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## Jahrestagung 2008

### Aktuelle Situation in Äthiopien

**Bericht über den Vortrag von Günter Schröder auf dem Äthiopien Seminar des „Deutsch –Äthiopischen Vereins e.V.“ vom 12.04.2008**

**Gangolf Florack-Genotte**

Günter Schröder beschrieb die Situation in Äthiopien in der die von der EPRDF dominierte Regierung von der bestehenden Parteienopposition scharf kritisiert wird. Er machte klar, dass auf Grund zahlreicher bestehender politischer Defizite man allenfalls von einer „beaufsichtigten Demokratie“ in Äthiopien sprechen könne. Andererseits gäbe es seit den ersten freien Wahlen Entwicklungen im Land, die den Vergleich innerstaatlich und auch in Bezug auf Gesamtafrika nicht scheuen müssen. Insgesamt steht Äthiopien auch in der demokratischen Entwicklung besser da als andere afrikanische Staaten. Leider verhindern polarisierende politische Debatten einen konstruktiven Dialog die eine Verständigung der unterschiedlichen politischen Auffassungen verhindern. Hierbei spielt die Aufrechterhaltung von „gesellschaftlichen Mythen“ eine wichtige Rolle.

Basierend auf statistischem Material internationaler Organisationen und von Seiten der Äthiopischen Regierung gab der Referent einen Überblick über einige

#### Bevölkerungsdaten im heutigen Äthiopien

So beträgt der Anteil der orthodoxen Christen im Land ca. 50%, andere christliche Religionen machen einen Anteil von 15% aus und ca. 30 % sind muslimischen Glaubens. Von einer Dominanz islamischer Bevölkerungsteile kann also keine Rede sein.

Der Anteil der Oromo und der Amharen beträgt ca. je 30%, Tigre und Somali je 6% und die restlichen 30% entfallen auf andere Ethnien. Durch die Dezentralisierung und Regionalisierung gibt es nahezu monoethnische Regionen, in denen 80% bis 90% einer Ethnie dominieren. Ausnahmen bilden die großen Städte in denen die amharische Bevölkerung vorherrscht. Der Anteil der in den Städten lebenden Bevölkerung beträgt aber nur ca. 17%.

Im Weiteren beschäftigte sich Günter Schröder mit den Daten der äthiopischen Gesellschaft und den

#### Leistungen der EPRDF dominierten Regierung

Im Gegensatz zu häufig publizierten Rankings bezüglich Bruttozialprodukt im internationalen Vergleich zeigt sich bei Betrachtung der Fakten ein deutlich positiveres

Bild von Äthiopien, unter anderem an der Tatsache, dass es in den letzten zehn Jahren zu über 8.000 Neugründungen von Kapitalgesellschaften kam. Auch die Direktinvestitionen aus dem Ausland, auch von dort lebenden Äthiopiern, sind deutlich gestiegen. In der Gesamtwirtschaftsleistung Afrikas liegt Äthiopien hinter Südafrika, Nigeria und Sudan auf den vierten Platz, obwohl Öleinkommen fehlen.

Ein weiteres Indiz für die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung ist die Zunahme von IT-Aufträgen aus dem Ausland, die ansonsten in Ländern wie Indien vergeben wurden.

Auch im landwirtschaftlichen Bereich wurde auf Grund der Selbstvermarktung durch die Kooperativen die wirtschaftliche Kraft der Erzeuger gestärkt. (zum Beispiel Kaffeeanbau im Süden). Somit verändern regionale Wirtschaftseliten die bestehenden Wirtschaftsstrukturen indem Zwischenhändler aus anderen Volksgruppen ihre traditionellen Positionen verlieren. Die Steigerung der Produktivität im Landwirtschaftsbereich übersteigt die Belastung durch das Bevölkerungswachstum, somit wird die Versorgung mit Grundnahrungsmitteln deutlich besser.

Das pro Kopf Einkommen beträgt z. Zt. 170 \$ pro Jahr (vor zehn Jahren 100 \$ pro Kopf) und dies trotz der deutlichen Steigerung des Bevölkerungswachstums. Bei näherer Betrachtung fällt jedoch auf, dass, wie in den meisten Entwicklungsgesellschaften, die Schere des Wohlstandes weiter auseinander klafft, das heißt die schwächsten Bevölkerungsgruppen sind ärmer geworden zu Gunsten eines sich etablierenden Mittelstandes und einer reicher werdenden Wirtschaftselite.

Durch verbesserte Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten (Einschulungsgrad fast 90%) und Ausbau des Hochschulsystems mit mittlerweile 23 Universitäten nimmt Äthiopien im afrikanischen Vergleich mittlerweile eine Spitzenposition ein. Daraus resultieren neue Bildungseliten, die mit ihren veränderten Vorstellungen und Ansprüchen die bisherige

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gen tradierten Gesellschaftsgruppen herausfordern und die Regierung auch in Zukunft unter Druck setzen, weitere Reformen anzugehen.

Im Folgenden widmete sich der Referent dem Thema

### Regionalisierung

Günter Schröder stellte fest, dass sich eine sprachliche Regionalisierung in einer multiliteraten Gesellschaft fest etabliert habe. Die Menschen definierten sich als Mitglied einer Ethnie sowie als Teil der äthiopischen Gesellschaft. Seit der Reform von 1991 haben sich regionale Verwaltungs- und Wirtschaftseliten in ihren jeweiligen Sprachbereich gebildet, die teilweise tradierte hegemoniale Strukturen fremder Volksgruppen herausfordern und verändern.

### Wirtschaftspolitische Maßnahmen

Wie alle Entwicklungsländer leidet auch Äthiopien unter einer Verdreifachung des Ölpreises und einer ständigen Verteuerung von Grundnahrungsmitteln sowie einer Inflation, die im zweistelligen Bereich liegt. Hier versucht die äthiopische Regierung durch Investitionen im Biotreibstoffanbau und in einer Steigerung der eigenen Nahrungsmittelproduktionen gegen zu steuern. Durch die Einführung so genannter Warenbörsen versucht sie die Preissteigerung zu kontrollieren. Negative Globalisierungseffekte werden hierdurch zu mindest abgeschwächt.

### Politische Alternativen

Günter Schröder beschrieb eine Opposition, die sich im Wesentlichen einer destruktiven Fundmentalkritik verschoren hat und im Falle ihrer Regierungsübernahme mit dem Sturz des bestehenden Verfassungssystems droht. Hierdurch wird nach Einschätzung des Referenten die EPRDF dominierte Regierung nicht ermutigt, schneller Liberalisierungsmaßnahmen zu ergreifen sondern

bekommt hierdurch den Vorwand, ihre teilweise restriktive Politik zu legitimieren. Diese so genannte „beaufsichtigte Demokratie“ entspricht in vielen Elementen nicht unseren westlichen Vorstellungen, ist aber im Kontext des afrikanischen Kontinents durchaus als entwicklungsfähig anzusehen.

### Abschlussdiskussion

In der abschließenden Diskussion wurde die Öffnung des Landes für Biotreibstoff Produktion von vielen Zuhörenden problematisiert.

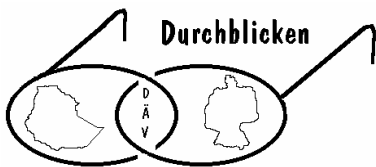
Auch der Standpunkt des Referenten über die Ursachen und die Berechtigung Äthiopiens in Somalia militärisch einzugreifen, um so der zwar international legitimierten aber von der Bevölkerung nicht geschätzten Übergangsregierung in die Machtposition zu verhelfen, wurde in Frage gestellt.

Zusammenfassend hat das Referat von Günter Schröder als einen seit vielen Jahren mit der äthiopischen Entwicklung befassten Menschen eine lebhaft und konstruktive Diskussion entfacht und sicherlich dazu beigetragen, die Entwicklung in diesem Land mit Interesse zu verfolgen.

### Anmerkung:

Günter Schröder beschäftigt sich seit 40 Jahren mit dem „Horn v. Afrika“. Er war für mehrere Organisationen als entwicklungspolitischer Berater tätig, ist internationaler Gutachter für Asylverfahren und hat sich in zahlreichen Vorträgen und Publikationen zur Situation in Äthiopien und Eritrea geäußert.

*P.S.: Dem Berichterstatter lag kein schriftliches Manuskript des Referenten vor. Die vorgelegte Zusammenfassung entstand aus den persönlichen Notizen und erhebt nicht den Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit.*



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## Future Cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea

**Prof. Dr. Tesfatsion Medhanie, University of Bremen**

First of all, I would like to thank the Ethiopian German Association for inviting me to give a talk on the future relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In fact I would like to thank you for your interest in the subject. These days –actually since the end of the Cold War, issues African, including those on Ethiopia and Eritrea - have been rendered themes of minor importance, though not completely banished from the discourse.

