

**Summary Report of the visit of Hon. AW Sebhat Nega, Executive Director of the  
Ethiopian International for Peace and Development (EIIPD) to. Japan from 23  
28th May 2010**

1. The Executive Director of the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development (EIIPD) Hon. Ato Sebhat Nega visited Japan from 23 -28 May 2010 upon the invitation of Mr. Noburo Hatakeyama, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Japan Economic Foundation (JEF).
2. During his visit, Hon. Ato Sebhat met and held discussions with Mr. Hatakeyama on the possibilities of future cooperation between EIIPD and JEF. In this regard, he presented a list of projects which could be considered between the two institutions for future cooperation. The two institutions have agreed to work together on Joint research programs and training projects and to this effect a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the two principals on the 26th of May 2010.
3. On this occasion, Hon. Ato Sebhat underscored the need to implement the MoU for the mutual benefit of both sides and he expressed his firm commitment to see to it that the MoU is realized in terms of concrete cooperation in joint projects and programmes concerning Africa-Japan partnership, IGAD and the sub-region as well as Ethiopia-Japan relations. On his part, Mr. Hatakeyama explained the activities undertaken by JEF in the Magreb region of Africa and Japan's economic relations with countries of the region. He therefore said similar undertakings could also be considered with Ethiopia and other members of IGAD. He also mentioned the possibility of introducing countries of the region in Japan Spotlight, a bimonthly publication of the Foundation.
4. On the 24th of May 2010, Hon Ato Sebhat met the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Japan Institute for Overseas Investment (JOI) Mr. Shinichi Jin and other members of the leadership of the Institute on a working lunch and he exchanged views with them on Japanese Foreign

Direct Investment in Africa in general. In this relation, he expounded on the image of the new Ethiopia and the availability of vast investment opportunities in different sectors. He therefore called upon the leadership of the institute to pay a visit to Ethiopia to see for themselves the potentials for investment in the country. Mr. Jin on his part explained about the activities of his institute and he gave Hon. Ato Sebhat a copy of the study undertaken by the institute on Japanese FDI in Africa. In response, Hon. Ato Sebhat stated that EIIPD also deals with issues of trade and investment and therefore there is a possibility for joint research with JOT. In this regard, he referred to the project concepts developed by EIIPD and said that the document could be sent to JOI for its consideration.

5. On the same day, Hon. Ato Sebhat spoke on the Institutionalization of Democracy in Africa in a Seminar organized by the United Nations University in Tokyo. A number of students studying in the University and some other members of the university community attended the seminar. Hon. Ato Sebhat started his remarks by shading some light on the history of Africa and the circumstances under which African countries got their independence. Hon. Ato Sebhat emphasized that the primary responsibility for Africa's woes lies with Africans themselves although there is no denying the fact that external forces also have their own share of the blame.
6. He said African countries took their independence as the final product of their hard won struggle and having their own flag and president became a goal in itself. They did not introduce democracy and institutionalized it since it was understood as a threat to the ruling elite. He stated African leaders are used to one man rule and the people have become vulnerable to individual manipulation and cult. Therefore, Africa has been characterized by military coups, intra and inter-state conflicts, poverty and underdevelopment.
7. Hon Ato Sebhat argued for democracy to be institutionalized and nurtured in Africa, it has to be discussed by the people. After all, he said democracy is

all about the participation of the people. It is through the active participation of the populace that problems could be identified, properly analyzed and solved. Therefore, Hon. Ato Sebhat underscored that the type of democracy which needs to be introduced and institutionalized in Africa should understand and appreciate the existing problem in the society. It is on the basis of this that the national vision and programs of the country could be formulated and implemented. In this regard, he pointed out the constitution as the primary aspect of democratic institutionalization which should be crafted with the active participation of the people. He also underlined the importance of informal structures such as gender, youth, elderly and professional associations to synergize the formal structures of government.

