



Ethiopian News

Winter 2018

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Happy Holidays!

Season's Greetings from all of us
at the Ethiopian Embassy in London



MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR



On behalf of the Ethiopian Embassy in London, I would like to extend my best wishes to the Ethiopian community and friends of Ethiopia in the United Kingdom for a joyous holiday season and a happy new year.

The run-up to the new year provide us with the opportunity to pause, reflect and celebrate the past year surrounded by our nearest and dearest. It is a season of togetherness, love and hope – a time of thanksgiving and contemplation.

For Ethiopia, 2018 has represented a year of transformational change - cementing the country's position as a beacon of hope and catalyst for peace in the Horn of Africa. Reforms championed by the administration of H.E Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed have registered a number of achievements including: the end of the conflict with neighbouring Eritrea and reestablishment of diplomatic relations; the brokering of peace between neighbouring Eritrea and Djibouti; the peaceful return of exiled

political groups from abroad and their reengagement in the democratic process; the provision of amnesty to all political prisoners and journalists held in prison; gender-parity in the cabinet and the restructuring of the Executive and the successful mediation of the split within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church among others.

With all of the change that has taken place in my country over the last year, the UK has stood side-by-side with the Government as a stalwart bilateral partner enduring in its commitment to Ethiopia. It is my sincere conviction that 2019 will be a year in which UK-Ethiopia relations continue to blossom. The Embassy looks forward to working closely with all of our UK partners to further consolidate our partnership in pursuit of global peace and mutual prosperity for our great nations.

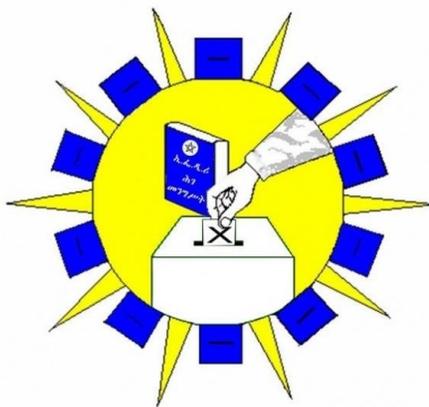
Once again, on behalf of all diplomats and staff at the Embassy, I would like to wish you joy, health, love and peace, this holiday season and beyond.



Editorial

Laying the ground-work for the 2020 elections

On taking the oath of office in April this year, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed told Parliament that his government will build a system “that responds to the country’s political, economic, and social conditions and which is governed by the will of the people.” Bringing about consensus among all stakeholders and realising sustainable development will be the overarching task, he said.



parties who attended included the Oromo Liberation Front, the Oromo Federalist Congress, Patriotic Ginbot 7 and the Ogaden National Liberation Front. The newly appointed **Chairperson of the National Electoral Board (NEBE)**, Ms Birtukan Mideska, a former judge and opposition politician who returned from exile in the United States and is one of a raft of women recently appointed to prominent positions, was also present.

Since then, the government has launched a wide range of measures and the PM has held inclusive discussions with sections of society all around the country and beyond. He travelled abroad and met members of the Ethiopian Diaspora in North America and in Europe, calling upon leaders and members of exiled political parties to return home and resolve differences through dialogue. Many prisoners have been released, reform of the justice system has been instigated and a new (woman) President of the Federal Supreme Court has been appointed. The PM has re-organised his cabinet, paying special attention to complete gender parity.



On 27th November the Prime Minister met with the leaders of over 80 (eighty) political parties to discuss the reforms that will ensure that the elections in 2020 will be fully free and fair. Political

Opening the discussion, PM Abiy said achieving consensus on a common national agenda would lay the foundations for a stable political culture and encourage prosperity. Being “open to dialogue and avoiding unnecessary polarisation can help turn differences into assets”, he said. “Differences in political ideologies should not be the cause of discord, but should serve as a foundation to rebuild Ethiopia with constructive ideas.” Discord can be resolved through dialogue, he said, urging those present to refrain from provoking dispute by dwelling on the past.

From now onwards, a forum will be established where all political parties can sustain a permanent dialogue on major national issues, and propose solutions to common problems. Elections are a pillar of any democratic system and a fully

independent electoral system is essential, so chief among issues discussed were the **reforms** required to ensure that the 2020 election outcome will reflect more closely how the people voted. The PM called on the leaders of all parties to play their part in setting up such sustainable electoral systems and laws. He reaffirmed his government's commitment to playing a constructive role.

The PM suggested a **three phase inter-political party discussion**. The first would focus on reaching consensus regarding the place and time of dialogue and identify the issues to be discussed. The second phase would cover building democratic/electoral institutions, and the third phase, to be held after the 2020 election, would focus on sustaining the new political culture. The rules of the game will include acceptance of the election outcome by all competing parties.



The PM encouraged the numerous political parties present to consider merging with parties that had similar ideologies, so the public will not be confused by the very high number of parties, and so that the government can allocate adequate budgets; in Ethiopia, competing parties receive government funds to support their election campaigns. Political parties should transcend the regions they represent, he concluded, and stand for the country as a whole.

The PM concluded that the NEBE will use the ideas raised at the meeting to reform the electoral process, helping to create trusted democratic and judicial institutions and a stable political culture. Any amendments to the country's laws, including the constitution, he said, should be considered together and in accordance with the law.

Birtukan Mideksa appointed chairperson of electoral board



Former judge and opposition leader, Birtukan Mideksa, has become the latest significant appointment of a woman to a key public office after Parliament endorsed her appointment as chairperson of the National Election Board of Ethiopia.

The Office of the Prime Minister announced the nomination of Birtukan saying it “realizes [Prime Minister Abiy's] promise in facilitating electoral reforms and bears testimony to the political will for strengthening an independent election board.”



Birtukan returned to Ethiopia in November following Prime Minister Abiy's call for national reconciliation aimed at former opposition figures, government critics as well as journalists who were in exile.

