

# **A Week in the Horn**

11.08.2023

*South Sudanese President Kiir on a Working Visit to Ethiopia*

*South Korean FM Says Ethiopia is Gateway to Africa*

*Diaspora Engagement Among the Key Priorities of the Ministry*

## **News In Brief**

### **Africa and the African Union**

The African Union (AU) planned to send a joint mission with representatives of the UN and the West African bloc ECOWAS to Niger on Tuesday (August 08), but it was denied permission by the military government which has closed Niger's airspace. As a consequence, additional sanctions were imposed on Niger on the same day, hours after its military leaders rejected the latest diplomatic efforts by the joint delegation.

The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and the Frontline States Task Force – a regional security initiative by countries bordering Somalia – have agreed to strengthen collaboration in the fight against Al-Shabaab. The resolution was made at a meeting held on Sunday (August 06) in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, between the Head of ATMIS, Ambassador Mohamed El-Amine Souef, the ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen Sam Okiding, and the Commander of the Frontline States Task Force, Gen. Mohamed Bariise.

### **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed received South Sudan's President Salva Kiir Mayardit, on Monday (August 07), and discussed on bilateral issues including trade and infrastructure development as well as regional peace and security issues.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed met with Park Jin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Korea on Wednesday (August 09) to discuss bilateral cooperation, regional and international issues. Discussions also included enhancing trade and investments between the two countries.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, on Tuesday (August 08), conferred with the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea (ROK), Park Jin. They discussed ways of further augmenting the long-standing diplomatic relations between the countries in bilateral and multilateral venues. They have agreed to continue cooperating in key areas including trade, investment and development cooperation, and to elevate the multifaceted partnership

between Ethiopia and ROK on issues of mutual interest. This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the commencement of formal diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and the East Asian country

United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres, on Tuesday (August 08), has appointed Dr. Ramiz Alakbarov as the UN Resident Coordinator in Ethiopia. He will also serve as the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in the country. Prior to his current assignment, Dr. Alakbarov, a national of Azerbaijan, served as Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) where he was also the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

## **Djibouti**

On Thursday (August 10), President Ismail Omar Guelleh held a telephone conversation with the US Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III to strengthen the U.S.-Djibouti defense partnership. The Secretary reaffirmed his country's commitment to the bilateral strategic partnership, and underscored the critical role Djibouti played in enabling the safe evacuation of American personnel from Sudan in April.

## **Somalia**

AU Special Representative for Somalia Ambassador Mohamed El-Amine Souef on Wednesday (August 09) visited Baidoa, Southwest State and commended Ethiopian troops serving with the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), for their contribution in restoring peace and security in the country. Ambassador Souef made the remarks when he led a delegation of top ATMIS officials to Baidoa, where he presided over the medal award ceremony for Ethiopia National Defence Forces (ENDF) troops who have completed their tour of duty.

On Wednesday (August 09), Somalia and Kenya have signed a bilateral air services agreement handing a major boost to Kenya Airways that has been raring to launch flights to the country. Transport Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen said the deal now 'opens' the airspaces of the two countries for direct flights.

Somali National Army kills over 40 al-Shabaab terrorists in a military operation. Al-Shabaab terrorists, including ringleaders, were killed in an aerial and ground operation conducted by the army's elite Danab unit on Sunday (August 06), the country's Information Ministry said. According to the ministry, the operation was carried out with support from international security partners and targeted a gathering place used by the terrorist group in the village of Welmaro. Welmaro is located 40 kilometers (24 miles) from the town of Afmadow in the Lower Jubba region in the southern state of Jubaland.

At least six people have been killed and 12 others were injured in an explosion targeting a passenger bus outside Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. The roadside explosion hit a minibus in

southern Somalia on Wednesday (August 09). Mohamed Ibrahim Barre, the governor of the Lower Shabelle region, confirmed that all the victims were civilians, including women and children. However, no one has claimed responsibility for the attack but Barre blamed the al-Shabab militant group.

## **South Sudan**

South Sudan's President Salva Kiir South Sudan president, veteran opposition leader Lam Akol met on Wednesday (August 09) to discuss the 2024 elections. During the meeting, opposition leader Akol, who heads the National Democratic Movement (NDM), called for expeditious implementation of the revitalized peace agreement so that elections are held on time.

South Sudan President Salva Kiir has fired Finance Minister Dier Tong Ngor, the latest abrupt cabinet change in the country. As well, President Kiir on Wednesday (August 09) replaced the Undersecretary in the Ministry of East African Affairs in a presidential decree aired on state-run media. He replaced Adrea Aguer Ariik Malueth with Beny Gideon Mabor.

## **Kenya**

Kenya on Monday marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi. On the occasion, Kenya demanded compensation by the U.S. government. The terror attack on the U.S. embassy in Nairobi on 07 August 1998 killed 213 persons and injured more than 5,000 others.

Kenya's government begins talks with opposition, on Wednesday (August 09), after wave of protests. Kenya's government and the opposition launched fresh talks aimed at resolving the political feud following a spate of violent protests over the high cost of living and calls for electoral reforms. The talks are taking place at the Bomas of Kenya.