8. Hon Ato Sebhat identified some of the challenges to institutionalization of Democracy in Africa. He said existing political parties are not from the middle class but from the elite and they are characterized by rent seeking and corruption. They are neither democratic nor trusted by the people. Since their interest is in collecting rents, they do not have the commitment for introducing democracy. Because of this fact, the subjective reality (the state of mind of the leaders) for institutionalization of Democracy can not be said to have matured. On the other hand, he said the desire of the African people for democracy has become apparent and the objective reality has already matured. Therefore, according to Hon. Ato Sebhat, Africa finds itself at the cross roads at this particular juncture.
9. Speaking on the synergy between democracy and development, Hon. Ato Sebhat said democracy is the mother of everything. There can never be peace and development with out democracy. Democracy is very instrumental in solving conflicts. Moreover, people have to be free from their internal masters to produce and enjoy the fruits of their labor. However, he also stated that development at times denies democracy referring to the possibility of concentration of wealth in the hands of few people. Therefore, he emphasized that democracy needs to be protected. Hon. Ato Sebhat responded to questions raised from the participants as far as the role of the

African Union and other external forces is concerned. He said the role of the African Union can only be supportive but the ultimate responsibility lies with the member states themselves. He further explained that the tendency by former colonial masters to prescribe everything to Africa in the form of dos and don'ts has certainly not been helpful either.

10. Hon. Ato Sebhat made a courtesy call on Mr. Hashimoto, Vice-President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). During the discussion, Mr. Hashimoto explained about JICA's priority areas of cooperation with Ethiopia. He also mentioned the policy dialogue and implementation of *Kaizen* in Ethiopia with the assistance of JICA with a view to sharing valuable lessons from the Asian development experience.
11. Hon. Ato Sebhat expressed his sincere thanks for JICA's assistance to Ethiopia. He said that Ethiopia has adopted the Democratic Developmentalist state model which is similar to the development path followed by Japan. In the light of this fact, he emphasized that Ethiopia can serve as a gateway to replicate the Asian model of development in Africa.
12. Hon. Ato Sebhat also explained the activities being undertaken by EIIPD. He also pointed out some of the project concepts which could be jointly implemented with Japanese research institutes. On his part, Mr. Hashimoto stated that JICA Research Institute has a division dealing with peace and development and signaled the possibility for joint research with EIIPD.
13. On the 25th of May 2010, Hon. Ato Sebhat visited Kyoto and held discussions with Professor Shigeta, Director of the Center for African Area Studies of the Kyoto University and other students and faculty members. During the discussion, Prof. Shigeta explained about the activities of the center and their current academic exchanges with Africa including Ethiopia. He mentioned the links established by the center with Addis Ababa University and Hawasa University to work together in the fields of Sociology, anthropology and agriculture.

14. Hon. Ato Sebhat on his part explained about the mandate given to EIIPD as a capacity building research and training institution. He also said that the Institute has outlined project concepts which could be implemented by matching with relevant institutes on areas of mutual interest and he shared a copy of the project concepts to the professor for identification of possible areas of cooperation. Professor Shigeta informed Hon. Ato Sebhat that he will be traveling to Ethiopia in the coming August and he will be happy to visit EIIPD to further discuss possible areas of cooperation based on the project concept.
  
15. Returning back to Tokyo, on the 26th of May 2010 Hon. Ato Sebhat had a breakfast meeting with Senators Hon. Yano and Hon. Ooe, members of the House of Councillors of Japan. Hon. Yano recalled his visit to Ethiopia during the TICAD III as Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan and explained Japan's effort to support Africa's development. He also referred to the activities of AFRECO (Association of African Economy and Development Japan ECA Committee) for which he is also serving as the President. In this relation, he requested Hon. Ato Sebhat to support its representative, Mr. Peter Fujiyama, who is based in Addis Ababa.
  
16. Hon. Ato Sebhat expressed thanks to the Senator and he briefed the Senators about the monumental changes taking place in Ethiopia. He also explained about the East Asian Development model specifically that of Japan being adopted in Ethiopia and stressed the need to support this endeavor so that it could succeed and serve as a model for other African countries. Hon. Ato Sebhat also exchanged views with the Senators on the workings of the parliaments of the two countries and the need to strengthen their relationship.
  
17. He also made a courtesy call on the Chairman of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Mr. Hayashi and exchanged views on the need to strengthen the trade and investment ties between Ethiopia

Hayashi briefed Hon Ato Sebhat about JETRO's assistance to Ethiopia particularly its support to the Ethiopian cut-flower to penetrate the Japanese flower market. He also referred to the study undertaken by JETRO to expand access to the Ethiopian cut-flower in third country markets. Furthermore, Mr. Hayashi indicated JETRO's desire to assist other Ethiopian export items such as mustard seeds to enter into the Japanese market. He also point out the efforts of JETRO to introduce Ethiopian products in Japan through the One Village One Product Initiative.