The NEBE, which is accountable to Parliament, is an independent and autonomous organ designated for conducting elections in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is scheduled to hold elections in 2020.



H.E. Girma Wolde-Giorgis

1924 - 2018



Former Ethiopian President Girma Wolde-Giorgis laid to rest

Former Ethiopian president H.E. Girma Woldegiorgis died on 14th December 2018, just two weeks short of his 95th birthday.



A state funeral was held in his honour on 19th December at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa, in the presence of high-level Ethiopian and foreign dignitaries including Ethiopian President

Sahle-Work Zewde, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and African Union Commission Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat.

Speaking at his funeral, broadcast live on television, Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde said "Wolde-Giorgis showed the true principles of public service, serving Ethiopia during challenging times over the last several decades, in various capacities."

A 21-gun salute was fired in his honour during the state funeral.

President Girma was born in Addis Ababa on 28th December 1924 and served as Ethiopia's president for twelve years between 2001 to 2013. He sustained a long career in public service, close to six decades, spanning multiple governments – from the imperial period, as a military officer, to the current EPRDF government - performing multiple state duties.

President Girma was also a staunch environmentalist who in 1991 founded a local environmental protection association, Lem Ethiopia.

In recent years President Girma had been active in efforts to foster reconciliation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, who declared an end to two decades of hostility in July.



President Girma is survived by his five children.

...Ethiopia mourns

19th December was declared a national day of mourning in memory of the former president. Flags were flown at half-mast all over the country as well as at Ethiopian embassies and missions abroad.

At the Embassy in London, staff held a minute's silence in remembrance of the former president on 18th December, where the Ambassador outlined the major achievements President Girma will be remember for.



A book of condolence was also opened to the public on 20th and 21st December. Condolence messages are also being accepted by email at condolences@ethioembassy.org.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopia holds first Car-Free Day



On 9th December, major roads were closed as thousands gathered to mark the first Car-Free Day in cities across Ethiopia by walking and exercising, to promote healthy living, and to reduce pollution.

Dr Amir Aman, Minister of Health, who was among those who walked and exercised for the day said that Car-Free Day will be held on the last Sunday of each month and hailed the first one as a success.



Dr Amir (centre in glasses) performing a group exercise

"Thank you to everyone who participated and supported the event. We shine when we walk together and build a healthy Ethiopia," he said.

Renaissance Dam to be completed in 2022

According to the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam will be completed in 2022.

According to the dam's construction manager, they expect to generate power from the first two units within the coming two years.

Construction of the dam, which began in 2011, is currently more than 65% complete. Once completed, it will generate about 6,450 MW of electricity, more than doubling Ethiopia's current production of 4,000MW, and will be the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa.

ETHIOPIA IN UK



Ethiopian Airlines launches Manchester route

On 11th December Ethiopian Airlines' launched its inaugural flight to Manchester, which is set to benefit more than 400,000 people across the North of the UK who access Africa via other means.

This new landmark route, a four times a week service, will connect the North to the heart of Africa and unlock more than 60 connections in Africa and beyond. It is currently the region's only direct links to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, H.E. Dr Hailemichael Aberra Afework, together with Deputy Head of Mission, Mr Ababi Demissie, and Head of Diaspora Affairs, Mr Fekadu Beyene, attended the launch at Manchester Airport, the UK's third largest airport. Other guests included the CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, Tewolde Gebremariam, Jeremy Lefroy MP, the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Ethiopia, Ethiopia-born Chancellor of The

University of Manchester, Lemn Sissay, the CEO and COO of Manchester Airport, as well as hundreds of guests from across the region.



Kicking off celebrations was award-winning dance troupe, DanKira, giving guests a taste of Ethiopia with a colourful cultural performance representing the different nations and nationalities of the country.

Speaking at the launch, Tricia Williams, Chief Operating Officer of Manchester Airport, said: "This absolutely strengthens our position to open up those long-haul routes that Manchester, maybe in the past, wasn't traditionally associated with.

"We've worked really hard and strategically to secure some of those long-haul routes, this is the only direct connection to Sub-Saharan Africa from the north, so it's fantastic for us and our customers.

"We know that there are about 400,000 passengers in our catchment area who currently travel to Addis Ababa and they don't go through Manchester, they are spending more money and time to get there, so this is a vital connection for those passengers."



Ethiopian Airlines CEO Tewolde Gebremariam presents a gift to Manchester Airport COO, Tricia Williams.

Tewolde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, said:

"We are elated to start our service to Manchester, our second destination in the UK next to London Heathrow, which we have been serving since 1973. As the leading African carrier with the widest

network on the continent, passengers from Manchester will enjoy convenient and seamless connectivity options to 60 African destinations operated with a cutting-edge fleet with the B-787 and A350 which offer our passengers unparalleled comfort on-board our flights, along with our African flavoured Ethiopian hospitality.

"The socio-economic implication of the new flight is immense. With vast investment and trade potential between Africa and the UK, the upcoming flight holds the promise of boosting trade, investment and tourism with ample business opportunities for investors and business people from both regions."

Speaking at the event, Ambassador Hailemichael commended Ethiopian Airlines on its latest achievement and said he hopes the new Manchester to Addis Ababa route will contribute to the strengthening of the century-old Ethio-UK relations. He also encouraged guests to visit Ethiopia to discover what the country has to offer, be it trade or tourism.



Ambassador Hailemichael with Ethiopian Airlines CEO Tewolde Gebremariam

"This is, in very many ways, a very important achievement. The UK is a very important development partner. A number of British companies are already investing in Ethiopia in many sectors, and that is growing...our bilateral and political relations are also growing. I hope that Ethiopian flying into Manchester will contribute to the strengthening of our relations...Ethiopian Airlines is one of the fastest growing airlines in the

world as Ethiopia is also one of the fastest growing economies in the world. And I hope Ethiopian Airlines serving this part of the UK will contribute to strengthening trade and investment...Ethiopia has a lot to offer in terms of tourism, its natural beauty and scenery, the cultures, the people, the history of the country, I am sure you will benefit from visiting Ethiopia.”

