



Ethiopian Embassy News

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Chairman Ed Royce with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn

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US House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce met with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn

In a cordial meeting in Addis Ababa with Ethiopian Prime Minister held on 17 January 2016, Congressman Ed Royce, Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, expressed support for strong cooperation between the United States and Ethiopia to spur economic growth and confront shared regional threats, including Al-Shabaab.

Royce's bipartisan delegation, which included Ranking Member Eliot Engel, also exchanged views with the premier on issues of human rights - including freedom of the press, drought situation as well as greater opportunities and rights for women.



Ethiopia is a stable and strong partner in a region plagued by violence and unrest, Chairman Royce said in a statement at the conclusion of the visit. Thanks to Ethiopia's efforts to confront extremism, al Shabaab has not expanded footholds in the Horn of Africa, he acclaimed. The Chairman also underlined that Ethiopia's impressive contributions to a number of peacekeeping missions should be commended, alluded to several peace operations to which Ethiopia has deployed its peacekeepers to protect civilians and ensure peace and stability in conflict areas. He also praised the Ethiopian government for the key role it has played in leading the regional mediation efforts between the warring factions in South Sudan.

In his statement Chairman Royce further stated that the visit was an important opportunity to discuss Ethiopia's impressive economic growth, and opportunities for additional US private-sector investment. Stronger United States - Ethiopia relations will mean greater security, human rights advances and greater opportunities to lift families and workers out of poverty, he added.

The delegation also visited Muya Ethiopia, an employer of Ethiopian weavers, potters and artisans that exports goods to global markets - including the United States - thanks to AGOA legislation that Chairman Royce has long championed and successfully reauthorized in 2015.



Before departing, the delegation also spent some time with children at AHOPE, a housing and community support program for HIV positive orphans in Addis Ababa.

Source: House Foreign Affairs Committee, ENA

US - Africa Business Summit held in Addis Ababa



The Tenth US - Africa Business Summit which was, among others, focused on enhancing business and investment ties between the United States and Africa was held in Addis Ababa from 2 - 4 February 2016. The Summit also sought to establish new partnership between United States and African business enterprises and consolidate the existing ones.

In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn called upon US companies to widely engage in Africa's investment opportunities. Stable political environment, expansion of basic infrastructure and fast economic growth in the continent are some of the advantages that companies investing in Africa would benefit from, the Premier stressed. He further underlined that Africa has enormous investment potential in the area of agriculture, infrastructure, health, agro-processing and agribusiness. It was also learnt that light manufacturing, energy, leather and leather products, textile, ICT, transport and pharmaceutical sectors are the major priority areas to invest in Africa.



Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn addressing the summit

Chairperson of the African Union Commission Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma on her part stated that Africa has become a right place to do business and urged for increasing participation of US companies by investing more in the continent. She pointed out that US companies should focus on investments that help improve the lives of Africans.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom also spoke at the “Doing Business in Ethiopia” Forum at the margins of the US-Africa Business Summit putting emphasis on a new era of rapid and sustained economic growth that in turn ushered in ample opportunities to invest in Ethiopia. The Minister also said that new approaches have been proposed to diversify the economic growth of the country, including by focusing on the manufacturing sector.

Though a non oil economy, Ethiopia has managed to register a rapid and sustained economic growth in the past decade with an average annual GDP growth rate of over ten percent, compared to the continental average growth of five percent and also Ethiopia is spearheading in the promotion of green economy by basing its power resources on renewable energy, the minister elaborated. It was mentioned that over the next few years, several energy projects are envisaged to become operational, transforming the country into a major exporter of reliable energy in the region.

In the Summit, it was also stated that the United States investment in Ethiopia has reached four billion USD. According to Ambassador Girma Biru, Ethiopian Ambassador to the United States, engagement of several US companies and Ethiopians in the Diaspora are contributing factors for the investment to increase. It was mentioned that .Corbetti Geothermal Company, KKR & Co. L.P Horticulture, Blackstone, Major Apparel Manufacturers, GE and Coca Cola are some of the US companies currently investing in Ethiopia. It is to be recalled that subsequent to President Obama’s visit to Ethiopia, Corbetti Geothermal Company has signed a power purchase agreement with the Ethiopian Electric Power Enterprise. The geothermal plant with a capacity to generate 1,000 MW power, will be Africa’s largest geothermal facility.