18. While appreciating the assistance of JETRO to Ethiopia, Hon. Ato Sebhat called for further strengthening the trade and investment ties between Ethiopia and Japan. He particularly highlighted the enormous potential for Japanese private sector investment in the agricultural, agro-processing, manufacturing and mining sectors. He also stated that the Ethiopian Investment Agency offers one-stop-shop service to investors and called on JETRO to encourage the Japanese private sector to invest in Ethiopia.
19. Hon. Ato Sebhat spoke on the theme of Peace, Democracy and Development in Ethiopia in a roundtable discussion organized by JEF in which prominent Japanese intellectuals, government officials and members of the Japanese business community attended. In his remarks, Hon Ato Sebhat said that Ethiopia was the archetype of all the ills in Africa - conflict, poverty and underdevelopment. Although people had genuine grievances, he said they were never discussed. In this regard, he cited the question of nations and nationalities as a major contradiction in the Ethiopian society which led to the emergence of many armed groups fighting for independence.
20. Hon. Ato Sebhat point out that there was no culture of arresting conflict before they develop into violence. But now even if conflicts occur, the mechanism for addressing those conflicts is already in place. He also explained that previous constitutions in Ethiopia were aimed at legally imposing autocracy. The current federal constitution which was crafted with

the active participation of the people ensures separation of power and gives autonomy to regional states to govern themselves.

21. Hon Ato Sebhat said it has been almost two decades since Ethiopia has ushered in a democratic dispensation. The democratic nationalism or otherwise known as revolutionary democracy which is being institutionalized in Ethiopia accepts diversity and strives to build unity based on equality of nations and nationalities. As a result, he said that there are no angry people in Ethiopia today except angry individuals. Although Ethiopia is new to democracy, he stated that people are learning through time and the democratization process is proceeding very well. Since the country is now at peace with itself, there are also no angry neighbors because of Ethiopia.
22. Hon. Ato Sebhat also alluded to the East Asian development experience and said that the democratic developmental state that Ethiopia is trying to build draws inspiration from the Japanese experience. He also underscored the importance of understanding the political developments in Ethiopia in this perspective. He also said that the system that is being built in Ethiopia can be replicated in other African countries and in this regard Ethiopia can serve as a gateway to instill the East Asian development model in other parts of the continent.
23. Hon. Ato Sebhat responded to several questions raised from the participants regarding the impact of the global economic crisis on the Ethiopian economy, the noise by the Ethiopian Diaspora about democracy and human rights in Ethiopia, trade strategy, the investment policy and trends in the flow of FDI in Ethiopia.
24. Since Ethiopia has not been integrated with the globalizing world much like other African countries, Hon Ato Sebhat said that the impact of the global economic crisis has been very negligible. But he noted that the crisis had affected Ethiopia in terms of its export, the flow of remittances and external

support, the price of petrol and fertilizer and so on and so forth. Hon Ato Sebhat also explained that chauvinism, narrow-nationalism and rentseeking are the main challenges to the democratization process in Ethiopia and those people espousing these tendencies have not been effectively dealt with. In the national and regional election recently conducted in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian people have clearly demonstrated that they are tired of hate politics by overwhelmingly voting for the EPRDF. Therefore, he said those extreme elements will have no place anymore, expressing his hope that in the coming years the country will witness a new form of politics. Hon. Ato Sebhat also expounded on Ethiopia's development strategy, the investment climate in the country and the flow of FDI from different parts of the world.

25. On the evening of 26th May 2010, at a reception held on his behalf at the Ambassador's residence, Hon. Ato Sebhat met with parliamentarians, government officials, and people from the academia and research institutions and exchanged views on the current transformation taking place in Ethiopia, Japanese parliamentary system, the East Asian development model and its application in Ethiopia. During this occasion, Ethiopia traditional coffee ceremony was displayed.

26. On the 27th of May 2010, Hon. Ato Sebhat met with the leadership of the Ethiopian Association of Japan and exchanged views on the cultural and people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and Japan. H.E. Mr. Izumi, Vice President of the Association and former Ambassador of Japan to Ethiopia briefed Hon Ato Sebhat on the various activities implemented by the Association to promote the image of Ethiopia in Japan. Hon. Ato Sebhat thanked the Association for its efforts of promoting Ethiopia in Japan and for strengthening the people to people links between the two countries.