The new service has been welcomed by Northern businesses and organisations who will benefit from reduced journey times, unlocking vital economic, trade and investment opportunities.

The UK Prime Minister’s Trade Envoy to Ethiopia, Jeremy Lefroy MP said:

“Ethiopia is a key partner as we look to expand our trading relationship with the wider African continent. This new flight route from Ethiopian Airlines will allow UK companies to build strong ties with their Ethiopian counterparts, increasing the accessibility and affordability of doing business for businesses in both countries.

“The Department for International Trade has a range of support available to businesses looking to make the most of the new flight route. Support includes finance through our award-winning export credit agency, UK Export Finance, and market advice from our in-country HM Trade Commissioner, Emma Wade-Smith.”

Speaking on the side-lines of the launch, Chancellor of The University of Manchester, Lemn Sissay, said:

“I have a very personal connection with Ethiopia and, through my work as Chancellor, the University of Manchester now offers scholarships to Ethiopian students with a desire to come and study in the UK. Having a direct Manchester-Addis Ababa flight route will open up these opportunities even further and that is something to be celebrated.”

“To be considered a truly global city Manchester needs to be open to the world, especially Africa, and this is a massive step forward in that regard. Both from a cultural and economic perspective, unlocking the doors to Ethiopia is another way for Manchester to embrace its place on the international stage.”

As part of the inaugural celebration, guests were also treated to a two-hour flight around the British Isles where they got to experience Ethiopian Airlines’ onboard services and hospitality, which included Ethiopian food.

A launch ceremony was also held in Addis Ababa in the presence of H.E. Mrs Susanna Moorehead, Ambassador of the UK to Ethiopia, Mr Tewolde GebreMariam, dignitaries and invited guests.



Launch ceremony in Addis Ababa

Speaking at the inaugural event, H.E. Mrs Susanna Moorehead, said, “I would think of Ethiopian Airlines as a symbol of Ethiopia. It’s global; it’s growing; connecting people; it’s supremely professional, modern; its forward looking, its young and it’s dynamic. I am fortunate enough to be the British ambassador to Ethiopia. The inaugural flight to Manchester is a strong symbol of the depth and breadth of the relations between Ethiopia and the UK.”

The airline flies to more destinations in Africa than any other carrier. The service to Addis Ababa will operate on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and will depart from Manchester Terminal Two at 18:05, arriving at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport at 06:45, providing significant onward connectivity options to Africa. Return flights depart Addis Ababa at 00:45 and arrive in to Manchester at 07:20 and have been scheduled to provide convenient connectivity with flights from the African continent in to Addis Ababa.

Ambassador Hailemichael visits Ethiopian students at Manchester University



On 14th November, Ambassador Hailemichael and the Embassy's Head of Diaspora Affairs, Mr Fekadu Beyene, visited the University of Manchester where they were welcomed by the University's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, and the International Office team.

The main purpose of the visit was to explore the many links the University and Ethiopia share, and discuss future opportunities.

The Ambassador met the very first batch of students from Ethiopia to be awarded the university's Equity and Merit Scholarship, which also supports young professionals from Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania as they pursue a master's degree at the University. This year, the scheme was extended to include students from Ethiopia who study courses such as engineering, renewable energy, environmental governance and international development.

The Ambassador met with five scholars including:

- International Fashion Marketing student, Binyam Andargie
- International Development students, Aida Bayissa and Ruth Bezu
- Environmental Governance student, Brook Makonnen
- Communications and Signal Processing student, Yacob Tsegaye



(l-r) Head of Diaspora Affairs, Fekadu Beyene, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, Ambassador Hailemichael and Joanne Jacobs, Senior International Officer

They discussed their time in Manchester, what they hope to gain from their studies there, and how they plan to use their new skills to help transform Ethiopia.

During the visit, the Ambassador also met and held discussions with the University's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell.

A lively discussion ensued on current issues relating to Ethiopia, with academics, researchers and students from the University's Global Development Institute. Ambassador Hailemichael briefed them on the major developments in Ethiopia and the current reforms under PM Abiy, answering questions raised.

During the visit, the Ambassador also met the University's Chancellor Lemn Sissay MBE, who has Ethiopian heritage. In his role as Chancellor, he has been supportive of a number of new initiatives for under-represented groups including Equity and Merit Scholarships and a new scholarship for black male law students.

The delegation also briefly visited the historic John Rylands Library where they viewed some rare Ethiopian manuscripts, hosted by John Hodgson, Head of Special Collections.

The visit was concluded by a timely visit to the Pankhurst Centre - home of Emmeline Pankhurst - where the Suffragette movement began.



Ethiopia shares a long history with the Pankhursts. Emmeline's daughter, Sylvia Pankhurst, and grandson Richard Pankhurst were devoted patriots and supporters of Ethiopia, where they are both

buried. Her great-grandchildren Helen Pankhurst and Alula Pankhurst maintain their ties to Ethiopia.

The visit to the centre was an opportune moment for Pankhurst Centre CEO Gail Heath to congratulate Ethiopia on the recent historic appointment of women to powerful posts including: the first female president, the first female Supreme Court President and a gender-balanced Cabinet.

A video report from the visit can be found at: <http://bit.ly/ETHinMCR>

Annual Parliamentary dinner recognises Ethiopia's latest developments

On 13th November, at the Ethiopian Embassy, London, parliamentarians, diplomats, investors, business people, the Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia, gathered for the annual parliamentary dinner, co-hosted by the Embassy and Laurence Robertson MP, Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ethiopia and Djibouti.



Welcoming guests, Ambassador Hailemichael highlighted the recent political and economic reforms in Ethiopia, including the recent elevation of women to top government posts: 50% female cabinet, a female president and a female Supreme Court President!

