The extent and proportion of the drainage area in the territory of each Basin State.

V - Principle to cooperate on the First Filling and Operation of the Dam

To implement the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts (IPOE), respect the final outcomes of the Technical National Committee (TNC) Final Report on the joint studies recommended in the IPOE Final Report throughout the different phases of the project.

The Three Countries, in the spirit of cooperation, will utilize the final outcomes of the joint studies, to be conducted as per the recommendations of the IPOE Report and agreed upon by the TNC, to:

- a. Agree on guidelines and rules on the first filling of GERD which shall cover all different scenarios, in parallel with the construction of GERD.
- b. Agree on guidelines and rules for the annual operation of GERD, which the owner of the dam may adjust from time to time.
- c. Inform the downstream countries of any unforeseen or urgent circumstances requiring adjustments in the operation of GERD.

To sustain cooperation and coordination on the annual operation of GERD with downstream reservoirs, the three countries, through the line ministries responsible for water, shall set up an appropriate coordination mechanism among them.

The time line for conducting the above mentioned process shall be 15 months from the inception of

the two studies recommended by the IPOE.

VI - Principle of Confidence Building

Priority will be given to downstream countries to purchase power generated from GERD.

VII - Principle of Exchange of Information and Data

Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan shall provide data and information needed for the conduct of the TNC joint studies in good faith and in a timely manner.

VIII - Principle of Dam Safety

The Three Countries appreciate the efforts undertaken thus far by Ethiopia in implementing the IPOE recommendations pertinent to the GERD safety.

Ethiopia shall in good faith continue the full implementation of the Dams safety recommendations as per the IPOE report.

IX - Principle of Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity

The Three Countries shall cooperate on the basis of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, mutual benefit and good faith in order to attain optimal utilization and adequate protection of the River.

X - Principle of Peaceful Settlement of Disputes

The Three Countries will settle disputes, arising out of the interpretation or implementation of this agreement, amicably through consultation or negotiation in accordance with the principle of good faith. If the Parties are unable to resolve the dispute thorough consultation or negotiation, they may jointly request for conciliation, mediation or refer the matter for the consideration of the Heads of State/Heads of Government.

This agreement on Declaration of Principles is signed in Khartoum, Sudan, on the 23 of March, 2015, by the Arab Republic of Egypt, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Sudan.

President El-Sisi visited Ethiopia

For the first time in three decades, an Egyptian leader paid an official visit to Ethiopia. During his three-day stay, Egyptian President al-Sisi met with Ethiopia's President Mulatu Teshome and Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. He also delivered a speech to the House of People's representatives.

President Dr Mulatu Teshome welcomed President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt at the National Palace on Tuesday. During their discussions, President Dr. Mulatu expressed his appreciation of the effort Egypt is making to deepen

desire to transform relations into a state of trust and confidence. President Dr. Mulatu stressed that Ethiopia was constructing the GERD purely for power generation, that the country was committed to a green development which would be beneficial



Egyptian President al-Sisi with Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam

the relationship between the two sisterly countries of Ethiopia and Egypt, both in general and over the issue of ensuring equitable water utilization. President al-Sisi emphasized that the Egyptian people had open minds and hearts, not just because of their historic ties and close cultural relations with the people of Ethiopia but also because of their

for all, Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian President further pointed out Ethiopia was concentrating on the fight against poverty and on enhancing sustainable development. Elements of this included reversing deforestation and enriching the flow of water. He underlined that Ethiopia's processes of industrialization and green

development would in fact contribute to Egypt's share of the water of the Nile.

President Al-Sisi welcomed President Mulatu's comments and the reassurance of Ethiopia's commitment to mutual benefits. He said Egypt had a clear and reiterated stance: it supported Ethiopia's development and was ready for cooperation. He welcomed the signing of the Declaration of Principles and stressed that the most important is to advance all agreements into binding legacies for future generations, promoting integrity, and implementing the common commitment and determination on the ground. President al-Sisi further said the Nile water and the GERD should not be the limit of cooperation. Ethiopian and Egypt should strengthen this in all fields to provide both sides with mutual prosperity.

During his meeting with the Egyptian President, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam said that Egyptian investors should seize the opportunity to grow their investments in Ethiopia. Ethiopia's Ambassador to Egypt, Mahmoud Dirir, who attended the meeting quoted the Prime Minister saying that the government of Ethiopia is ready to provide all the necessary support to Egyptian investors. Egyptian President al-Sisi said on his part Ethiopia and Egypt have a longstanding political relation and further want to strengthen trade and investment relations. The two leaders also addressed measures to tackle the spread of religious extremism in the region.

