

A Week in the Horn

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Prime Minister Abiy at the 2nd Russia-Africa Summit

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Japan Vows to Further Strengthen Longstanding Relations with Ethiopia

News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The African Union Commission Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat on Tuesday (August 2) talked with World Bank President Ajay Banga on measures to strengthen the partnership while fully integrating Africa's priorities and realities within the rapidly changing global dynamics to ensure a shared future of fair access to opportunity and prosperity.

The Authority of Heads of States and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) convened an extraordinary session on Sunday (July 30), in Abuja on the coup in Niger.

The African Women for Transitional Justice platform's first capacity building and network-building workshop was held (August 2) in Nairobi, Kenya. It was organized by the African Union in collaboration with the European Union Delegation to the African Union Consortium on Transitional Justice (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR)), the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), the Africa Transitional Justice Legacy Fund (ATJLF), GIZ, and the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES).

At its emergency virtual meeting on Saturday (July 29), the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) strongly denounced the military coup in Niger.

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed met with Japanese Foreign Minister, Hayashi Yoshimasa on Thursday (August 3) and reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to working with Japan on shared interests.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen on Thursday (August 3), received visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa. They agreed to work closely to elevate Ethio-Japanese cooperation in bilateral and multilateral venues. In particular, they reaffirmed their commitment to boost the trade, investment, innovation, capacity building and development cooperation between the two countries (**See article**).

Ethiopia and the African Development Fund (ADF) inked a grant agreement on Wednesday (August 2) totalling USD 84.3 million to help boost wheat productivity in the country. By raising wheat productivity and output, the initiative intends to raise the earnings of Ethiopia's small-scale wheat farmers.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed welcomed World Bank President Ajay Banga to his office on Monday (July 31) during the President's two-day visit to Ethiopia. In a bilateral conversation with the delegation, the Prime Minister gave an outline of the general economic changes occurring and the developments on Ethiopia's home-grown economic reform agenda (**See article**).

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed met on Monday (July 31) with Naledi Pandor, South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation. Their conversation focused on mutual interests of regional and global nature, as well as means to strengthen diplomatic relationships, expand economic and trade links, cooperate on science and technology, and improve education.

The Ministry of Finance launched a European Union-funded project on Thursday (August 3) to enhance public finance management in Ethiopia. The project aims to build institutions' capacity for financial management reforms and provide technical support. 10 million euros over a four-year period have been provided for the project by the European Union.

The 4th Ethiopia-South Africa Joint Ministerial Commission meeting took place in Addis Ababa on Monday (July 31), Ethiopia, co-chaired by Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, and South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr. Naledi Pandor. The high-level meeting focused on strengthening diplomatic relations between the two countries. (**See article**).

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Mesganu Arga, on Tuesday (August 1) met at his office with the Chairman of Azerbaijani State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations (ASAN), Ulvi Mehdiyev. Azerbaijani Government's readiness to work with its Ethiopian counterpart on providing public services was commended by Ambassador Mesganu Arga. The Chairman also expressed his Country's interest to expand collaboration in the areas of public service delivery, development assistance, education, tourism, and cultural linkages.

Eritrea

President Isaias Afewerki attended Russia's Navy Day event on Sunday (July 30) held in Russia's second-largest city, after meeting with President Vladimir Putin. The President among African leaders, who participated in the 2nd Russia-Africa Summit.

Djibouti

On Sunday (July 30) the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Support Base in Djibouti hosted an open day celebration and a multilateral military skills exchange competition to commemorate the 96th anniversary of the founding of the PLA and the sixth anniversary of the establishment of the PLA Support Base in Djibouti.

Somalia

On Wednesday (August 2), National Security Adviser, Hussein Sheikh-Ai met with Special Representative of the Chairperson (SRCC) of the African Union Commission for Somalia and the leader of the African Union Transition Mission (ATMIS), Souef Mohamed El-Amine to review preparations for the second phase of the ATMIS troop withdrawal.

Italian Foreign Ministry announced that Italy on Saturday (July 29) dispatched humanitarian supplies to Somalia. 18 tons of medical supplies, first aid kits, and tents were sent by relief aircraft from Rome to Mogadishu.

Deputy Information Minister Abdul Rahman Yousef Al-Adalah stated, about 100 Al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorists, including renowned leaders were killed in a military operation on Saturday (July 29) in central and southern Somalia.