The Commonwealth Observer Group to Kenya on Wednesday (August 09) publishes final report on Kenya's 2022 general elections. The 15-member delegation, led by The Hon. Bruce Golding, former Prime Minister of Jamaica, concluded that, despite some challenges, the election, which saw William Ruto elected as the country's fifth president, was on the whole credible, transparent, inclusive and largely peaceful. The Group noted the dedication and hard work of the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC) staff and polling staff in undertaking this complex logistical operation.

President William Ruto made a five-day development tour this week in the country. The President launched various development projects, and said the Government will fulfil its pledges to the people of Kenya through the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda. He further assured Kenyans of the Government's commitment to reducing the cost of living by supporting farmers to increase production.

## **Sudan**

The foreign ministers of Sudan's neighbouring countries held a meeting on Sudan's current situation on 06-07 August in N'Djamena, Chad. The foreign ministers on Monday endorsed a comprehensive plan aimed at bringing an end to the four-month-long conflict within the country. The two-day gathering of foreign ministers had been convened following a summit of Sudan's neighbouring leaders last month in Cairo. The Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs has formulated an action plan, which is slated for consideration and approval by the Heads of State and Government.

The U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, on Wednesday (August 09), urged a negotiated solution for the Sudanese conflict, saying there is no alternative. The official told the U.N. Security Council that the ongoing violence has resulted in the widespread displacement of civilians. She also expressed concern about the escalation of the conflict in key areas, and the designation of civilian neighbourhoods as "areas of operations" by both sides, which is exacerbating a desperate humanitarian crisis. "The longer this war continues, the greater the risk of fragmentation, and foreign interference, and erosion of sovereignty, and the loss of Sudan's future, particularly its youth", Pobee said

The United Nations Security Council meets on Wednesday (August 09) about the ongoing power struggle in Sudan. The Council convenes the meeting as a deadly power struggle in the capital continues. More than four million people have been uprooted in the conflict, which began in April.

Sudan's Sovereign Council Deputy-Chairman, Malik Agar, has unveiled the government-proposed roadmap to end the war, starting with the separation of warring forces and concluding with a political process. Agar outlined the government's position in the Jeddah negotiations in a statement after a meeting with representatives of the Women Against War platform in Cairo on Saturday (August 05).

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## **South Sudanese President Kiir on a Working Visit to Ethiopia**

President Salva Kiir Mayardit of South Sudan paid a one day working visit on 07 August 2023 and on his arrival along with his delegation at Bole International Airport was received by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and other high ranking government officials.

The leaders held bilateral talks which include diplomatic relations, economic cooperation and infrastructure (Pagak-Maiwut-Mathiang-Paloch and Akobo-Bor and Boma- Radd-Kopoeta roads) development, Cooperation Framework Agreement (CFA) on Nile Initiative, regional peace and among others.

On the issue of infrastructure, the two principals exchange views on the progress made on road construction of Pagak-Maiwut-Mathiang-Paloch and Akobo-Bor by by two countries. The two leaders underlined the importance of the two corridors roads construction to boost the trade between two counties. During their discussion they agreed to give priority to Pagak-Maiwut-Mathiang-Paloch road construction and then Akobo-Bor Road will follow in the short period of time. They also agreed that while the Pagak-Maiwut-Mathiang-Paloch road is on construction, other infrastructures such as electricity and oil pipe line will simultaneously continue.

On border trade issue, they raised that the illegal trade between the two neighbouring countries encourages the contraband in the border which has negative impact for both countries in term of revenue as well as security in the border. The two-principals took note that since the eruption of conflict in Sudan the illicit trade in the border is increasing daily and the two leaders agreed to establish a technical committee from both countries to control the increasing illegal trade along the border.

Recognizing the pivotal significance of the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) on Nile River, the two principals reviewed the recent sensitization workshop conducted on the matter in Juba. On his part, president Kiir recognized the workshop which raised awareness to members of parliament, scholars and other stakeholders on the significance of CFA. He stated that the workshop will help them during parliament discussion for CFA ratification. Prime Minister Abiy, on his part urged, the President to give political direction to parliament members for ratification and the President took note of it and assured to Prime Minister that the document is now in the parliament, they are working on it.

The two leaders also exchanged views on the South Sudan peace process. PM Abiy commended President Kiir's leadership for the progress made in implementation of the roadmap for peace process in the country and assured the latter of the continued support of the Government of Ethiopia.

Last but not least, the leaders discussed on the conflict in Sudan. They commended the various initiatives including the recent IGAD Quartet meeting in Addis Ababa to bring about a peaceful solution to the conflict by ensuring that the process is owned and led by the Sudanese People.

They concluded their bilateral discussion by agreeing to work closely on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest in a manner that the strong people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and South are further cemented.

### **South Korean FM Says Ethiopia is Gateway to Africa**

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea, Park Jin, paid a three-day official visit to Ethiopia. As part of his visit, the Foreign Minister conferred with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen over the week. The two sides have exchanged views to further elevate their bilateral relations to a strategic partnership level, firming up their cooperation on regional and global venues as both play important roles in peace and stability in their respective regions, and leverage the shared values in multilateral fora as well.