Laurence Robertson MP acknowledged the reforms that have taken place in Ethiopia under new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, including the historic rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the part liberalisation of the economy.

As Chairman of the APPG on Ethiopia and Djibouti, Mr Robertson affirmed his commitment to further strengthen Ethio-UK relations in the UK Parliament and to promote investment.

Jeremy Lefroy MP, the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Ethiopia, applauded the government on the historic appointment of Women in leadership, including the first female President H.E Sahle-Work Zewde.

The new Ethiopian Airlines Manchester route scheduled to commence on 11th December will play a crucial role in encouraging more investment and promoting tourism, as it will open up northern UK to Ethiopia, and strengthen UK- Africa links with the airline's extensive network, he said.

Mr Lefroy also shone a light on Ethiopia's flagship Hawassa Industrial Park, noting that he has never seen such a park, even in the UK.

Guests were treated to a full spread of Ethiopian food and were shown a video of political reforms and economic policies that the new government has put in place, and its plans going forward. The video can be found at: <http://bit.ly/NewHorizonHope>

Highlights of the event can be viewed on our YouTube page at: <http://bit.ly/APPGDinner>

OBE, FRGS, who spoke at Julie's memorial service.

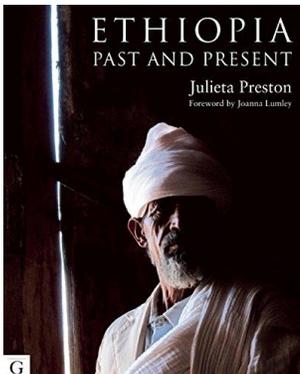
Ethiopians remember Julie with great fondness and praise for her efforts to ensure that artefacts looted from Ethiopia are returned home. The exhibition *Maqdala 1868*, currently at the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A), is testament to Julie's success as she was, in part, responsible for persuading the V&A to hold the exhibition and, in due course, to return artefacts to Ethiopia. For this, Julie will remain in the hearts of Ethiopians forever.



OBITUARY

Julie Green 1943 - 2018

We were saddened to hear of the passing of renowned photographer, Julie Green, who deeply loved Ethiopia, which she visited regularly over decades.



In Ethiopia, Julie is best remembered for her exquisite book of photographs *Ethiopia Past and Present*, which was published in 2016 with a foreword by friend, actor, author and activist Joanna Lumley

...Memorial held

On 28th November, St Peter's Church Eaton Square, London was filled by hundreds of guests, including H.E. Ambassador Hailemichael Aberra, who had gathered to remember the remarkable life of renowned photographer Julie Green.

A moving film shot by Julie was shown, and family and friends spoke of her warmth, her verve and her daring travel adventures. Many tributes were paid and poems recited.

Family and friends are collating a book about Julie and those who knew her were encouraged to contribute.

May She Rest in Peace.

LOCAL NEWS

PM Abiy: African of the Year

There's no denying that 2018 has been a historic year for Ethiopia, and the man behind it is none other than Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

Ongoing changes in Ethiopia have not gone unnoticed. UK-based *New African Magazine* and *African Leadership Magazine* have listed PM Abiy in their annual lists of notable Africans.

New African Magazine: 100 Most Influential Africans

This year's listing of the '100 Most Influential Africans of Year' was released on 30th November and features seven entries from Ethiopia.

The list has become a much-awaited collation – revealing Africans who have contributed in shaping the African narrative in the concluding year and envisaging the role they will play in the coming year, both on the continent and in the Diaspora.



The December issue is published with four different covers featuring: Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Ahmed

Abiy, arguably Africa's person of the year; the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize co-winner DR Congo's Dr Denis Mukwege; Botswana's 32-year old Minister of Trade and Investment Bogolo Joy Kenewendo; and Egypt's soccer superstar, Mo Salah whose influence goes well beyond football.

On PM Abiy, the publication notes how, "The charismatic former military officer has helped to re-engineer the EPRDF administration, making it more inclusive, lifted the state of emergency and freed thousands of political dissidents. He has ended the state of war and normalised relations with Eritrea, increased the democratic space in Ethiopia, included more women in cabinet and embraced Pan-Africanism by easing travel to Ethiopia".

Other Ethiopians included in the publication are:

- Frehiwot Tamiru – CEO of Ethio Telecom
- Bethlehem Alemu – founder of soleRebels
- Tewolde Gebremariam – CEO of Ethiopian Airlines
- Dr Senait Fisseha – Reproductive endocrinologist and infertility specialist
- Gelila Bekele – model, social worker, humanitarian and documentary filmmaker

The December issue of *New African* is available at newsstands in 75 countries and via the app store and the magazine's digital channels.

...African of the Year

Similarly, in the *African Leadership Magazine Persons of the Year Awards*, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed resoundingly emerged as the African of the Year, with over 85% of total votes/submissions.

The keenly-contested poll, had seven different categories and winners will be presented with the award on 22nd February 2019 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The Awards, which have become the leading vote-based, third-party endorsement on the continent,

recorded an upsurge of 20% of votes from the African Diaspora this year.

The Publisher, Mr Giami, said all the nominees are deserving of the crown considering their personal contributions to the continent's growth and development. In his words, "the nominees have demonstrated great faith in the Africa project, and are 'walking their talk' in their communities. They all are true lovers of Africa, determinedly contributing, sometimes amidst very difficult circumstances, but undoubtedly making their communities a better place for its people."

The Awards, now in their 7th year, are reserved for distinguished Africans, who are considered to have blazed the trail in the year under review.

This year, the selection committee considered four broad themes: Africans whose activities, policies and actions have contributed to "Investments into Africa's young people, jobs and wealth creation; promotion of sustainable peace and development, delivering of democratic values; and the promotion of Africa's image globally."

President Sahle-Work among Forbes 100 Most Powerful Women

Ethiopia's new President, H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, is ranked Number 97 on Forbes' *2018 World's 100 Most Powerful Women* list, and is the only African.