While meeting with the Ethiopian public diplomacy delegation, the Egyptian President called on the delegates to enhance relations between

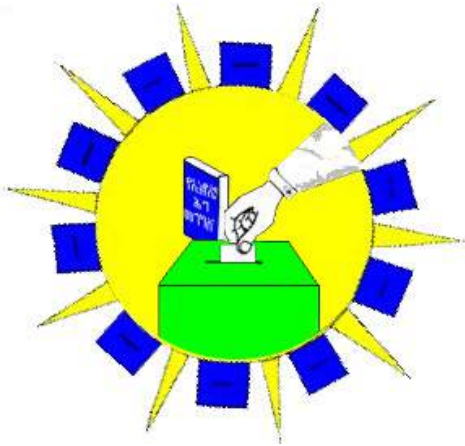
Ethiopia and Egypt to greater heights. He urged for cooperation in implementing the declaration of principles signed on Monday in Khartoum, and noted that an intensive diplomatic approach is needed to win people's hearts and minds. He invited two members of the delegation to set up permanent offices in Cairo to this effect. He added that the Egyptian people does not oppose to Ethiopia's development and vice versa. President al-Sisi underscored the need to clarify misconceptions in the public to boost mutual cooperation.

In front of the House of People's Representatives, the Egyptian President delivered a warm speech which was received by a standing ovation of MPs. The Egyptian President reiterated the need for Egypt and Ethiopia to cooperate and jointly promote trade and development between the two countries. "From the onset of our civilizations, we have drunk and shared the waters of the Nile. The river has been passing through the veins of generations of Egyptians and Ethiopians as blood", he said. President al-Sisi remarked that the agreement on the declaration of principles should be implemented without delays and that concrete actions are needed to further strengthen trust and confidence between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. "Let's not dwell in the past, we have chosen to move forward together, based on a relationship founded on trust", he said.

President al-Sisi's visit, the first visit of an Egyptian President to Ethiopia in 30 years, is the result of the growing trust among the two countries, according to Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom. Saying Ethiopia is keen to boost bilateral ties with Egypt, the Foreign Minister stressed the need for similar visits by both sides to strengthen relationships.

Election updates

Regular voters registration closed on 21 February 2015, with a total voters registration of over 34.8 million. In March, further special voters registration facilities were established for those people who are living far from their vicinity due to service duty in Ethiopia.



Over 177,000 people at the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), 34 universities and military camps have already registered in March to cast their vote. In just three days, over 3,000 students of Addis Ababa University have secured voter's ID cards. The students obtained the IDs from the 20 special polling stations established in the nine faculties of the University. More than 15,000 students of the University are expected to get registered in the voter registration that will remain open until 29 March 2015.

OPDO jubilee anniversary

The Embassy of Ethiopia in Brussels colorfully celebrated Oromo People's Democratic Organization jubilee anniversary

The anniversary of the Oromo People's Democratic Organization has been colorfully celebrated at the Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels on Thursday 27th of March 2015. At this occasion, H.E. Teshome Toga delivered a speech, in which he described the struggle of the OPDO for equality, justice and

democracy in Ethiopia. He admired the courage and perseverance of the OPDO members, who had a major importance in bringing Ethiopia on the path of democracy and development. Other staff members also expressed their gratitude and then a cake and drinks were shared in a festive atmosphere.



Improvement of drinking water supply

According to UNICEF, Ethiopia reached the water goal 7c of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): 57 percent of the country's population now is drinking water from an improved water supply.

This achievement helped Ethiopia to greatly improve the health of many women and children and contributed to cut under-five mortality rate by two-thirds and significantly reduce child stunting. In the base year of the MDGs (1990), only 6.9 million Ethiopians accessed improved water supplies. Since then, Ethiopia managed to improve the water access for 55 million people.

Still according to the UN body, government leadership and strong policy instrument played a major role in achieving this goal, along with persistent donor investment. A total of US\$ 2

billion has been invested by the Government, development partners, NGOs and the private sector in water supply since 1990.

To further improve water access, Ethiopia has developed a program to ensure that all the remaining people in the country receive access to water supply by 2020. The plan has a budget of USD 2.4 billion and involves the collective contribution of public, private, NGO and donor investments.

Watch the interview of Dr Samuel Godfrey, from UNICEF Ethiopia <https://youtu.be/174jymZ3rX4>

ECONOMY

The GERD: A new chapter in Ethiopia's history

This April, the 4th anniversary of the launching of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) will be celebrated after achieving 41 percent of the Dam's construction. Built on the Blue Nile, which originates in Ethiopia and provides 85% of the Nile waters, the project will satisfy the growing energy demand of the Ethiopian economy and will play a decisive role in the regional integration among Nile riparian countries. In fact, the 4th year anniversary of the dam construction will take place weeks after an agreement in principle was signed between Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan.