In his welcoming remarks, Demeke Mekonnen evoked memory of the historic diplomatic relations of the two countries and mentioned that this year marks the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Ethiopia's diplomatic relations with Republic of Korea dates back to the 1950s, and formal diplomatic relations were established on December 23, 1963. During the Korean War, Ethiopia sent its troops and fought under UN flag for the Republic of Korea in pursuit of world peace and collective security.

The two Ministers reiterated that the relations between Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea have been forged by blood and this bond catapult the furtherance of longstanding ties between our two countries. Demeke also underlined that the Republic of Korea remains to be Ethiopia's key partner and mentioned his aspirations that the historic relations will be manifest through investment, balanced trade, development assistance, capacity building and experience sharing. He seized the opportunity to appreciate the friendship and development assistance from the Republic of Korea. Moreover, he mentioned that Korea is a role model in infrastructure development, green energy, and digital innovation. In this regard, he expressed Ethiopia's keenness to learn from Korea's successes and explore investment together with technology transfer opportunities.

Foreign Minister Park Jin, on his part, echoed not only Ethiopia as gateway and Korea's priority partner in Africa, but also as the only country in Africa that stood on Korean side 70 years ago. He stressed that the people of Korea will never forget the noble sacrifice and genuine friendship that Ethiopian had shown during the Korea War by dispatching the Ethiopia troops by defending peace and freedom of the people of Korea and honour them by putting their contribution to the highest place in the proud history of Korea.

He also underlined the need to elevate bilateral relations to higher level of strategic partnership fittingly at a time the two sides are commemorating the 60th Anniversary of Korea-Ethiopia Diplomatic Relation ties this year. Furthermore, his government decision to set the direction of the next 60 years and explore Ethiopia as a primacy in Korean development assistance and to be continued in a better profile. Korea formulated a five-year Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) guideline that planned to back Ethiopia's four country priority sectors; health and sanitation, rural development, transport and energy and education.

On domestic situation in Ethiopia, H.E. Demeke briefed his Korean counterpart on the implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement including the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) process and reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment and efforts to finalise the formulation of Transitional Justice policy and needs the continued support of international partners such as Republic of Korea, in complementing the Ethiopian effort in reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war affected areas and called for further support in national consensus determinations. Ethiopia wants to Korean government to partner with Ethiopia in these endeavours and stand together on international efforts.

On regional and global issues, H.E. Demeke, reiterated that Ethiopia strongly supports the IGAD led, Sudanese owned and African Union supported peace process, and seeks the support of the international community to align with and complement the IGAD process. He also expounded, Ethiopia is supportive of the Federal Government of Somalia in reinforcing measures against the Al-Shabab as this terrorist group poses threat to the future of Somalia and the region at large.

The two Ministers agreed on a strategic coordination and closer consultations on matters of mutual interest on multilateral fora.

The South Korean Foreign Minister extended his country's invitation to the Government of Ethiopia to participate in the upcoming high-level Africa-Korea Summit, which will be held in 2024 in ROK that helps deepen the cooperation between Africa and Korea through the implementation of the ROK-Africa Framework of Cooperation.

### **Diaspora Engagement among the Key Priorities of the Ministry**

Beginning the month of June 2023 four delegations comprising representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia and Ethiopian Diaspora Service have conducted outreach programs in thirty cities in the United States of America and Canada, some European, Middle Eastern and African countries. While the outreach has covered fifteen Ethiopian missions in the stated places, close to sixty consultation forums on the enhancement of diaspora participation have been held with the diaspora. Eleven visits were also made to cultural, religious and educational institutions and businesses established by the diaspora.

As a result of the consultations held with large number of diaspora associations, favourable conditions were laid down for sustainable future engagement. Discussions were made and possible solutions were indicated to bottlenecks the diaspora faces while conducting investment, trade and skill transfer activities back home. Pledges were also made on the part of the diaspora to enhance its participation in public diplomacy and advocacy; to support resource mobilization efforts for national projects and philanthropic deeds. Candid discussions were also held on the concerns of the diaspora on current affairs of the country. As most of the diaspora get its information from unconfirmed sources, largely from social media, the forums have created conducive situations to explain the commitment of the government so as to assure mutual understanding and balanced view on major national issues.

Two delegations led by Somali and Harari regional states senior leaders have also conducted similar missions in the United States of America and Canada. Discussion forums focusing on harnessing the diaspora potentials and showcasing opportunities to invest at home were common issues.

On top of having discussion forums with the diaspora, the delegations also had a chance of visiting cultural, religious and educational institutions and businesses established by the diaspora.

In a nutshell, the outreaches conducted were instrumental in enhancing and harnessing the diaspora potentials and familiarizing the diaspora with new concepts and strategies devised to elevate its engagement in all sectors. These include, among others, Diaspora Integration and Protection Strategy, establishment of High-Level Panel for Ethiopian Public Diplomacy and upcoming diaspora investment forum.