This is not the first time that I am speaking on this issue. Even though I am addressing this body for the first time, it is quite possible that some of you have heard me speak on this theme before.

I

The topic in the announcement says “Future cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea”. I would like to amend it a little bit and entitle the discussion as one on the future relations between the two countries. I find “relations” a wider concept that enables us to engage in a broader dialogue.

In my latest book I have stated the kind of relationship I wish would be realised between the two countries. Specifically, I have stated that confederation is not merely desirable but also necessary. But I have noted the problems or the obstacles to the prospect of confederation or other relations of co-operation. I expressed my views on what needs to be done so as to quicken or enhance the process of fulfilling the preconditions for the realisation of confederation.

I must say here that before the secession of Eritrea my position was that, although Eritrea has the right to a separate sovereign existence, the appropriate solution of the Ethio-Eritrean problem was federation. Like many others I was faced with a fait accompli in 1991. Eritrea seceded and the issue regarding the relations between the two countries changed.

Since that time, I took the position that the closest relationship that is possible between Ethiopia and Eritrea now is confederation. In other words, there is no point in trying to unify the two countries now, not at this stage

At the beginning the response of many Ethiopians to the idea was negative. That was mainly because they were enraged by the cynical way Eritrea was made to secede; they felt dishonoured by what appeared like contempt for Ethiopia on the part of the new leaderships in the two countries.

On the part of Eritreans the response was not one of hostile objection (mainly because the President had said confederation was not an idea Eritrea would reject); but it was not one of excitement either; it was a lukewarm response. On the part of the Eritrean activists the problem was more one of confusion than anything else. Actually, not many of them had a clear understanding of what was meant by confederation.

Attitudes began to change in subsequent years. At present there is more appreciation both in Eritrean and Ethiopian circles for confederal relations. Ethiopians are becoming more relaxed about Eritrean independence and increasingly receptive to the idea of co-operative relations with Eritrea. Eritreans are becoming much less euphoric about their country's independence and have more appreciation for relations with Ethiopia. And they now have more understanding about the meaning of confederation. But this does not mean there is enough understanding about - and enough support for - confederation among both Ethiopians and Eritreans.

Today many Ethiopians and Eritreans I talk to basically agree on the need for confederation, not merely between our two countries, but for the Horn as a whole, even though it should start with Ethiopia and Eritrea. They differ on the question of prerequisites - on what must be done so as to get there. And this is the challenge. There indeed are obstacles and prerequisites and it is important to briefly discuss them.

## II

I think we should start by stating what is meant by confederation. I remember that at the 2004 ASA annual conference in New Orleans, one Eritrean asked me whether or not I think the Eritrean people would accept confederation. My answer was yes, provided they are told the true meaning of confederation. And I was serious when I said that. If you tell the Eritrean people that confederation or any association with Ethiopia means slavery, then of course they would not accept it. Hence, it is important for Eritreans to have a clear understanding of what confederation is.

I am using the term to mean an association of states or an arrangement by which states agree to establish a central authority to which they give certain powers "for reasons of convenience, mutual security or efficiency" as one writer put it. The association is loose and the member states retain their sovereignty.

Confederation can be a perpetual arrangement. It can also be a "step towards a higher level of ... integration, including federation". This for example was the experience of what is now the USA. And today many believe the European Union is evolving into a federation.

## III

In the recent past confederal arrangements have been tried in Africa. But they failed. The most prominent examples are those of the Senegambian confederation and the East African Community I. Various factors explain the failure of the confederation between Senegal and Gambia. They include

i. Substantial difference in size and level of development. Gambia was much smaller and less developed than Senegal. Due to this Gambians were very suspicious that Senegal would swallow up Gambia and do away with its sovereignty.

ii. The confederation, which started in 1982, was basically an arrangement entered into by the leaders. It had no popular support both in Gambia and Senegal. There were no groups - economic or any other - interested in the success and sustainability of the confederation.

iii. Gambia's interest in the confederation was very pragmatic, motivated almost solely by security interest. The regime entered into confederation with Senegal because it had concerns after a failed coup attempt. By 1989, there was no apparent reason for security concern. And so the confederation collapsed.

iv. What is known as "federal spirit" was lacking on the part of Senegal. Federal spirit means "desire on the part of the stronger partner(s) to respect the rights" of the weaker one or weaker ones. Senegal was said to be insensitive to the interests and concerns of Gambia, and to have harboured design to annex Gambia into a full merger. Gambians anticipated and feared "annexation" by Senegal.

v. And finally, the process of the confederation was a factor. It was an aggregative process as distinguished from a disaggregative one. There is an aggregative confederation or federation for that matter when separate states come together and form it. For example, the European Union's is an aggregative process, as was the American one in the 18th century. And there is a disaggregative confederation or federation when one state breaks up into separate units along confederal or federal lines as the case may be. An example of such a process is Ethiopia's which was a unitary state devolving into ethnic based federation. Another may be the former USSR breaking up into confederated states and forming the GUS.

Students of federalism say that it is more difficult to sustain an aggregative than a disaggregative confederation (or federation for that matter).

East African Community I which was established in 1967 was another example of an aggregative process. It collapsed in 1977 due to several factors the main of which were the following.

a. All the members did not feel equally satisfied with the "distribution of the benefits" of the Community. Specifically, Uganda and Tanzania felt they were benefiting less than Kenya.

b. The structure of the establishment was such that it was "the Authority" that had the ultimate control. The Authority comprised of the Heads of State. This meant that the harmonious relations between the Heads of State was absolutely essential for the smooth functioning of the Community. Besides the lower level bureaucrats pursued national interest in the narrow sense leaving the Community concerns to the Heads of State. So problems accumulated.

c. The states had not relinquished significant measure of their sovereignty. Being newly independent, they were too enthusiastic about sovereignty and thus retained much of it.

d. The three member states had different ideological orientations. Co-operation became difficult.

e. There were differences in policies, such as in foreign policy, as regards role of foreign governments, role of transnational corporations etc.

The most serious of the problems were the deterioration in the relations between the Heads of States and the feeling on the part of Uganda and Tanzania that they were not benefiting as well as Kenya was.

#### IV

The Horn of Africa is one region in our continent that is frequently mentioned in connection with the idea of regional co-operation and even confederation. That the societies of the Horn can tremendously benefit from integration and co-operation has been underscored by many who wrote on the region: development and peace would be served by integration and co-operation.

There are several factors in the Horn that facilitate integration.

1. The states are geographically -or in terms of their resources- complimentary, Ethiopia supplies water and top soil; the maritime states provide outlet to the sea.
2. They have ethnic and cultural factors in common. The peoples are ethnically the same or close. They have similar cultures. In all of them Christianity and Islam are the dominant religions.
3. The borders between them are products of colonialism. There are no natural borders between them. The states are not "ethnic or cultural closures".
4. The peoples know and understand each other. They have lived together for centuries.

On the other hand there are factors posing obstacles to integration in the Horn. Among them are the following:

1. There is no powerful political figure with a vision for the integration of the Horn. There is no hegemonic group eager to promote and realise this vision.
2. There is no consensus among the elite of the Horn as regards integration and confederation.
3. There is a lot of misunderstanding concerning the question of benefits to the various states. For example many Ethiopians say that it is Eritrea that would benefit at the expense of Ethiopia.
4. Some of the states are excessively preoccupied with national sovereignty (even though this is somewhat decreasing now).

5. Some of the states are unstable. And in several of them -in fact in almost all of them now- the regime in power has no popular support.

#### V

Among the Horn states it is Eritrea and Ethiopia that can integrate most easily. All the factors facilitating integration in the Horn obtain as between them. They have a lot in common and are to a significant extent integrated at various levels. Additionally, the two countries had constituted one state until 1991. They have the experience of a common administrative bureaucracy or institutions of governance which can be resuscitated and serve the framework of confederation. Socially there has been considerable integration. Ethiopians and Eritreans have intermarried a lot. The ties exist and cannot be done away with. And both countries can only benefit from economic integration and confederation. Besides, confederation is the most appropriate context for peaceful relations between the two countries.

But there are also hindrances to integration and confederation between the two countries. The hindrances are mostly political. They relate to the type of regimes currently in power in both countries, to the lack of responsibility on the part of the elite -especially the intellectual elite- and to bad information and unwarranted fears and concerns on the part of some people in both countries.

Both Ethiopians and many Eritreans maintain that there have to be political changes in both countries if confederation is to be undertaken. In my opinion the situation in Ethiopia has changed since the aftermath of the 2005 elections. The government has become basically authoritarian paying lip service to democracy. In Eritrea the regime has always been autocratic with no pretence for democracy. This means there is need for change in both countries.