A cornerstone in Ethiopia's development

The GERD hydropower project is at the center of Ethiopia's development strategy and will be vital to achieve the status of middle income country

by 2025. The construction of this flagship project started in 2011, and is expected to be completed by 2017. Its total cost is estimated at USD 4.7 billion, and it is entirely funded by the Ethiopian Government

and the Ethiopian population. The construction is carried out by the Italian firm Salini Impregilo, and the French company Alstom has also been entrusted with the supply of turbines and generators.

First and foremost, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam will provide cheap and abundant electricity to the booming manufacturing sector of a country in which the electricity demand is growing by about 30 percent each year. Combined with a vast, cheap and trainable labour force, robust infrastructure development, political stability and a strategic location, this energy achievement will considerably boost the manufacturing capacity

of 4 nuclear reactors. By next year, two turbines of the dam will start to generate about 750 MW of electricity.

Apart from power generation, advantages of the dam for downstream countries include: avoiding flood and excessive sediments and maintaining a regular and sustainable flow of water. The dam will be capable of handling a flood of 19,370 cubic meters per second. By creating a lake twice the size Lake Tana, it will provide immense opportunities for local communities through fishing and tourism potential.

Ethiopia has a hydropower potential of 45,000 MW,



and attractiveness of Ethiopia. Furthermore, this new electricity production facility will enable Ethiopia to export cheap electricity to neighboring countries. This will have a positive effect on regional integration and development.

The completion of the Grand Renaissance dam will change the face of East African power infrastructure. It will be the largest dam on the continent: 1,780 meter long and 145 meter high. Upon completion, it is estimated to have the potential to generate 6,000 MW, which is equivalent to the combined power

which remains largely untapped until today. The country however has already planned and achieved the construction of several other hydropower facilities. Plants constructed in the last ten years include Tekeze (300 MW, completed in 2009), Gilgel Gibe II (420 MW, completed in 2010) and Tana Belese (460 MW). Gilgel Gibe III (1,970 MW) is 89% complete and is scheduled to begin generating power later this year.

Regional cooperation

Ethiopia took the initiative to establish an international panel of experts from the three riparian countries and other experts from other countries, to study the impact of the dam on the downstream countries. The findings of the panel of experts concluded that the dam will not have a significant impact on the downstream countries. Despite these results, Egypt raised concern about its water shares. Accordingly, Tripartite ministerial meetings were organized between Egyptian, Ethiopian and Sudanese representatives at ministerial level, in order guarantee a strong and continued dialogue. In this framework, it was agreed that a Tripartite technical committee was to meet regularly to assess technical aspects of the project. Among other prerogatives, the Tripartite technical committee has the mission to choose an international firm which will conduct a study on the environmental and human consequences of the dam. This study will be commissioned by the three countries and the results be binding.

A major step towards more regional cooperation around the dam was taken on 23 March 2015 in Khartoum, when the leaders of Egypt, Ethiopia

and Sudan have signed a declaration of principle on Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance dam project. "We could cooperate and accomplish great things or disagree and hurt each other... we have chosen to cooperate," the Egyptian President El-Sisi stated at this occasion. On his side, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn stressed that the Renaissance Dam will not cause any significant harm to the Egyptian people: Egypt and the rest of the Nile Basin countries are one family, he said.

The Nile Basin Initiative, a regional organization founded in 1999 aiming at improving the dialogue around questions concerning the Nile, congratulated the three countries for this achievement.

The last developments around the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam show that Ethiopia is on a good way to make one dream come true: accelerating its development to eradicate poverty, attain economical well-being and reach the status of a middle-income country by 2025. This hydroelectric project will massively contribute to these goals. This is why the Government of Ethiopia and the people of Ethiopia are so committed to support the realization of this project, and will colorfully celebrate the 4th anniversary since the start of the construction next month.

International horticulture exposition

The 6th international horticulture exposition was organized from the 25th to the 28th of March 2015 in Addis Ababa. One hundred and five foreign and domestic companies took part in the event.

Companies from Kenya, China, Turkey, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, and others from the Middle East and Asia displayed their products. Buyers from Russia, Germany, Sweden, the Middle East and other countries also attended.

