



EU Council Adopts Conclusion on Ethiopia, Welcomes Political and Economic Reforms

Addis Ababa, November 19, 2018 – The European Union Council praised the changes, the political and economic reforms in Ethiopia as it adopts the conclusion on the country today.

“Ethiopia has witnessed momentous change and that political and economic reforms have gained a new impetus under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed,’ the Council said in a statement.

The Prime Minister’s ambitious agenda towards a more democratic and just Ethiopian society is a positive example for the region and beyond, the Council said.

It also welcomed the commitment of the government of Ethiopia to multi-party democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and gender equality.

The Council described the recent appointment of Sahle-Work Zewde as the President and nominations of 50% women in the cabinet by the Prime Minister as important and encouraging steps toward a greater degree of gender equality and inclusiveness.

It encouraged the Government to continue its efforts and towards developing an inclusive dialogue with all stakeholders.

The EU expressed its readiness to support Ethiopia in its continued work to ensure the respect for the fundamental rights of freedom of opinion, expression and access to information, the right to assembly.

It further vowed to assist government's efforts to foster religious tolerance and to safeguard gender mainstreaming, promote women and girls' education and empowerment, eliminate all forms of violence against women, also in view of the next elections that should be inclusive, credible and transparent.

The Council welcomed the announcement of reforms aiming at revitalizing the economy by improving the investment climate, strengthening the role of the private sector, engaging in multilateral free trade mechanisms, reforming key state-owned enterprises and opening them to competition and foreign participation, and putting the economy on a fiscally sustainable path.

The Council also welcomed EU-Ethiopia cooperation on migration and forced displacement, and commended Ethiopia for its constructive role in the Khartoum Process and the follow-up to the Valletta Summit.

Moreover, it welcomed the decision to grant visa-upon arrival to citizens of African countries as a step towards further regional and continental integration.

The Council welcomed the new approach to regional issues promoted by Prime Minister Dr Abiy that opens a unique opportunity for greater cooperation, good neighborly relations and economic integration in the Horn of Africa and beyond.

It welcomed in particular the historic peace agreements between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and expressed its readiness to support the continued implementation of these through relevant instruments and mechanisms.

The Council further welcomed the commitment to comprehensive cooperation made between Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia -which also opens perspectives for a better environment for State-building in Somalia.

It underlined the importance of continuing efforts towards normalization of their relations, which could contribute to strengthening the inclusive dimension of the regional reconciliation.

The Council appreciated the role of Ethiopia and encouraged it to keep offering facilitation of the dialogue between Eritrea and Djibouti.

It also welcomed the UN Security Council's decision to terminate the restrictive measures against Eritrea.