In Ethiopia there has to be reform so that there would be established a government of national unity in which all existing parties would take part in proportion to the support they garner in elections.

In Eritrea, the situation is much more difficult. There is no atmosphere or context for reform. The existing regime simply does not listen and cannot be expected to co-operate so as to make reform and reconciliation possible. It looks like the people will be forced to get rid of it one way or the other. After that the process of reconciliation and establishment of national unity government can start. The establishment of such governments in both states is an indispensable prerequisite for confederal relations and other relations of co-operation.

As regards the issue of confederation specifically, there are certain views and positions on the part of both Ethiopians and Eritreans that are not helpful. Here are some examples. A decreasing number of Ethiopians subscribe to the following positions so as to justify rejecting confederation with Eritrea.

#### V-a

1. Eritreans have opted to go. We Ethiopians should not associate with them in any way. (This somewhat emotional response is subsiding now. But it is not a helpful position. It is also too simplistic. It is not aware that the process that led to Eritrea's separation was very complex indeed. It is oblivious to the historic complaints of Eritreans. Besides, the Eritrean movement was

utilised, including by Ethiopians, to weaken the Dergue and overthrow it. Eritrea's is not and cannot be a closed matter. Relationships are too deep-rooted, and the border too long stretching (1000 km). Besides, Eritreans are learning now. Many are reflecting and demonstrating their interest in relations with Ethiopia.

2. Others say that Eritrea is a poor country, or even that it is a "failed state" Ethiopians should not bother to salvage. Yes, Eritrea is poor at present. But we should note two things here:

Eritrea's current problems are due to the regime in power. The people are capable of doing much better. At the beginning it was clear that Eritreans everywhere were determined to work hard for the reconstruction and development of their country. The regime made it very difficult, almost impossible, for them to engage in economic activities. With a basically democratic regime in power that would allow people to become enterprising, Eritrea will do much better

Eritrea is not quite a failed state. But even if one wants to characterise it as such, this is not an argument against co-operation and confederation. On the contrary, it necessitates co-operation and confederation. The two countries share a 1000 km. common border and have a common destiny. Co-operation and confederation can help Eritrea and Ethiopia as well. If it salvages Eritrea from becoming a "failed state", then this good for Ethiopia, because a close neighbour which is a failed state is dangerous.

3. Some say that confederation is meant to benefit Eritrea, that it will enable Eritrea to plunder Ethiopia etc. Again this is not a sound argument. Yes in the early 90s there were many things that were done improperly. But again that was to be explained in terms of the relationship between the two regimes which enabled the party in power in Eritrea to engage in unfair practices. The confederation I have in mind presupposes equitable relations.

4. Others cite several other problems in the past. They refer to the 1998-2000 war and argue that Eritrea is an invader and that we should not confederate with it. They say Eritreans make contemptuous pronouncements about Ethiopians. Again all these cannot be valid arguments against confederation. With the establishment of a basically representative government in Eritrea there would be peaceful relations and mutual beneficial, equitable economic relations.

#### V – b

There are also untenable arguments on the part of many Eritreans.

1. Many Eritreans are still not clear on the difference between federation and confederation. I know this rather well. Recently one Eritrean in Sweden who saw or heard about my latest book entitled "*Towards confederation in the Horn*" accused me on a television program of advocating merger with Ethiopia in the framework of federation. This means many Eritreans need clarification on the meaning of confederation. They are rather uneasy about the term federation because of the unhappy experience during the defunct federation that was dissolved in 1962. Confederation has the tone of federation.

2. Not very different from this is the contention that even in a confederation Ethiopia -which is much bigger than Eritrea- cannot be trusted. It can swallow up Eritrea any time. This fear is unfounded. Ethiopians have seen the consequence of dissolving Eritrea's local autonomy.

They have learnt lessons from this. Besides, a basically democratic government in Ethiopia would be different to that of Haile Selassie's Imperial regime.

3. Some also tend to view Ethiopia as a historical enemy with whom we should not confederate. Fewer and fewer groups are adhering to this view. The view is gaining more popularity that a "historical enemy" can be turned into an ally as the history of France and Germany attests. Actually integration and confederation is the most effective way of putting an end to enmity.

Among those who maintain that Ethiopia is a historical enemy, there are some who argue that Sudan is Eritrea's natural ally. This view is untenable. Both Ethiopia and Sudan can be equally friendly to Eritrea.

4. There are wrong views on the part of many Eritreans regarding history. They are either unaware of or dishonest about the fact that Ethiopians and Eritreans (especially the highlanders) have the same history and share the same ethnic and cultural traits. They refuse to acknowledge the contribution of Eritreans in the history of Ethiopia. This is a serious shortcoming. The Eritrean intelligentsia has a huge responsibility to enlighten the people -especially the young- on the genuine or authentic history of the country.

5. Related to the wrong understanding of history is the arrogance and condescending attitude on the part of some Eritreans towards some Ethiopians. This may be attributable to colonial legacy or to the propaganda of the EPLF which is now the ruling party. At any rate there is much less of it now. And it will disappear with the increasing enlightenment on the history of the country. But it certainly is an obstacle.

The above obstacles both on the Ethiopian and Eritrean sides should be dealt with. Doing away with them or seriously reducing their severity is a prerequisite for a successful process of confederation. But of course the main precondition -i.e. one without which there can be no credible process of confederation- is political change in both countries. There have to be national unity governments in both countries -i.e. governments that are credibly representative of the various political forces, ethnic based or otherwise.

I did get several responses on the book. Most of those who like the idea of confederation between the two countries also maintain that it is not possible now. But, though not possible now, it is important to introduce the discourse on confederation. A professor of history at Addis Ababa University, wrote to me saying "Even if I have the feeling that confederation at the moment may not be a practical idea, I support the discussion because sooner or later the region will go towards it". Commenting on the book, a Somali intellectual wrote to a friend of mine saying "*I am one of those who believe that some sort of aggregation must take place in the Horn ... if we really want the people to survive*", and added that he does not see "any alternative".

As regards the Horn, the Somali colleague is right when he said that some sort of aggregation is necessary. And as regards Ethiopia and Eritrea in particular, an integration process leading to confederation is absolutely necessary, and the Ethiopian professor is right in saying that eventually we "will go towards it". One can confidently say it is only natural for Eritrea and Ethiopia to confederate.

In conclusion, let me say this.

One commentator on Ethio-Eritrean affairs said that the two countries are only separated, but not yet divorced. I

agree with his view that the two countries are still close. But, as I mentioned in the book, I would characterise the situation a bit differently. I would say that Eritrea and Ethiopia are officially divorced, but not separated actually. Really, the problem is that these two countries are so integrated at various levels, that they are having tough time to split effectively. The problem will go on. And it will stop once confederal relations are established following the necessary changes in both countries

As I mentioned at the outset, some confederations in history developed into federations. This was the case as regards the USA and it appears will be the case as

regards the EU. As concerns Eritrea and Ethiopia I have used the term *sympoliteia*, an old Greek concept referring to an association which was more integrated, enduring and evolving. It is a comprehensive relationship marked by deepening integration in all spheres – economic, political and social. That is the kind of confederal association that I hope will be the make-up of future Ethio-Eritrea relations. In other words, what we need is the kind of confederation that, on the basis of the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned, can deepen and evolve into closer frameworks including federation.

## Als Tourist in Äthiopien

### Ein Reisebericht

von Wilhelm Weber

Alle zwei oder spätestens drei Jahre zieht es mich wieder nach Äthiopien, das ich zuerst im Jahr 1972 besucht habe. Damals war ein Verwandter dort als Diplomat tätig.

Diesmal habe ich mir viel Zeit genommen und war insgesamt sechs Wochen im Land unterwegs. Ich habe einige Orte und Landschaften, z.B. auf der „historischen Route“, wieder gesehen, aber auch für mich bisher fremde Gegenden besucht. Hier berichte ich nur über neue Eindrücke in den mir schon vertrauten Orten und über Erlebnisse in den mir bisher unbekanntem Regionen.

Die Reise begann als Gruppenunternehmen, wir waren 18 Leute aus Münster und Umgebung und hatten zwei Wochen Zeit, um uns die berühmten Stätten der im Norden des Landes anzusehen. Ich hatte oft in diesem Kreis voller Begeisterung von Äthiopien erzählt und damit wohl den Wunsch angeregt, dieses Land zu besuchen.