South Sudan

President Salva Kiir Mayardit called on the United Nations to support the country in developing a robust agricultural system to boost food production and combat food insecurity. The request was made during a meeting on Tuesday (August 01) with FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu; International Fund for Agriculture Development President Dr. Alvaro Lario; and WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain.

During Martyr's Day celebration on Sunday (July 30), President Kiir expressed his rejection of the continuous transitional arrangements in his remarks, claiming that they have prevented citizens from choosing the leaders they want since South Sudan gained independence in July of 2011.

Kenya

Ministry of Interior released an official statement on Wednesday (August 2), announcing the suspension of Worldcoin's operations in the country owing to concerns over the collection of

people's iris data. The decision comes amid concerns about the economy, security, and data privacy.

Foreign Minister Dr. Alfred Mutua said in a statement Saturday (July 29) that his country has agreed to "positively consider" leading a multinational force to Haiti. Kenya has pledged to send a team of 1,000 police officers to Haiti to assist in training and assisting the Haitian police in restoring normalcy and protecting vital facilities.

Sudan

On Monday (July 31), the Sudanese Civil Aviation Authority issued a statement that the country's airspace will remain closed until August 15, with the exception of planes carrying emergency supplies and those who seek evacuations.

The Japanese government has given USD 600,000 to the UNHCR to help emergency relief efforts in Sudan. According to a statement released by the organization on Sunday (July 30), this donation will help refugees and asylum seekers who have recently arrived in camps in the Sudanese states of White Nile, Gedaref, and Kassala after leaving Khartoum and other war zones.

During a phone conversation with General Commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan on Saturday (July 29), Saudi's Foreign Minister, Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud prompted both warring sides in Sudan to put their country's interests first and refrain from any further escalation.

Prime Minister Abiy at the 2nd Russia-Africa Summit

The *2nd Russia-Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum* was held from July 27 to 28, 2023 in St. Petersburg, Russia, and representatives of 49 African countries, regional organizations and other international institutions participated in the forum, including the leaders of 21 African countries. The Forum mainly focused on New Global Economy, Integrated Security and Sovereign Development, Cooperation in Science and Technology and The Humanitarian and Social Agendas, Business and Youths.

A high-level Ethiopian delegation led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took part in the Forum in the second city of Russia. Prime Minister Abiy held talks with President Vladimir Putin ahead of the Summit. The leaders discussed bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. During the talks, both leaders acknowledged the longstanding and historic relations between the two countries and expressed commitment to enhance trade ties, collaborate in the field of agriculture and manufacturing industries. In particular, they discussed technology, cybersecurity, economic exchange, and trade. I hope this would be a very fruitful discussion.

On 28 July, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Ambassador Mesganu Arga and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov inked intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in Ensuring International Information Security.

Messages conveyed by the Ethiopian delegation highlighted that Russia has long-standing and historic friendship with Africa and Ethiopia, in particular. The delegation called on Russia to increase its economic cooperation with Africa and support efforts to realize *African Agenda 2063*. Similarly, Africa should follow the approach of adding values instead of being a supplier of raw materials to the world market; to this end, Russian cooperation is expected in the field of science and technology and modern agriculture.

World Bank President Visits Ethiopia

On 31 July 2023 the newly-selected and 14th President of the World Bank Group, Ajay Banga, arrived in Addis Ababa for a two-day visit. He was received by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed at Office of the Prime Minister.

During their bilateral meeting, Premiere Abiy provided an overview of the overall economic reforms underway and the progress of Ethiopia's *Home-Grown Economic Reform Agenda*. The Prime Minister noted, the World Bank will be instrumental to our economic growth in expanding its scope of partnership with Ethiopia through increased concessional financing, robust investment financing through IFC and support for our homegrown economic reform agenda.

The World Bank President on his part commended Ethiopia's focus on key development goals despite many challenges encountered domestically and in the global arena.

After the discussions PM Abiy and WB President Banga together visited the two industrial plants situated within the Bole Lemmi Industry Park on the outskirts of Addis Ababa, that mainly produce apparel and malt, respectively. The Premiere disclosed, activating manufacturing industries are a key part of Ethiopia's homegrown economic reform agenda. With abundant skilled labor and investments in ease of doing business, Ethiopia is a critical industry destination, he added.

Besides the industry tour, the Prime Minister and President Banga planted trees as part of the *Green Legacy Initiative*.

The World Bank President also met with Finance Minister Ahmed Shide. Their discussion focused on further bolstering the cooperation Ethiopia and the Bank as the development priorities of the Ethiopian Government.