Speaking on the opening, Prime Minister Hailemariam said Ethiopia has become a center of attraction for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in horticulture development. International companies are attracted to Ethiopia because of the favorable conditions in terms of agro-ecology, investment environment and proximity to Europe and Middle East. The revenue generated from this sector reached 245 million USD in 2013/14 and created 180,000 job opportunities.

Horticulture development is among the sectors

which have been given top priority in the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan. To this end, the government has been extending support for the private sector engaged in this development. "By working closely with existing investors as well as new comers joining the sector, we are therefore hopeful to register improved export performances both in the floriculture, fruit and vegetables areas in the years to come" the Prime Minister said in his speech.

Favorable climate, availability of land and the incentives package provided by the Government have all contributed to the phenomenal and successful growth of the horticulture sector in Ethiopia, which includes flowers, cuttings, ornamental plants, fruits, vegetables and herbs.

The total value of horticultural exports passed from USD 28 million in 2004/05 to USD 245 in 2013/2014. Floriculture development in particular has been a success, as the value of exports passed from USD 12 million in 2004/05 to USD 212 million in 2012/13. The country is now the second largest flower producer and exporter in Africa next to Kenya. The majority of the production is roses (estimated at 80

percent), and the country is noted for high quality, long stems, large buds and vibrant color.

Besides the natural gift it is endowed with, Ethiopia is close to the markets of Europe and the Middle East and has good freight links to all major and emerging markets including Western Europe, the Middle and Far East, Russian and the USA.

Business opportunity: Dutch dairy trade mission

The Netherlands-African Business Council (NABC) organizes a dairy trade mission for Dutch companies to Ethiopia from the 26th of April until the 1st of May 2015.

The mission focuses among others on quality testing, milk processing, packaging, cooling and logistics, as well as distribution. This mission includes bilateral tailor-made meetings and visits, matchmaking sessions and at the end, a celebration of King's Day at the Royal Dutch Embassy in Addis Ababa. Among other events, a Dairy Platform Meeting with key stakeholders will give a chance to discuss current

challenges and opportunities in the sector. This platform will be opened by H.E. Ethiopian State Minister Dr. Mebratu Meles. Dutch companies in the sector are cordially invited to join this mission and explore trade and investment opportunities in Ethiopia. Registrations are possible until the 1st of April 2015.

More information and registration: <http://ethio.be/1GI2VJt>

SPORTS

Ethiopian double victory at the Rome marathon

Ethiopian runners took both the men's and the women's titles at the 21st edition of the Acea Rome Marathon, with Abebe Negewo Degefa and Meseret Kitata Tolwalk winning in 2:12:23 and 2:30:25 respectively last Sunday 22 March 2015.

"We picked up the pace in the first half of the race. In the second half I felt heavy legs because of cramps. There was no more energy left in the legs, the rain and slippery cobblestones took their toll," said Negewo Degefa after the race.

The women's race saw an Ethiopian trio of Kitata Torwalk, Alemu Ourge Mokonnin and Alem Fikre Kifle set the pace in the first half of the race. Unlike the men's race where the pace dropped in the second half, the three leaders kept a regular pace

until 30km when Kitata Torwalk and Kifle pulled away from a flagging Mokonnin and reached the 35km mark in 2:05:37. Kitata Torwalk then produced a decisive surge at 37km to clinch victory with Kifle second in 2:31:01.

"I trained to run a faster time but today it was not

possible because of the rain," said Kitata Tolwalk. "I ran with my compatriots for most of the race but we had not planned a tactic. Everyone ran her own race. Unfortunately the weather affected the race."

Source: iaaf.org

READER'S QUESTIONS

Zerihun asked to questions per email. We would like to thank him for that, and remind our kind readers that we would be happy to answer their questions.

"With 35 million registered as potential voters, it means more than a third of the population is involved in this election. That is great, but in order to appreciate this better, it is necessary to know the approximate number of eligible voters (Ethiopians above the age of 18 years). Do you have this estimate?"

Dear Zerihun,

According to the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia, there are 43.5 million Ethiopians of voting age.

"A few weeks ago, I read in this newsletter that organizing the election for diaspora voters is impossible because of logistic and financial reasons. My question is: was there a recent change in the Election Law regarding who is eligible to vote? I was

in Ethiopia during the first two election cycles and I was, in both occasions, unable to vote because I did not live long enough (6 months to one year) in my constituency. So, I think Ethiopians living abroad are not eligible for voting because of that Law. Is that right?"

In fact, according to the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia, a person is eligible to vote if :

- he/she is an Ethiopian
- he/she has been residing within the constituencies for at least 6 months.
- he/she is 18 years of age or older on the date of registration.
- he/she has not served a term of imprisonment

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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