Wir begannen mit einer Stadtrundfahrt in Addis, haben uns die wichtigen Museen angesehen, das quirlige Leben des Mercato auf uns wirken lassen und sind dann auf den Entoto gefahren - von oben sieht Addis ja aus wie eine Parklandschaft. Aber dass „Addis Abeba boomt“ (so DIE ZEIT vom 15.8.2008), konnte man schon bei der Fahrt auf der Bole Road zum Hotel beobachten. Das gilt übrigens auch für viele andere Städte: ob man Bahar Dar, Gondar, die kleine Stadt Debarq am Simen-gebirge besucht, sich in Mekele umsieht oder nach Awassa und Arba Minch im Süden fährt - überall wird gebaut.

Mit dem Flieger ging's zuerst nach Bahar Dar am Tanasee. Die Wasserfälle des Blauen Nil, der Markt in Bahar Dar und eine Bootsfahrt auf dem Tanasee zu den alten Klöstern auf der Halbinsel Zeghie waren die Hauptattraktionen - wie bei jeder Reise nach Bahar Dar. Abends haben wir ein Asmarihaus besucht und uns von der Musik und den Tänzen bezaubern lassen.

In Bahar Dar hatte die Agentur Hess Travel, die unsere Reise vor Ort organisiert hat, einen Bus bereitgestellt, mit dem wir dann bis Lalibela unterwegs waren. Mit dem Fahrzeug das Land zu erkunden, ermöglicht einen viel intensiveren Eindruck von der Landschaft und von den Menschen in den Dörfern als das bei einer Flugreise zu den Highlights der Historischen Route möglich wäre. Auf

dem Weg nach Gondar konnten wir z.B. eine außergewöhnliche Dorfgemeinschaft besuchen: angeregt von einem „Patriarchen“ haben sich hier Menschen zusammengefunden, die mit Kindergarten, Schule, Landwirtschaft, Handwerksbetrieben, einem Altersheim usw. eine kleine - nahezu unabhängige - Welt geschaffen haben, in der Männer und Frauen die gleichen Arbeiten und Aufgaben haben.

In Gondar, der nächsten Station, beeindruckte uns der Gemp mit den einzigartigen Palastbauten, die Kirche Debre Berhan Selassie mit den berühmten Deckengemälden, das Bad des Fasilidas und die Ruinen von Kusquam. Vom Goha-Hotel aus hat man einen schönen Blick auf die Stadt.

Kurz hinter Gondar, auf der Straße nach Axum befand sich ein Dorf der Falachas. Die Häuser stehen noch, auch das Gebäude der ehemaligen Synagoge mit dem Davidsstern. Die typischen schwarzen Keramiken der Falachas werden immer noch dort produziert, aber die äthiopischen Juden sind in den 70er Jahren nach Israel ausgeflohen worden.

Die Schotterstraße nach Axum ist jetzt in einem gutem Zustand, man fährt über den Wolkefitpass durch die herrliche Berglandschaft des Hochlandes in Richtung Semien-Nationalpark. Von der Marktstadt Debarq 100 km nördlich von Gondar aus geht eine Straße direkt in das Gebirge. Am Beginn der Treckingroute durch die Semienberge gibt es jetzt in spektakulärer Lage auf über 3000 m die Semien-Lodge. Auch wenn man nur wenig Zeit hat, kann man doch auf einer kurzen Wanderung einen Eindruck von dieser grandiosen Landschaft bekommen mit den Ghelada-Herden, die auf den Klippen herumturnen.

Axum war nach einer langen Fahrt das nächste Ziel. Hier wurde zu Beginn des 4. Jahrhunderts unter Kaiser Ezana das Christentum als Staatsreligion eingeführt - etwa gleichzeitig wie im Römischen Reich und in Armenien. Man braucht viel Phantasie, um sich in den Resten der über 1500 Jahre alten axumitischen Paläste das glanzvolle Leben am Kaiserhof vorzustellen.

Am eindrucksvollsten sind natürlich die Stelen. Die jetzt endlich von Italien zurückgegebene Stele liegt noch im Depot am Boden, sie wird aber demnächst wieder aufgerichtet. In der neuen Marienkathedrale konnten wir einen orthodoxen Gottesdienst mitfeiern. Übrigens ging kurz nach meiner Rückkehr eine Meldung durch die Presse, wonach bei neuen Grabungen jetzt die Ruinen von zwei dreitausend Jahre alten Palästen ausgegraben worden sind. Sie werden der legendären Königen von Saba und ihrem Sohn König Menelik I zugeschrieben.

Die Straße Richtung Adigrat ist asphaltiert, so dass wir zügig vorankamen und - vorbei an Adua - bald den Mondtempel von Yeha erreichten. Der 2500 Jahre alte 12 m hohe Tempel ist außerhalb von Ägypten und dem Sudan das älteste erhaltene Steingebäude Afrikas. Adua - hier fand 1896 die Schlacht gegen die Italiener statt. Seit den Zeiten Hannibals hat zum ersten Mal ein afrikanisches Heer ein europäisches besiegt! Axum, Adua und Yeha sind von einer herrlichen Felslandschaft eingerahmt. Das wäre ein ideales Gelände zum Klettern und für Treckingtouren.

Von Adua aus gibt es eine Schotterstraße in Richtung Tembien und Mekele. Diese und andere Straßen in Tigre sind jetzt in einem hervorragenden Zustand. Wir haben deshalb nicht die Straße nach Adigrat genommen, sondern sind in Adua in Richtung Süden abgelenkt und haben in Hawzin in der neuen Gheralta-Lodge übernachtet. Ein absoluter Geheimtip! Die Lodge liegt in den Bergen von Gheralta und ist im Stil der runden Farmhäuser Tigres gebaut. Alle waren begeistert und einige wollen unbedingt noch mal nach hier kommen, um in der Gheralta-Lodge einige Tage zu verbringen. Es ist das Gebiet der berühmten „rock hewn churches“. Viele von ihnen kann man jetzt von hier aus jetzt leichter erreichen.

In der Nähe von Hawzin trafen wir Kamelkarawanen mit Salzplatten aus der Danakilwüste. Vorbei an den Gheraltbergen ging die Fahrt weiter in Richtung Wukro und zur Hauptstraße, die Adigrat mit Mekele verbindet und dann weiter über Dessie und Debre Berhan bis Addis führt. Kurz vor Wukro liegt eine der ältesten Felskirchen Tigres direkt an der Straße: Abreha wa Atsbeha aus dem 9.-10. Jahrhundert. Auch die Felskirche von Wukro ist ein eindrucksvolles Zeugnis tigrinischer Kirchenarchitektur (10. Jahrh.). Wir hatten das Glück, dass hier gerade ein Gottesdienst stattfand, an dem wir teilnehmen durften (in der Passionszeit werden in allen Kirchen täglich Gottesdienste gefeiert). Tagesziel war Mekele, die Hauptstadt der Provinz Tigre.

Die nächste Etappe sollte eine Herausforderung an Sitz- und Durchhaltevermögen werden. Wieder bogen wir von der Hauptstraße ab und arbeiteten uns auf Schotterstraßen über Sekota nach Lalibela. Auch hier waren die Straßen gut befahrbar, aber das ewige Auf und Ab war doch anstrengend. Nach 12 Stunden Fahrt erreichten wir schließlich Lalibela, den Höhepunkt jeder Äthiopienreise. Auch hier sind viele neue Hotels gebaut worden.

Verglichen mit 1972 und noch 1993 hat sich die Atmosphäre sehr verändert. Vor drei Jahren war ich zum letzten Mal hier und in dieser kurzen Zeit ist unglaublich viel gebaut worden. Natürlich wollen, wie wir auch, alle die berühmten Kirchen sehen. Neuerdings werden fast alle Kirchen mit Dächern geschützt. Dafür ist extra ein Architekturwettbewerb ausgeschrieben worden. Italiener haben den Wettbewerb gewonnen – und den Kirchen schreckliche massiv-plumpe Dachkonstruktionen übergestülpt. Ein stilistisches Verbrechen sondergleichen!

Und wie wird es wohl werden, wenn die geplante Direktverbindung zwischen Addis und Lalibela fertig ist? Wenn man Lalibela zum ersten Mal sieht, stört diese Verunzierung vielleicht nicht so sehr. Trotz alledem ist natürlich weiterhin Lalibela ein „Muss“ für jeden Äthiopienreisenden. Denn diese 12 Kirchen sind in ihrer Art weltweit einzigartig.

Nach dem Abschied von den Münsteranern war eine Treckingtour in den Bergen südlich von Lalibela angesagt. Mit der TESFA (Tourism in Ethiopia for Sustainable Future Alternatives) war ich fünf Tage in den Bergen unterwegs. Die Route ging immer an den Abbruchkanten

der Canyons entlang und übernachtet haben wir in Tukuls aus Stein im Stil der Farmhäuser. Die Camps waren alle an spektakulären Stellen angelegt mit phantastischen Ausblicken in die Landschaft. Die TESFA ist eine neuartige Tourismusorganisation, der man nur Erfolg wünschen kann. Das Gepäck wird auf Maultieren von einem zum anderen Camp gebracht. In den Camps wird man hervorragend gepflegt und das Geld bleibt in den Dorfgemeinschaften.