In October 2018, Ms Zewde became Ethiopia's first female president and is currently the only serving female head of state in Africa.

A seasoned diplomat and veteran of the United Nations, Ms Zewde was appointed with a unanimous vote by parliament after being nominated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

In her first address to parliament, Ms Zewde promised to be a voice for women and stressed the importance of unity. Traditionally a ceremonial role, Ms Zewde's appointment is a tremendously symbolic move for Ethiopia, opening the door for gender parity.

In the 15th year of the annual list, German Chancellor Angela Merkel retained the top spot for the eighth consecutive year, followed by British Prime Minister Theresa May in second place. Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund takes third place while Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II ranks 23rd and is the oldest on the list at 92.

"Forbes' Most Powerful Women 2018 list reflects what is always known about power, how ephemeral it is and how volatile it can be," says Moira Forbes, Executive Vice President, Forbes Media. "The world's most powerful women are leading amidst a tumultuous time where geopolitical tensions are on the rise, key economies are facing instability, and where trust in institutions is at an all-time low."

List members represent women in six categories: business (27 honourees), technology (18), finance (12), media & entertainment (16), politics & policy (22) and philanthropy (5). In total, the Power Women control or influence nearly \$2 trillion in revenues and oversee 5 million employees.

For the complete list, visit: <http://bit.ly/Forbes-100Women>

...100 most influential Africans

President Sahle-Work also gets a mention, as Ethiopia's first female president, in *New African Magazine's 100 Most Influential Africans of 2018*, which stated "Ethiopia's advances in gender diversity enhance the standing of the region, where Rwanda is celebrated for having numerous female lawmakers in parliament." This progress was applauded by the AU Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, who said: "The momentum to recognise men and women as equal in politics is vital as we work towards the Africa we want."

Fistula surgeon, Mamitu Gashe, among BBC 100 Women

Mamitu Gashe, a senior nurse aide/fistula surgeon at Catherine Hamlin Fistula Hospital in Addis Ababa has made it into the BBC's *100 Women* list for 2018.

Despite never graduating from primary school, 72-year-old Mamitu is one of the world's most experienced fistula surgeons, after being treated for fistula (an injury which can occur in childbirth) herself back in 1962. Mamitu was so grateful for the care that she received at the Catherine Hamlin Fistula Hospital that she dedicated her life to helping other women with obstetric fistula.



Mamitu (right) in the operating room with Catherine Hamlin

The Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, the world's only medical centre dedicated to providing free obstetric fistula repair surgery to women suffering from childbirth injuries, was co-founded by world-renowned obstetrician and gynaecologist, Dr Catherine Hamlin, and her late husband, Dr Reginald Hamlin. Together they have dedicated their lives to the people of Ethiopia for decades.



Catherine with some of her patients and staff

The Hamlins, together with the hospital staff, have treated more than 50,000 women to date.

The BBC's *100 Women* lists 100 inspiring and influential women from around the world, ranging in age from 15 to 94, and from more than 60 countries and includes leaders, trailblazers and everyday heroes.

Ethiopian troops withdraw from Eritrea border

Ethiopia has begun withdrawing its troops from the border with Eritrea.

This follows the historic rapprochement between the two countries, which has resulted in the resumption of diplomatic relations and reopening of borders for the first time in 20 years. Air links, embassies and trade routes have also been re-opened since then.

...UN lifts Eritrea sanctions

In related news, the UN Security Council voted to lift sanctions against Eritrea, amid growing rapprochement with Ethiopia, which has been hailed a huge success.



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed thanked the UN Security Council for responding to Ethiopia's call to lift the sanctions, an important move for the whole of the Horn of Africa:

"The lifting of the sanctions will have far-reaching effects in improving the stability of the Horn of Africa region and in building peace and normalisation of relations among the countries of the region. It will further enhance the collaborative gains that we have achieved in the region over the last few months."

The Eritrean Permanent Representative to the UN, Mr Amanuel Giorgio, hailed the lifting of the sanctions as marking the end of a difficult period for Eritrea and the region: "On this historic day I am humbled to congratulate the people of Eritrea, who have endured persistent existent pressure...Eritrea as a nation is committed to work with all its

neighbours. The peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the tripartite agreement between Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, mark the beginning of a new dawn,” he said, adding that “it is time to redouble efforts and work closely with neighbours to build a region at peace with itself.”

Speaking on behalf of Ethiopia, Taye Atske Selassie, Ethiopia’s Permanent Representative to the UN, welcomed “unreservedly” the adoption of the resolution which, he said, his country fully supports.

“We are supporting this resolution today at a time when a major and historic development is unfolding in the Horn of Africa”, he said. “The breakthrough arising from the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is already producing unprecedented and far-reaching positive consequences and is significantly changing the political landscape of the Horn of Africa and beyond.”

Ethiopia to host World Press Freedom Day

On 2nd to 3rd May 2019, the 26th global celebration of *World Press Freedom Day*, will take place in Addis Ababa.

Jointly organized by UNESCO, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the African Union Commission, the international conference will be held at the Headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa and will be focused on the role of the media in elections and democracy.



The decision by Ethiopia to host World Press Freedom Day was announced following a meeting between Markos Tekle, State Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ana Elisa Santana Afonso, UNESCO Liaison Office Director, in November.

This follows a fruitful collaboration between UNESCO and the African Union Commission, through the Regional Coordination Mechanism Framework, in promoting freedom of expression

and the role of a healthy African media in achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

UNESCO’s Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, Moez Chakchouk, welcomed Ethiopia’s decision to host the event, stating that this “illustrates the Ethiopian government’s commitment to democratic reforms, especially in the media sector, which has opened up the space for media freedoms and for strengthening respect for human rights in the country including online freedom of expression”.

About 1,000 participants and high-profile speakers are expected to attend the event, including representatives from governmental and international organizations, the media, academia and civil society.

A dedicated website and online registration page will be set up shortly on the UNESCO website and partners interested in organising panels related to the theme or partnering with UNESCO in other ways, are invited to contact UNESCO.