Addis Hosts the 4th Ethiopia-South Africa Joint Ministerial Commission

The 4th Ethiopia-South Africa Joint Ministerial Commission was held on 31 July 2023 at the Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa. The meeting was co-chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Dr. Naledi Pandor

The high-level ministerial meeting was preceded by a two-day senior officials' meeting which reviewed the existing partnership and previously signed agreements and explored new areas of cooperation to broaden the ties between the two countries.

In his opening remarks, DPM and FM Demeke underscored that Ethiopia attaches great importance to its relations with the Southern African country. He expressed the gratitude of the Ethiopian People and Government to the People and Government of the latter for graciously hosting the Pretoria Peace Process that brought to an end to the conflict in Northern Ethiopia.

Taking the historical relations and the potential that the two countries have into consideration, Demeke expressed the need to redouble efforts to further enhance the two countries engagement on trade, investment, knowledge, experience sharing, and people to people relations as well as cooperation on regional and multilateral fora.

Foreign Minister Pandor similarly thanked DPM and FM Demeke for convening the session, that was previously hosted by South African in 2013. She stated that the People and Government of South Africa recognize with appreciation, the contribution of Ethiopia in the historic fight against colonialism and apartheid in her country. The Minister further mentioned that Ethiopia and South Africa enjoy historical bonds inspired by solidarity and Pan-Africanism.

The dignitaries concurred, Ethiopia and South Africa need to scale up collaboration to collectively achieve their common vision of fostering multilateral cooperation in a rapidly changing world. They also pledged the continued commitments of their respective nations to fight terrorism, violent extremism and promote conflict prevention and resolution on the African continent with the spirit of "African solutions to African problems".

The JMC culminated with the signing of an *Extradition Agreement* between Ethiopian Justice Minister Dr. Gedion Timothewos and Foreign Minister Pandor.

The next session of the Joint Ministerial Commission is scheduled to be held in South Africa in 2025.

Japan Vows to Further Strengthen Longstanding Relations with Ethiopia

Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hayashi Yoshimasa arrived in the Capital, Addis Ababa, on 03 August 2023 for an official, as part of his Africa tour.

During his visit, he met with Prime Minister Abiy and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke and discussed bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

Welcoming FM Hayashi to Ethiopia, PM Abiy resonated the fact that, Ethiopia attaches great importance to its relations with Japan and remains committed to cooperate on issues of mutual interest.

The meeting between Demeke and Hayashi also focused on enhancing multifaceted, longstanding cooperation in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora. In particular, they reaffirmed their commitment to boost trade, investment, innovation, capacity building and development

cooperation between the two countries and also exchanged views on issues ranging from regional to global issues.

The DPM and FM during the talks recalled Ethiopia and Japan established formal diplomatic relations in 1930 with the signing of the *Treaty of Amity and Commerce* that was borne of the strong bond of friendship between respective leaders of the day. He noted with satisfaction the crucial role of Japan in the socio-economic development of Ethiopia. Japan provides support to Ethiopia through bilateral grants, loans and capacity building schemes, The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and different UN Agencies. He also expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan for its continued assistance in the peace-keeping efforts of Ethiopia. Demeke expressed Ethiopia's keenness to foster all rounded partnership and elevate the relation to a higher level.

Touching upon current state of affairs in Ethiopia, Demeke brought up-to-date the Japanese FM on the progress of the implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement including the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), national dialogue and Transitional Justice processes. While stressing the peace consolidation efforts of the Ethiopian Government, Demeke called for the continued support of international partners such as Japan in these respect as well as the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in areas affected by the conflict in Northern Ethiopia. Ethiopia is on the path of healing, reconciliation, and revitalising the economy, the DPM and FM noted.

Demeke also reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to support the international system that respects the UN Charter and reforming the current global architecture towards the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere through dialogue. He mentioned the fact that Ethiopia hosting 70,000 Sudanese refugees, who fled the war in the country while emphasizing Ethiopia's strong position to champion a peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialogue and negotiation while ensuring that the process is owned and led by the Sudanese People and facilitated by the IGAD platform under the auspices of the African Union.

FM Hayashi, on his part, stated that he was pleased to visit Ethiopia for the first time in four years and pledged to further strengthening diplomatic relations with Ethiopia. He also expressed his appreciation on the improving situation in Ethiopia and mentioned Japan's support to the consolidation of peace. Bilaterally, the Foreign Minister vowed to improve the multifaceted cooperation in the areas of human capacity development assistance, scaling up Japanese investment in Ethiopia addition to development and humanitarian assistances.