Ich war unterwegs in einer kleinen Gruppe von 5 Personen: eine irische Nonne, eine Engländerin und ein deutscher Student waren mit von der Partie. Wir alle waren begeistert, nicht zuletzt von der warmherzigen Aufnahme, den intensiven Kontakten mit den Einheimischen in den Camps und natürlich der wunderbaren Berglandschaft. (Information: <http://www.community-tourism-ethiopia.com/index.htm>)

Nach einigen Tagen mit Freunden in Addis brachte uns der Bus in den Süden. Erste Station war Awassa, eine sehr angenehme Stadt mit breiten Boulevards, schönen Restaurants und vielen neuen Häusern (u.a. Hotels). Aber Anlass, hier einige Tage zu bleiben, war natürlich der Awassa-See. Auf einer Bootstour sieht man Marabus, Pelikane, viele andere Vögel und Hippos. Am Seeufer gibt es zwei romantisch in einer Parklandschaft gelegene Hotels.

Wir haben uns im Wabe Shebele Awassa I direkt am Seeufer sehr wohl gefühlt und einige Tage entspannt. Eine Attraktion ist der jeden morgen am Seeufer abgehaltene Fischmarkt, ein buntes Treiben herrscht dort, Marabus und Pelikane streiten sich um die Fischabfälle.

Auch hier in Awassa ist der Aufbruch zu spüren, viele neue Bauten in der Stadt zeugen davon. Die Stadt am See scheint neuerdings ein lukratives Ziel für Immobilienpläne zu sein. Man nimmt sich offenbar Bahar Dar am Tanasee zum Vorbild., Hoffentlich wird die sensible Seelandschaft dabei erhalten und das ökologische Gleichgewicht nicht gestört.

Über Shashamene näherten wir uns Arba Minch, unserem Reiseziel im Süden. Bis Sodo ist die Straße in Ordnung und man kann die grüner werdene Landschaft genießen. Das letzte Stück bis Arba Minch ist dagegen eine Tortur und man ist froh, wenn man endlich Arba Minch erreicht hat. Die Hauptstadt der Region Gamu-Gofa hat eine Universität mit 12000 Studenten und sie ist das Tor zum Süden. Wunderschön am Berghang zwischen dem Abaya- und dem Chamosee gelegen, bietet die Stadt viele Attraktionen.

Da sind zunächst die beiden Seen, auf denen man Bootstrips unternehmen kann. Wir waren auf dem Chamosee, ein Vogelparadies, an dessen Ufern man außerdem viele Krokodile beobachten konnte. Unser Hotel Bekele Molla liegt hoch über der Stadt mit wunderbaren Ausblicken auf die beiden Seen. Den Nechi Sar Nationalpark konnten wir nicht besuchen, weil die Straßen nach nächtlichen Regengüssen unpassierbar waren.

Ganz in der Nähe bieten die 1000m höher gelegenen Chenchaberger mit ihren bunten Märkten und den traditionellen Dorze-Häusern ein anderes lohnendes Ziel. Ein Abstecher führte dann noch in das weiter südlich gelegene Konso. Dort am Kreisverkehr auf der Terrasse des Hotels Mariam zu sitzen und zu beobachten, was sich alles so tut, ist wie großes Kino.

Von Konso aus ist es nicht mehr weit zu den berühmten Omovölkern. Arba Minch wird demnächst erneut mein Reiseziel sein, wenn hier vom 17.- 19. Dezember das legendäre „Festival of 1000 Stars“ stattfindet, auf dem die Völker des Südens ihre Kultur vorstellen. (Information:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NaYDH9Js7Y> und <http://video.aol.com/video-detail/arba-minch-festival-of-music-and-dance-aari/3630145398>

In einer Stunde waren wir von Arba Minch aus mit dem Flieger zurück in Addis. Die letzte Etappe der Reise führte wieder in den Norden nach Debre Berhan, Ankober und die Region Menz. Die Straße nach Dessie wird z.Zt. von den Chinesen erneuert, insofern war die Fahrt auf dieser Strecke ziemlich mühsam.

Dafür entschädigen die abwechslungsreiche Berglandschaft und die traditionellen Dörfer mit ihren steinernen Rundhäusern, die manchmal mit schönen Fresken dekoriert sind. Vom mittelalterlichen Glanz der früheren Hauptstadt (unter Kaiser Zara Yacob 1414-1468) ist jetzt nichts mehr zu spüren in Debre Berhan. Die Fahrt auf guter Piste in das 40 km entfernte Ankober lohnt sich allemal. Wieder ist die Hochgebirgslandschaft abwechslungsreich und der Ort liegt spektakulär auf einem schmalen Bergsporn, der in der Zeit Menelik als uneinnehmbar galt.

Ankober war damals Hauptstadt von Shoa und bis zur Verlagerung des Schwerpunktes auf den Entoto Hauptort Menelik. In der Kirche Medhane-Alem wurden Menelik und Taytu getraut. Später fungierte Ankober als eine Art Staatsgefängnis. Hier wurden der Sohn des Kaisers Johannes IV. und der letzte König von Kaffa gefangen gehalten. Ankober wird in arabischen Quellen schon vor 1000 Jahren erwähnt, es war immer ein Durchgangsort für Karawanen, die vom Osten ins Hochland zogen.

Man hat von der Bergspitze, auf dem die Ruinen des Palastes von Menelik liegen, einen herrlichen Blick in die Lowlands mit dem Awash im Hintergrund. Hier ist jetzt die luxuriöse Palace-Lodge errichtet worden. Für Reisegruppen sicher ein schönes Quartier, aber völlig isoliert von den Menschen in Ankober. Ich habe deshalb vorgezogen, in einem einfachen Hotel im Ort zu übernachten und hatte dort intensive unvergessliche Gespräche mit dem Hotelbesitzer, einem Projektleiter und einem Muslim aus der Awashregion.

Sie haben mir auch Tips gegeben, wie ich meine Reise fortsetzen könnte. Wir fuhrten zunächst zurück nach Debre Berhan und von dort nach Menz, westlich der Straße nach Dessie. Offenbar schlägt es nicht viele

Touristen dahin. Das merkte man an der Reaktion der Menschen. Ich habe mich gerade hier sehr wohl gefühlt, z.B. in einem kleinen Gasthaus bei einer netten Familie. Einige ältere Herren habe ich interviewt über die Zeit Haile Selassies (mein Fahrer sprach sehr gut Englisch!), eine Tochter zelebrierte die Kaffezeremonie und bald war das „Fastingfood“ gekocht.

Als wir in einem der nächsten Dörfer einen Platten hatten, waren sofort einige Jugendliche da, um beim Reifenwechsel zu helfen. Ich konnte währenddessen in aller Ruhe Schulkinder fotografieren. Am Ende dieser Route liegt das Guassa-Plateau, eine kahle grüne Berglandschaft mit vielen endemischen Pflanzen und Tieren.

Man muss allerdings Zeit haben und Zelte mitführen, wenn man dort bleiben will. Wir haben es noch bis nach Mahal-Meda geschafft, dort ein Hotel gefunden und sind von dort am nächsten Tag nach Addis zurück gefahren. In Menz habe ich viel vom „Alten Äthiopien“ gespürt, die Menschen, die wir getroffen haben, waren höflich, warmherzig, gastfreundlich, offen und interessiert. Bestimmt werde ich demnächst noch einmal für einige Tage in diese Region fahren.

Nach 6 Wochen ging meine siebte Äthiopienreise zu Ende. Diesmal bin ich viel mit Bus oder PKW im Land unterwegs gewesen. Aufgefallen sind mir die Hunderte von Projekten in allen Regionen (von der Intensivierung der Solartechnik bis zur Nutzung des menschlichen Urins). Man kann das humanitäre und auch finanzielle Engagement nur bewundern (auch aus meiner Heimatstadt Münster gibt es mehrere Initiativen). Die Aufbruchstimmung im Land führe ich aber mehr darauf zurück, dass viele Äthiopier aus Amerika und Europa jetzt im Land investieren und damit einen regelrechten Boom ausgelöst haben (vgl. „Addis Abeba boomt in der ZEIT vom 15.5.2008“).

Seit meiner letzten Tour vor 3 Jahren gibt es große Fortschritte im Straßenbau. In Tigre z.B. sind mehre Pisten ausgebaut worden, so dass man dort jetzt viel leichter reisen kann als bisher. Was von alledem bei den Menschen ankommt, für sie wichtig ist und das Leben erleichtert, weiß ich nicht. Wenn man über aktuelle Politik spricht, findet man eine ähnliche Verdrossenheit wie in Deutschland.