In addition to investment, trade ties have also been increasing between the United States and Africa mainly because of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). In this regard, the Ambassador noted that AGOA has played a significant role for Africa's economic growth in general and for Ethiopia in particular, and it is the US gift for Africa as it significantly enhances market access to US markets.

President Obama's visit to Ethiopia was an important sign of how much the United States values Ethiopia as a partner, the Ambassador added.

U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Patricia Haslach, on her part said that US would continue to support Ethiopia to realize its aspiration of becoming a middle income status by 2025. She said that working together with the US Chamber of Commerce and Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) will enable Ethiopia access more market opportunities in her country. The Ambassador also noted that given its commitment to trade and investment through the Second Growth and Transformation Plan, the U.S government and the business community see Ethiopia as an important partner.

According to the Ambassador, over 100 U.S. companies have so far visited Africa, including Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa and Angola with the intention of promoting trade ties.

It was learnt that a good number of American companies attended the 2nd US-Africa Business Summit have expressed their interest to do business in Ethiopia.

Source: ENA

Ambassador Girma Birru's Interview on current situations in Ethiopia

Special Envoy and Ambassador Extra-Ordinary and Plenipotentiary to the US, Mexico and Jamaica, Girma Birru gave interviews on current situations in Ethiopia to Tsenat and Selam radio stations in Atlanta and Washington, D.C. respectively.

In the interviews, the Ambassador covered the Oromia protest, the border question with Sudan, the issue of the Kemant nationality, the Business Summit held in Addis Ababa, and the El-Nino induced drought that has surfaced in Ethiopia. The Special Envoy reiterated his government's stand on these issues in both interviews.

Pertaining to the issue of demarcation of Ethio-Sudan border, the Ambassador recounted the historical beginnings of the border agreements with the Sudan. And also mentioned that for the Ethiopian government, as stipulated in the constitution and stated by the Prime Minister, the boarder issue will be resolved as per the agreements taking into account the national interest of Ethiopia. The Premier categorically dismissed the attempts of some quarters that blow the issue out of proportion, with the evil intent of grabbing power. No matter what certain quarters dream is, their day dreaming of using the boarder issue to political purpose is doomed to an utter failure, he underlined.

On the issue of the El-Nino induced drought that has been affecting some parts of his country, Ambassador Girma said that though the current drought in Ethiopia impacts a vast area and relatively a huge population the government is trying its level best that it does not cause much harm to the people affected. In this connection, he challenged those who claim that the drought has turned into famine, by referring to a UN accepted measurement which states for a famine to exist. First, 20% of the house hold in the drought affected area should have nothing to eat or drink. Second, 30% of the

entire population in the drought afflicted area, must be suffering from acute malnutrition. And the third is that in every 10,000 people in the drought affected area, two persons must be perishing daily for famine to exist. After having put the internationally accepted criterion, Ambassador Girma, took million people as a base in the drought affected area and proved that there is no famine in Ethiopia.

At last the Ambassador advised not to jump into conclusions before looking into the issue from rational point of views.

(Full interview in Amharic can be found at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4bFnijqEA4>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgoWJy22JNE>)

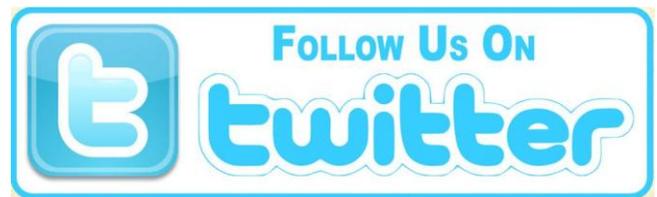
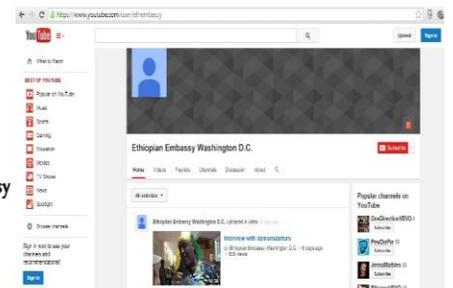
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