Nationwide anti-HPV Programme launched

The Ministry of Health successfully launched on 3rd December, a nationwide campaign to offer the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine to girls to help protect them from cervical cancer.

The campaign targeted more than 1.1 million girls aged 14, Minister of Health, Dr Amir Aman said.

The launch of the National Immunisation Programme is an important step towards achieving the vision of a world where the number of women and men affected by certain HPV-related cancers is greatly reduced.

Each year an estimated 7,095 Ethiopian women are diagnosed with cervical cancer. In 2012 the mortality rate related for Ethiopian women was 20 per 100,000. Total cancer deaths in females was 26,200 annually, of which 17.5% was attributable to cervical cancer.

In Sub-Saharan Africa cervical cancer incidence rates are the highest in the world and the disease is the most common cause of cancer death among women in the region.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Ethiopia is Africa's fastest-growing economy for 2019



According to the latest International Monetary Fund (IMF) Economic Outlook for Africa, Ethiopia's economy is forecast to grow 8.5% this Ethiopian fiscal year, which

ends on 7th July 2019.

The report says Ethiopia will continue to be the fastest growing economy in Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by Rwanda with 7.8% and Senegal with 6.7% growth.

Deputy Director of the IMF Africa Department, David Robinson said Ethiopia's growth was driven by the service sector and better domestic and foreign investment.

Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to be 3.1% in 2018, up by 0.4% from last year.

...IMF praises Ethiopia's economic growth

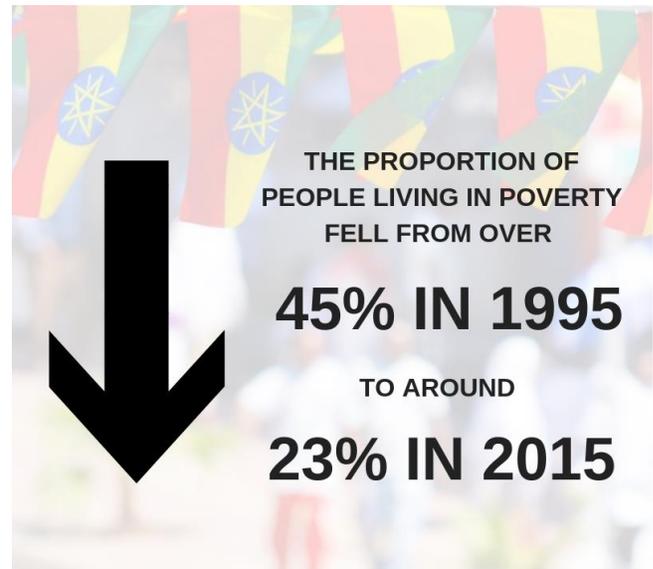
The International Monetary Fund has praised Ethiopia's remarkable progress over more than a decade, which has led to a significant reduction in poverty and improved living standards for many Ethiopians.

The country's large infrastructure investments are beginning to bear fruit and the provision of public services such as education and health has increased dramatically. As a result, the population has enjoyed important welfare gains, the report said.

The number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births fell radically from 1,080 in 1995 to 353 in 2015 and the proportion of people living in poverty fell from over 45% in 1995 to around 23% in 2015.

In 2017-18, Ethiopia's economic growth dipped to 7.7% due to reduced government public expenditure aimed at tackling the growing current account deficit and indebtedness. Political

uncertainty and severe foreign exchange shortages also dampened growth.



As the political climate settles and investment recovers, growth is expected to recover to 8.5% this fiscal year, and the current account deficit should continue to narrow.

In their report, IMF staff said they expect inflation – which currently exceeds the single-digit target – to continue to fall due to an appropriately tight monetary policy.

Analysis carried out jointly by IMF staff and UN Women finds that the government's agenda of promoting gender equality could yield large economic benefits over time. Closing gender gaps in educational attainment, formal labour force participation rates, and access to quality land and other resources are key to realizing these benefits.

The new government has made progress in this area. They have appointed a gender balanced cabinet, while women have been placed in key decision-making positions, including the presidency and the head of the Supreme Court.

Read full report at <http://bit.ly/IMFet>

Invest Africa delegation explore investment opportunities in Ethiopia

London-based business and investment platform, Invest Africa, led a very successful Investor Mission of around 25 delegates to Ethiopia in November.

Delegates comprising of industry leaders from a host of sectors, key investors and Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Africa, Emma Wade-Smith OBE, formed part of the Mission and were treated to a comprehensive itinerary including meeting the private sector locally and bi-laterals with the Commissioner of Ethiopian Investment Commission, Fitsum Arega, and ten Ministers, including the Minister of Finance, Ahmed Shide.



The Delegation with President Sahle-Work

Invest Africa was also honoured to have an audience with Ethiopia's new President, H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde. During the talks, the President briefed the delegation about Ethiopia's current political and economic reforms, and responded to questions raised by the delegation.

For more information about Invest Africa, contact George Arnold on George.arnold@investafrica.com.

Jimma and Dire Dawa Industrial Parks inaugurated

As part of the government's plans to transform Ethiopia's largely agrarian economy into an industrialised one, the month of December saw the inauguration of two industrial parks - Jimma Industrial Park and Dire Dawa Industrial Park - by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

Jimma Industrial Park was inaugurated in the presence of Sudanese president Omar Hassan al-Bashir and Djibouti's president Ismaïl Omar Guelleh.

Jimma Industrial Park, built by the Chinese construction giant China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), is expected to host investors in light manufacturing sectors, mainly agro-processing, textile and apparel products.

Stretching over 75 hectares of land, with an ambition to attract foreign investors to Ethiopia's agro-processing sector, the industrial park hosts nine manufacturing sheds.

Dire Dawa Industrial Park, constructed by China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) at a cost of \$51 million, is expected to host investors in textile and leather sectors, and construction input sectors.