27. On the same day, Hon. Ato Sebhat made a courtesy call on Hon. Mr. Tenzo Okumura, member of the Diet and Chair of the Administration Committee of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). During the discussion, Hon. Ato Sebhat and Hon. Mr. Okumura underscored the need to strengthen the relations between the parliaments of the two sisterly countries. Hon. Ato Sebhat took the opportunity to brief Hon. Mr. Okumura about the 4<sup>th</sup> national and regional elections held in Ethiopia and the enormous strides the country has made in terms of expanding

the frontiers of democratic governance and economic development.

28. Hon. Ato Sebhat also met Hon. Dr. Jimi Shozaburo, Member of the Diet and Secretary General of the People's New Party which is a junior member of the Ruling coalition. Hon. Dr. Jimi explained to Hon Ato Sebhat his involvement with Ethiopia for a long period of time and the activities that he has so far undertaken to cement ties between Japan and Ethiopia. He particularly made reference to his lobbying effort to secure assistance for the construction of the Renaissance Bridge over the Abay gorge. Hon Dr. Jimi also alluded to the emergence of a new Ethiopia as a result of tremendous change happening in the country. Hon Ato Sebhat expressed his thanks to Hon. Dr. Jimi for his tremendous contributions. He also appreciated him for his understanding of the new image of Ethiopia and expressed his hope that other Japanese politicians would also have a similar understanding of the positive developments in Ethiopia which could be considered as a model for the rest of Africa.

29. As can be understood from the foregoing, the visit of Hon. Ato Sebhat was on the whole fruitful and productive. The signing of the MoU between EIIPD and JEF is indeed a successful outcome of the visit and lays the basis for the two institutions to cooperate in the areas of their mutual interest. There is no doubt that the two think tank institutions need to work closely together in order to implement the MoU.

30. During the course of his visit, Hon. Ato Sebhat has also met senior Japanese politicians, government officials, scholars and others and he seized the opportunity to extensively brief them about the new Ethiopia and the positive developments both in terms of ensuring democratic governance and bringing about rapid economic development. This is believed to have given them a better understanding of the objective reality in Ethiopia and look at the country in the perspective of these positive developments.

## Press Release

### **Basic Diplomatic Training At EIIPD**

A three-month intensive training in the basics of diplomatic service for 24 new recruits of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was inaugurated on Thursday, 27 August 2009, at the head office of the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development (EIIPD).

The trainees are graduates and former public servants from the Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Harari and Somali Regions. They have been selected with the objective of realizing equitable representation in diplomatic staffing from nations and nationalities of the Ethiopian Federation.

An integral component of the MFA's program in human resources capacity building, the training is designed by the Ministry to orient the recruits on the mandate and mission of Ethiopian diplomacy, the vital national interests which the diplomacy is assigned to serve, to equip them with the knowledge of fundamentals of diplomacy and to train them in the skills of applying the language and other tools of diplomatic relations.

The training courses have been designated by the Ministry on the basis of needs analysis and contracted to the EIIPD for management of the program.

EIIPD's Executive Director, the Honourable Ato Sebhat Nega, formally inaugurated the program with remarks in which he underscored the critical importance of capacity and commitment to faithfully strive for the realization of Ethiopian renaissances.

A broad range of subjects will be covered in the program, including the following:

- the mission, organization and functional procedures of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- the foreign policy and national security strategy of Ethiopia;
  
- the development policy and strategy of the country with focus on major socio-economic sectors;
  
- the concept and historical evolution of diplomacy, the dynamics that have transformed the way it functions in the era of globalization, the concepts and modern tools of diplomacy;
  
- Ethiopian policy on relations with neighboring countries, Africa, the major development partners including international financial institutions and the UN system;
  
- diplomatic communications, public diplomacy and constituency building with focus on the Ethiopian diaspora;
- international law, treaties and international conventions;
  
- economic diplomacy as a core function of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The EIIPD is an independent capacity building and policy research think-tank which organizes training programs and disseminates research outputs with the objective of promoting capacity for diplomatic performances and to promote the image of Ethiopia as a credible partner in global development.