### **Aktivitäten von Äthiopien-Initiativen**

## **Fairlink Ethiopia – Partnering Business and Biodiversity**

**von Thomas Nessel**

Eines der Reichtümer Äthiopiens ist die Vielfalt an biologischen und kulturellen Ressourcen. Beide stehen in enger Wechselwirkung zueinander. Äthiopien ist nicht nur die Wiege der Menschheit, sondern das Genzentrum bedeutender Kulturpflanzen wie Weizen, Gerste und Sorghum, einiger Hülsen- und Ölfrüchte sowie des Arabica-Kaffees. Im Land selbst sind Teff, Fingerhirse, Ensete, Noug und Kath zu wichtigen Kulturpflanzen entwickelt worden. Auch lokale Rinder-, Esel- und Ziegenras-

sen konnten sich in den diversen Ökosystemen dieses Landes entwickeln. ([http://www.biodiv.be/ethiopia/implementation/ibc/str\\_ap](http://www.biodiv.be/ethiopia/implementation/ibc/str_ap))

Ogleich natürliche Habitate nur in Fragmenten vorhanden sind, ist das Land noch ein „hotspot“ für wilde Tier- und Pflanzenarten. So beherbergt das äthiopische Bergland min. 555 Pflanzen- (z.B. Giant Lobelia, Senecio spp.), 65 Fisch-, 30 Säugetier- (z.B. Ethiopian Wolf, Sacred Baboon) und 30 Vogelarten, die nur hier heimisch sind. Ebenso reich an endemischen Pflanzenarten ist das aride Tiefland, wo zudem mehr als 90 Reptilien-, 20 Säugetier- (z.B. Desert Warthog) und 24 Vogelarten ihre Heimat haben.

(<http://web.biodiversityhotspots.org/xp/Hotspots/afromontane/> und <http://web.biodiversityhotspots.org/xp/Hotspots/hornofafrica/>)

Diese Vielfalt gilt es zu bewahren und zu fördern. Gelingen kann dies aber nur, wenn die dort lebende Bevölkerung, die häufig um den Wert der Natur weiß, auch ökonomisch überleben kann und nicht gezwungen ist,



auf der Suche nach neuen Einkommensquellen in die Großstädte zu ziehen.

Mein Anliegen ist es nun, eine Non-profit-Organisation zu gründen, welche eine Plattform außerhalb Äthiopiens unterhält, auf der lokales und traditionelles Wissen präsentiert und innovative Geschäftsideen geboren werden. Zudem soll die Organisation Gelder für die Entwicklungs- und Anschubphase einwerben. Insbesondere kleine lokale, aber sehr verschiedenartige Projekte, welche die ländliche Bevölkerung Äthiopiens fair und gerecht teilhaben lassen und die ökonomisch, ökologisch und sozial nachhaltig sind, sollen gefördert werden. Die Unterstützung kann erfolgen als Wissenstransfer und mit der Bereitstellung von Geld- und Sachmitteln.

Wie könnte nun solch eine Geschäftsidee aussehen? Ein Beispiel: Das US National Research Council hat in 1996 eine Publikation mit dem Titel ‚Lost Crops of Africa‘ veröffentlicht. Darin wird u.a. der äthiopische Hafer, *Avena abyssinica*, sein traditioneller Anbau und seine Verwendung beschrieben. Sein besonderer Wert liegt in

der hohen Malzausbeute, in der er der Braugerste weit überlegen ist. Deswegen findet er auch Verwendung bei der Herstellung des traditionellen Bieres, des *Tella*. Warum sollte aus Hafer gebräutes Bier nicht auch einen Markt in anderen Regionen oder Ländern finden?

Mit der Entwicklung vieler derartiger Nischenprodukte ließe sich die Biodiversität und die kulturelle Identität bewahren. Einen Schwerpunkt sollte die Nutzung langlebiger Kulturen wie z.B. von Gehölzen bilden, da diese am Besten geeignet sind, der starken Bodendegradation entgegenzuwirken.

Ich möchte Sie dazu aufrufen, sich an der Gründungsphase solch einer Organisation zu beteiligen und bis zum 15. August 2008 Kontakt zum Autor aufzunehmen.

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## Äthiopisch Kochen

### **KARTOFFELKÄSE (FASTENKÄSE)**

#### **Yedinich butecha**

##### Zutaten:

4 mittelgroße Kartoffeln, ca. 3 EL Öl  
6 grüne Peperoni  
1 — 2 rote Zwiebeln  
2 EL Zitronensaft  
Salz

##### Zubereitung:

Die Kartoffeln schälen, in kleinere Stücke schneiden und ca. 30 Minuten in Wasser kochen bis sie weich sind. Das Wasser abgießen und die Kartoffeln stampfen.

Die Peperoni entkernen und fein hacken, mit Salz, Öl, Zitronensaft und schwarzem Pfeffer zu den Kartoffeln geben und gut vermengen. Kalt servieren

### **GEBACKENE ZUCCHINI**

#### **Ye duba tibs**

##### Zutaten:

2 Zucchini  
200 g Mehl  
2 Eier  
1/8 l Milch oder Wasser  
Öl zum Backen  
Mitmitta  
Schwarzer Pfeffer  
Salz

##### Zubereitung:

Die Zucchini in Scheiben schneiden. Mehl, Eier, schwarzer Pfeffer und Salz mit Milch bzw. Wasser zu einem Teig verrühren. Die Zucchini hineintauchen und in Öl schwimmend von beiden Seiten 40 — 60 Minuten backen. Abtropfen lassen und evtl. mit Mitmitta bestreuen

### **ERBSENMEHL (SHIRO)**

#### **Ye shiro duket**

##### Zutaten:

3 kg getrocknete Erbsen (oder Bohnen oder Kichererbsen)  
10 g Königskümmel (Ajowan)  
10 g Basilikum, getrocknet  
15 g Kardamon  
20 g Bockshornklee  
5 g Koriander  
etwas Salz

##### Zubereitung:

Die Erbsen in einer Pfanne leicht rösten.

(Nimmt man verschiedene Leguminosen, dann jede getrennt rösten). Königskümmel, Basilikum, Bockshornklee, Koriander, Salz und Kardamon evtl. in einer Pfanne kurz rösten. Zu den Erbsen geben und alles fein vermahlen.

In einem gut verschließbaren Gefäß aufbewahren.

### **KITFO**

##### Zutaten:

600 g zartes rotes Rindfleisch (z. B. Steakfleisch) Gewürzbutter  
1 EL Mitmitta  
evtl. etwas schwarzer Pfeffer  
Salz

##### Zubereitung:

Das Rindfleisch mit einem scharfen Messer sehr klein schneiden (ähnlich dem Hackfleisch).

Das rohe, fein gewürfelte Rindfleisch mit etwas Salz, Butter und Mitmitta nach Geschmack würzen.

ODER

Eine Pfanne erhitzen. Das zerkleinerte Fleisch zugeben und unter ständigem Rühren kurz erhitzen.

Dann etwas Salz, Butter und Mitmitta nach Geschmack zugeben und gut vermengen.

Sofort servieren.

## Links

[http://www.eed.de/fix/files/doc/EED\\_info\\_nr\\_35\\_02-2008.pdf](http://www.eed.de/fix/files/doc/EED_info_nr_35_02-2008.pdf)

### **info Konflikte und Friedensarbeit**

EED Arbeitsstelle Frieden und Konfliktbearbeitung, Nr. 35, Februar 2008

### **Inhalt**

Horn von Afrika – zunehmende Instabilität; Der Eritrea / Äthiopien Konflikt; Äthiopien; Die Offensive in Somalia ... und ihre innenpolitischen Folgen; Entwicklungsanstrengungen; Armut und Ernährungsunsicherheit; Demokratischer Anspruch; Herrschaft, Menschenrechte und Rechtsstaatlichkeit.

Die Lage Äthiopiens wird heute durch vier Problemkreise bestimmt: innenpolitisch stellen das demokratische Legitimationsdefizit der Herrschenden und ihr Verlust an innenpolitischem Vertrauen und die zunehmend deutlicher hervorstechenden Entwicklungsdisparitäten im Lande zentrale Herausforderungen dar. Außenpolitisch bereiten der eingefrorene Konflikt mit Eritrea und die mit der Krise in Kenia sich beschleunigende politische Instabilität der Region am Horn von Afrika der äthiopischen Regierung Sorgen. Die Frage ist zu stellen, ob die von ihr verfolgten Strategien und angewandten Methoden geeignet sind, diesen Herausforderungen so zu begegnen, dass die Region insgesamt stabilisiert wird und eine auf Dauer tragfähige Entwicklung in Äthiopien in Gang kommt. Zweifel scheinen angebracht.