Extending across 14,500 hectares of land, the park will have 15 industrial sheds ready to accommodate prospective investors once it is fully commissioned, and will create employment opportunities for around 40,000 Ethiopians.

According to the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), there are 11 more industrial parks in the making. Ethiopia plans to build a total of 30 parks by 2025, creating 200,000 jobs.

Ethiopia earns over \$28 million from electricity in five months

Ethiopia earned over \$28.4 million from electricity exports to Sudan and Djibouti in five months, according to Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP).



The country is also currently working to promote regional integration through cross-border electricity interconnections and has signed agreements with Somaliland, Kenya, Tanzania, and South Sudan to this effect.

Ethiopia is endowed with huge hydropower generation potential which is estimated at approximately 45,000MW.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM



Addis Ababa becomes the gateway to Africa

Ethiopia has overtaken Dubai as the transfer hub for long-haul travel to Africa, thanks to the success of Ethiopian Airlines expansion drive within the continent and Prime Minister Abiy's reforms since he took office in April.

The latest findings from Spanish travel consultancy ForwardKeys shows that the number of long-haul transfers to Africa via Addis Ababa Bole International Airport has grown in volume by 85% for five years in a row, between 2013 and 2017. Transfers via Dubai over the same period rose by 31%.

The firm analysed data from travel booking systems, which record an average of 17 million flight bookings a day, to determine the number of long-haul transfers to the region via Addis Ababa.

So far this year, Addis Ababa's traffic growth is 18%, while Dubai stands at 3%.

This means that Addis Ababa Bole Airport, has now surpassed Dubai as the lead gateway to Africa.

Dubai has long been a major global air travel hub. Many passengers traveling between one part of the continent and another, or from Asia or Europe to Africa, must often transit through Dubai. But this is changing due to Ethiopian Airlines expansion drive,

which sees it flying to more than 60 destinations in Africa and launching new destinations in the lucrative Asian market, as well as Europe.

ForwardKeys also attributed the recent hike in bookings via Addis Ababa in part to new-found confidence in the wake of reforms carried out by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed since he took office in April. These include signing a peace deal with Eritrea in July, a new e-visa policy introduced in June, which allows international visitors to apply for a visa on line and a promise to open Ethiopia's markets to private investment.

And the rise of travel via Addis Ababa looks set to continue. International bookings for Ethiopia, for the period from this November to January 2019, are ahead by more than 40% over the same period in 2017 – well ahead of all other destinations in Africa.

Olivier Ponti, VP Insights, ForwardKeys, said: "Sub-Saharan Africa is a market of opportunity. Across the region, carriers are increasing seat capacity on international flights by six percent on average; that is an encouraging sign. If more governments follow the go-ahead example set by Ethiopia, including reducing conflict and taking advantage of the benefits that can flow from more relaxed visa policies, I would expect to see a healthy growth in tourism in 2019."

...Bole International Airport to become Africa's largest

In related news, the Bole International Airport expansion will see it take over as the largest airport in Africa upon its commissioning in January 2019.

The project to expand Bole International Airport commenced in December 2015 and the expanded terminal partially commenced service in September this year after the Eastern wing was completed. At that point, the whole project was 83% completed.

The Bole expansion will make it the largest airport in Africa in terms of passenger handling capacity, besting South Africa's O.R. Tambo Airport, which has the capacity to handle 20 million passengers a year. Bole International will have a capacity of around 22 million passengers a year.

Once completed, the airport will cement the Ethiopian aviation industry's dominance in Africa, and possibly push it towards global prominence as well. Ethiopian Airlines is already Africa's biggest airline by a number of metrics.

Cultural preservation project at Bete Golgotha Mikael in Lalibela completed

The preservation of Bete Golgotha Mikael Church in Lalibela was completed on 21st November.

A celebration to mark the completion was attended by Ethiopian officials and the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Michael Raynor. Representatives of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Lalibela government administration, members of the National Scientific Committee, and invited guests also attended event.

This project was funded by the U.S. Embassy in Addis, in partnership with the World Monuments Fund, the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and the National Scientific Committee.

The preservation work was made possible by a grant from the U. S. government's Ambassadors' Fund for Cultural Preservation.

The U.S. Embassy invested 14 million birr and the World Monuments Fund contributed over 3 million for the completion of the renovation.

SPORTS

Derartu Tulu becomes Ethiopia's new athletics boss

Derartu Tulu, the first black African woman to win an Olympic gold medal, has been appointed as interim president of Ethiopia's Athletics Federation - replacing running legend Haile Gebreselassie, who resigned in November after serving for two years.



Derartu Tulu celebrates her historic win at the Barcelona Olympics in 1992

Derartu will remain as interim president until an urgent congress meeting can be held in the coming months.

Ethiopia at the IAAF Athletics Awards

Solomon Barega, Meskerem Mamo and Meseret Belete represented Team Ethiopia at this year's IAAF Athletics Award held in Monaco on 4th December.

As finalists in their specific category, Solomon was up for the Male Rising Star Award while Meskerem and Meseret were up for the Female Rising Star Award.

Unfortunately they did not win the awards, but being finalists was recognition of their achievements in their fields.

Solomon Barega, one of 5 finalists for the Male Rising Star Award 2018 is the IAAF Diamond League champion at 5000m with an U20 world record of 12:43.02, the world's quickest time since 2005. He is also world indoor silver at 3000m and came fourth at World U20 and African Championships 5000m.

Meskerem Mamo holds the world U20 leads at 3000m and 5000m with 8:33.63 and 15:05.21. She is also a bronze medallist in 5000m at African Championships.

Meseret Belete holds the world U20 best at half marathon with 1:07:51. She is also a Gothenburg Half Marathon winner and was Sixth and team gold at IAAF World Half Marathon Championships Valencia 2018.

What did win an award that evening was this stunning photo of Solomon Barega, by Felix Sanchez, taken after he won the Cross Internacional Juan Muguerza. It was one of four finalists for the IAAF Photo of the Year award.



Speaking after the race at the time, Solomon said, "The race was not easy because of the rain but I felt very good and could give back to Ethiopia the Elgoibar title"

Thousands take part in Africa's largest road race

The 18th edition of the Great Ethiopian Run - Africa's largest annual road race - took place on 18th November where more than 44,000 participants ran the streets of Addis.

Participants from more than 25 countries took part with 500 elite athletes and 500 international participants.

Overall winners were Olympic 5000m bronze medallist Hagos Gebrehiwet and 20-year-old Fotyen Tesfaye, who regained their titles.

Four Eritrean athletes participated in the international sports event in Ethiopia for the first

time in 20 years, following the rapprochement between the two countries. Four-time Olympic medallist, Zersenay Tadesse of Eritrea, was guest of honour.



Great Ethiopian Run winners Hagos Gebrehiwet and Fotyen Tesfaye with Haile Gebrselassie.

The Great Ethiopian Run was launched in 2001 by running legend Haile Gebrselassie as part of his efforts to turn running from an elite sport into a hobby for the masses.

Thousands run for Ethio-Eritrea Peace

Thousands of Ethiopians and Eritreans took part in a 10-kilometre run for peace in Addis Ababa on 11th November.



The Ethiopia-Eritrea Peace and Reconciliation Run was the first joint sporting event held between the two countries since the signing of the historic peace agreement in July ending 20 years of 'state of war', which has seen the restoration of diplomatic ties, trade and phone links, resumption of flights and the re-opening of borders.

ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

Ethiopia aims to blast economy forward with satellite launch

 **REUTERS** Ethiopia plans next year to join an exclusive club of nations in Africa: those with their own national satellites.

Ethiopia's first satellite, due to be launched in September, is being put in place in part to track environmental concerns.

Ethiopia having its own satellite technology was once “unthinkable”, but it could now prove a help in analysing weather conditions, particularly in remote areas.

Melkachew Temsgen

“The main mission of this space satellite is to monitor climate change and assess environmental issues such as proper application of water resources, mining activities and other activities related to environmental purposes,” said Solomon Belay Tessema, the director general of the Ethiopian Space Science and Technology Institute.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/ReutETH>

Seven global events to be thankful for. Yes, even in 2018

 2018 has been a rough year for the world...Even so, there were a couple of bright spots...[Here are a] couple of foreign policy trends, shifts and happenings that left us smiling:

2. Ethiopia and Eritrea came to a groundbreaking peace. Oh, and Ethiopia appointed a female president.

Ethiopia and Eritrea had been locked in conflict for nearly two decades. The Economist described it as a “cold war that once seemed irresolvable.” ...But this summer, the two countries made peace and restored normal relations, easing tension around the region. “There is a wind of hope blowing in the Horn of Africa,” U.N. Secretary General António Guterres told journalists after the signing of the

peace accord...The peace comes against a backdrop of unprecedented changes in Ethiopia...including prisoner releases, economic opening and opposition figures allowed back in the country. Most dramatically has been the appointment of women in several top posts, including half the cabinet ministers, the head of the Supreme Court and even the president of the country.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/WaPoET>

The women smashing Ethiopia's glass ceiling

 Women, who make up about half Ethiopia's population, have been largely confined to traditional roles. But things are changing rapidly under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

For the first time in the country's history, women now hold powerful posts in Government: Female President, Female Supreme Court President and Gender-balanced Cabinet.

Women now hold half of the government's 20 ministerial posts...Ethiopia and Rwanda are now the only African states to have equal gender representation in the cabinet.



Renowned human rights lawyer Meaza Ashenafi is Ethiopia's most senior judge. In two other moves, communications expert Billene Aster Seyoum has been appointed as the prime minister's press secretary, while former UN official Sahle-Work Zewde was elected as president.

Furthermore, Ethiopia's security has been placed in the hands of women for the first time, with ex-construction minister Aisha Mohammed the defence minister and former parliamentary speaker Muferiat Kamil heading the newly created peace ministry, which covers the police and the powerful intelligence agencies.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/BBC-ET>

My Kind of Place: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Addis Ababa is often used as a pit stop to enter Ethiopia, before moving on to explore the treasures of the rest of the country. But spend a few days in Africa's diplomatic centre, and you'll discover that the city's deserving of its own attention.



Culture abounds here and there are a cluster of intriguing museums and monuments, which provide context to any traveller's journey through the country.

Addis is like an onion, full of layers waiting to be peeled back

When you're not seeking out museums or palaces, you'd do well to treat your taste buds in a city, which serves up all kinds of Ethiopian fare. However, the intangible offering from the city is the chance to feel the energy of a place that hasn't yet quite arrived. The city is full of young entrepreneurs and is home to many artisans producing endlessly fascinating offerings.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/GoAddis>

Your bucket list for 2019: Ethiopia



Not only has Ethiopian Airlines just launched the first Manchester-Ethiopia flights, it's also begun a new domestic route between Addis Ababa and Bale Robe — making the Bale Mountains, one of Ethiopia's most remote national parks, accessible by a smooth one-hour flight rather than a bumpy eight-hour drive.



That's all the excuse you need for a nine-day trip, at the core of which are four days hiking through waterfalls and

lakes before arriving at Sanetti Plateau, home to the country's endangered resident: the Ethiopian wolf.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/VisitETHo>

DIASPORA CORNER

His Grace Abune Gorgorios presents credentials

On 21st November, Ambassador Hailemichael received the credentials of His Grace Abune Gorgorios, the newly appointed Bishop for Great Britain and Northern Ireland of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

In their discussions, the Ambassador congratulated the Bishop on the reconciliation and unity achieved by the Church in recent months, while encouraging the delegation to keep up the momentum. The two sides also affirmed their commitment to work together on diaspora matters going forward.

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Published by the Public Diplomacy Department, Embassy of Ethiopia, London SW7 1PZ

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