Wolfgang Heinrich

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## Nachrichten

### **Äthiopien knebelt Zivilgesellschaft**

TAZ, 16.5.08, NAIROBI - VON MARC ENGELHARDT

[http://www.taz.de/1/politik/afrika/artikel/1/aethiopien-knebelt-zivilgesellschaft/?src=MT&cHash=688cb532\\_db](http://www.taz.de/1/politik/afrika/artikel/1/aethiopien-knebelt-zivilgesellschaft/?src=MT&cHash=688cb532_db)

Ein neuer Gesetzentwurf soll die Arbeit einheimischer und ausländischer NGOs deutlich erschweren. Die Regierung weist Kritik daran ab.

Kritik hat Äthiopiens Premierminister Meles Zenawi noch nie gut vertragen: Als sich 2005 ein Sieg der Opposition bei den Parlamentswahlen abzeichnete, karrten Lastwagen tausende Oppositionsanhänger in Gefängnisse, ihre Parteichefs wurden zu lebenslanger Haft verurteilt. Proteste von Menschenrechtsgruppen ebenso wie internationaler Organisationen verhallen. Wenn es nach dem Willen von Äthiopiens Regierung geht, dann wird in Zukunft jede Art von Kritik ganz unmöglich sein. Ein Gesetzentwurf, der am 7. Juli im Parlament beschlossen werden soll, wird zivilgesellschaftliches Engagement praktisch unmöglich machen.

So sollen Polizisten oder Ministeriumsvertreter unangemeldet alle Sitzungen von Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NGOs) verfolgen dürfen. Die Regierung soll NGO-Mitarbeiter ohne Gerichtsprozess entlassen, Büros durchsuchen und Eigentum beschlagnahmen können, sobald ein Verdacht auf "ungesetzliches Handeln" vorliegt. Internationalen Organisationen wird praktisch jedes nicht rein humanitäre Engagement untersagt. Die Bereiche Demokratie, Menschenrechte, gutes Regierungshandeln und Konfliktbewältigung sollen für sie ebenso wie für fast alle äthiopischen NGOs tabu sein. Denn ein besonders perfider Paragraf definiert all jene Gruppen als "international", die nicht zu mindestens 90 Prozent aus äthiopischen Quellen finanziert werden. Außer Pseudo-NGOs, die in Wirklichkeit zur Regierungspartei gehören, kann diese Bedingung praktisch niemand erfüllen.

Während die Regierung den Gesetzentwurf mit der Angst vor islamistischer Unterwanderung begründet, ist Äthiopiens NGO-Szene in Aufruhr. "Das ist der Versuch,

eine bereits verschüchterte Zivilgesellschaft vollends mundtot zu machen und zu kriminalisieren", bilanziert ein Mitarbeiter einer deutschen NGO, der seinen Namen nicht zitiert sehen möchte. "Für uns wäre das Gesetz die Todesstrafe", befürchtet Minas Hiruy, Chef von Hope, einer äthiopischen Hilfsorganisation für Waisen. "Wir flehen die Regierung an, mit uns zu sprechen, bevor das Gesetz verabschiedet wird."

Doch Äthiopiens Justizminister Assefa Kesito hat bereits Eile angemahnt: "Uns läuft die Zeit davon. Die NGOs können ihre Kommentare in den kommenden Tagen einreichen. Das muss reichen." Diplomaten in Addis Abeba hoffen, das Gesetz noch verhindern zu können. Immerhin zahlen Geberländer jährlich etwa eine Milliarde US-Dollar an rund 3.000 NGOs in Äthiopien, die mit diesem Geld in praktisch allen Bereichen Regierungsaufgaben übernehmen. "Einer Regierung, die ihr eigenes Geld überwiegend aus dem Ausland bekommt, steht es moralisch nicht an, NGOs wegen ihrer Finanzquellen zu disqualifizieren", urteilt Getnet Assefa, ein äthiopischer EU-Berater.

### **Forscher der Universität Hamburg entdecken Palast der Königin von Saba**

Quelle:

Pressemitteilung der Universität Hamburg vom 7. Mai 2008

Viele Legenden ranken sich um die Königin von Saba und die Bundeslade. Forscher der Universität Hamburg konnten nun einige Geheimnisse lüften. Eine Gruppe von Wissenschaftlern um Prof. Dr. Helmut Ziegert hat während ihrer dreimonatigen Feldforschung im Frühjahr 2008 den Palast der Königin Saba aus dem 10 Jh. v. Chr. in Axum-„Dungur“ (Äthiopien) gefunden. In diesem Gebäude könnte zeitweise auch die Bundeslade aufbewahrt worden sein.

Entdeckt wurde das Bauwerk unter dem Palast eines christlichen Königs. Die Untersuchung hat gezeigt, dass dieser erste Palast der Königin von Saba nach kurzer Zeit abgetragen und, ausgerichtet zum Stern Sirius, neu errichtet wurde. Die Forscher vermuten, dass Menelek, nach der Überlieferung Sohn der Königin von Saba und des Königs Salomon in Jerusalem, für die Neuerrichtung

verantwortlich war. Hier wurde auch ein Altar mit zwei Basaltsäulen errichtet, nach O 18°S zum Sirius orientiert, auf dem möglicherweise vor dem Bau des ersten Tempels in Axum die Bundeslade stand. Die besondere Bedeutung dieses Altars muss über Jahrhunderte überliefert worden sein. Dies zeigen die vielen Opfergaben, die rund um diese Stelle gefunden worden sind.

Später wurde die Bundeslade im 1. Tempel am Platz der ersten Kirche „St. Maryam“ aufbewahrt, nach 325 n. Chr. im 2. Tempel, nach 400 n. Chr. in dem heute noch stehenden Bau auf den Mauern jenes Tempels.

Prof. Dr. Ziegert und seine Mitarbeiter untersuchen seit 1999, teilweise unterstützt durch die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft und die C. Nordmann-Mission, in Axum den Beginn des Äthiopischen Staates und der Äthiopisch-Orthodoxen Kirche. Im Mittelpunkt der Feldforschung 2008 stand die Fragestellung:

„Wie kam im 10. Jh. v. Chr. das Judentum nach Äthiopien, und wo ist die Bundeslade heute?“ Die nun vorliegenden Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass mit der Bundeslade und dem Judentum ein bis nach 600 n. Chr. praktizierter Sothis-Kult nach Äthiopien kam, für den die Sirius Zeichen, die Orientierung aller Kultbauten zum Sirius-Aufgang und aufgefundene Reste von Rinder-Opfern charakteristische Merkmale sind.

Prof. Dr. Helmut Ziegert, Universität Hamburg, Archäologisches Institut, Tel.: (040) 428 83-2006/ 2050/ 2233; E-Mail: [ziegert@uni-hamburg.de](mailto:ziegert@uni-hamburg.de)

## Bio-Öl-Boom aus Äthiopien

<http://www.floraecopower.com/pressemitteilungen.html>  
zusammengefasst von B. Schulte-Kemna

Die Münchener „Flora EcoPower“ Holding AG (FEP) ist in Äthiopien im großen Umfang in die Non-Food Bioöl-Produktion und in die Holznutzung von (schnell wachsenden) Eukalyptuswäldern eingestiegen.

Wie das Unternehmen in verschiedenen Pressemeldungen im Frühjahr 2008 mitteilt ( ) werden inzwischen 15.000 ha Castorbohnen (=Rizinus) und Jatropha im Südosten angebaut und ein 2.200 ha großer Eukalyptuswald in der Provinz Amhara über eine Konzession genutzt.

Aus den Eukalyptuswäldern sollen jährlich 1Mio. Kubikmeter Holz gewonnen werden, teils für die afrikanische Bauwirtschaft und großteils für die weltweite Papierindustrie. Nachhaltigkeit soll gewährleistet sein durch die alle 8 Jahre mögliche Holzernte aus den wieder ausschlagenden Baumstümpfen.

Die Ölpflanzen, beides sogenannt anspruchslose Pflanzenarten aus der Familie Wolfsmilchgewächse, werden im Südosten des Landes „überwiegend auf früherem Brachland“ angebaut und in einer eigenen modernen Ölmühle weiterverarbeitet. Das Öl soll nach Deutschland exportiert werden. Mittelfristig sollen in Afrika (Äthiopien, Madagaskar) 80.000 ha angebaut werden. Das Unternehmen beteuert eine nachhaltige Wirtschaftsweise und dass die Ölpflanzen nicht auf „zur Lebensmittelproduktion verwendeten“ Flächen angebaut werden. Außerdem soll es eine Kooperation mit Kleinbauern geben, die für FEP Anbauflächen bewirtschaften.

*Kommentar des Verfassers B. S.-K.:*

Wer bei unserem vorletzten Äthiopienseminar im März 2007 zugegen war, hat sicher noch in Erinnerung, dass

Jatropha (und sicher auch Castor) zwar auf sogenanntem „Ödland“ wächst, dass der Ertrag sich aber auf besseren Landwirtschaftsflächen - und erst recht bei Bewässerung - vervielfacht. Wenn man mal von wegfallenden Brachlandfläche als Weideland (und bisherigen Naturlächen) absieht, wäre es interessant zu erfahren, ob FEP sich wirklich auf die marginalen Nicht-Ackerflächen beschränkt.

Bzgl. der Nutzung der Eukalyptuswälder erhebt sich natürlich auch die Frage, wo die lokale Bevölkerung, die sich ja traditionell mit Ästen und Zweigen aus den Wäldern versorgt, ihren Energie- bzw. Einkommensbedarf decken kann - um nur zwei Fragen aufzuwerfen, die sich zu diesem Investment aufdrängen.

## Düstere Aussichten für Omo- und Nechisar-Nationalpark

von Eggert Götsch

In unserem Infoblatt von Februar 2007 hatte ich ausführlich über neue und sehr viel versprechende Wege im Naturschutz in Äthiopien berichtet. Daher erspare ich mir hier die Einzelheiten. Nur soviel zur Erinnerung: im Jahre 2005 hat eine private Stiftung, die „African Parks Foundation“ (AP) erst den Nechisar- und dann auch den Omo-Nationalpark von der äthiopischen Regierung quasi für 25 Jahre gepachtet um dort konsequent Naturschutzvorhaben zu verwirklichen, aber auch mit dem Ziel, den Tourismus zu entwickeln und so die Parks wirtschaftlich zu nutzen. Dieser „public-private-partnership“-Ansatz im Naturschutz ist neu: private Organisationen übernehmen Aufgaben, die der betreffende Staat - aus den unterschiedlichsten Gründen - nicht leisten kann - oder nicht leisten will.

Die AP hat ihren Sitz in den Niederlanden, sie arbeitet mit zahlreichen Institutionen (z.B. der GTZ), Universitäten und auch privaten Sponsoren zusammen. Ihre Fachleute vor Ort sind ausgewiesene Experten.

Als AP das Management der beiden Parks übernahm, befanden diese sich in jeder Hinsicht in einem katastrophalen Zustand (s.o.). Große Probleme gab es mit den in den Schutzgebieten z.T. illegal lebenden Menschen. Bei der Lösung dieser Frage hat AP anfänglich nicht immer klug agiert, aber es zeichnete sich dann doch im Laufe des Jahres 2007 eine Lösung ab, die sowohl die Anforderungen des Naturschutzes als auch - zumindest am Omo - die Ansprüche traditionell dort lebenden Menschen berücksichtigte.

Um so überraschender war es, als AP im vergangenen Dezember plötzlich ihren völligen Rückzug aus beiden Projekten ankündigte. Ich habe auch darüber in unserem Infoblatt berichtet (Feb. 2008). Es gab für beide Parks unterschiedliche Gründe für diesen Rückzug.

Im Fall des Nechisar NP ging es darum, einige Tausend illegal dort lebende Nomaden umzusiedeln. Diese unumgängliche Maßnahme war sowohl mit der Bundesregierung in Addis, als auch mit der Provinzregierung der „Southern Nations“ (SNNPR) abgesprochen, aber unmittelbar vor Beginn der Maßnahme verweigerte die Provinzregierung ihre Unterstützung. Damit war eine sinnvolle Arbeit im Nechisar NP unmöglich geworden.

Am Omo war die Problematik eine andere: dort siedeln traditionell die Mursi in Teilen des Parks, eine ethnische Gruppe, die wegen der sog. „Tellerlippen“, die ihre Frauen tragen, weltweit bekannt sind. Auch bei den Mursi hat inzwischen die Moderne Einzug gehalten. Da alle Män-

ner sind mit automatischen Waffen ausgerüstet sind, gab es Konflikte mit den Naturschutzvorstellungen von AP.

Diese forderte von den Mursi gewisse Einschränkungen ihrer Aktivitäten auf dem Westufer des Omo. Obwohl sich bei den gemeinsamen Verhandlungen Lösungen abzeichneten, wurde AP von Menschenrechtsorganisationen massiv angegriffen. Der Vorwurf lautete, man würde ein „unschuldiges Naturvolk“ mit raffinierten Tricks aus ihrer angestammten Heimat vertreiben wollen, um dann reichen Touristen eine „heile Natur“ zeigen zu können. Die meisten dieser Angriffe kamen aus den USA und von Leuten, die mit der Situation vor Ort in keiner Weise vertraut waren. Diese Organisationen verfügen gelegentlich – erstaunlich genug – auch über politischen Einfluss. Als auch noch „Survival International“, eine eher seriöse Organisation, die sich weltweit für den Schutz von ethnischen Minderheiten einsetzt, gegen AP Front machte, gab diese entnervt auf.

Seit Januar zieht AP sich schrittweise aus den beiden Projekten zurück, im Juni werden die Parks wieder den äthiopischen Behörden übergeben.

Die Zukunft der beiden Gebiete ist ungewiss. Ich hatte schon im Februar meine eigene düstere Prognose für die zu erwartende Entwicklung beschrieben. Da ich seit 5 Jahren nicht mehr vor Ort gewesen bin, war ich für die Beurteilung der aktuellen Situation natürlich auf die Auswertung von Quellen aus „zweiter Hand“ angewiesen. Ich freue mich daher, an dieser Stelle die Beobachtungen von zwei Augenzeugen wiederzugeben.

Dabei handelt es sich einmal um den Amerikaner Patrick Walbaum, der aktives und förderndes Mitglied von „Survival International“ ist, den Omo sehr gut kennt und daher zu völlig anderen Einsichten kommt, als seine Organisation.

Über die heute katastrophalen und sich wohl noch verschärfenden Verhältnisse im Nechisarpark berichtet Yelibenwork Ayele für den „Ethiopian Reporter“ vom 15.03.08.

Es ist wirklich mehr als schade um eine interessante neue Projektidee und um die Chance, zwei wertvolle Naturräume erhalten zu können .....

## 1) Bericht zum Nechisar Park

### African Parks to leave Nech Sar

by Yelibenwork Ayele

Source: Ethiopian Reporter - English Version -26.04.2008 14:50: African Parks to leave Nech Sar  
[http://en.ethiopianreporter.com/index2.php?option=com\\_content&task...](http://en.ethiopianreporter.com/index2.php?option=com_content&task...)

March 15 2008 - African Parks started management of Nech Sar Park in 2004. There was very high pressure on the park. The major causes of pressure on the park were firewood for Arba Minch town, illegal fishing, illegal human settlement and cattle grazing inside the park.

African Parks consulted the government, especially the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Regional (SNNPR) government on the issues of the illegal settlement in the park.

"We recruited scouts to protect the park from poachers and wood cutters, illegal fishermen and grass collectors. That had greatly reduced the pressure on the park," said John Mark, country director of Africa Parks.

The main issues were the Guji communities who live in the park. As long as they stayed in the park, it was inconvenient for African Parks to manage the Nech Sar park.

"We waited two years for the government to deal with the settlement problems but the government did not do anything about it." Therefore, African Parks decided to meet the Guji communities directly and negotiate with them. The government agreed with the idea of the Park negotiating with the settling communities.

"We managed to have an agreement with the Guji people by the end of September," John Mark said. The federal government requested a formal letter from the SNNPR government approving the negotiation between the Guji communities and Africa Parks. But the regional government would not approve the negotiation. That is the main reason why they are pulling out, said the manager of African Parks.

Since African Parks started managing the Nech Sar Park, the number of tourists was doubling each year. It increased from 5300 tourists in 2005 to 20,500 in 2007. And 58 of the 86 scouts protecting the park were unemployed young men from the town of Arba Minch, recruited and paid by African Parks. The rest were supplied by the government.

African Parks is scheduled to hand over management of Nech Sar park to the government by June this year and pull out of Ethiopia. Residents of Arba Minch and the association of fishermen said that would be affected by African Park's departure their lives.

Hundreds of illegal fishermen have been working on Lake Abaya. The water recedes from the shore during the hot seasons and the volume has been diminishing in the last few years as tributary rivers were diverted for irrigation. One of the tributaries, the Kulfo River, is now just a dry bed of washed pebbles and boulders. "There are over 3000 illegal fishermen working on Lake Abaya," said Abera Adnew, deputy manager of Arba Minch Fishermen Cooperatives.

Local farmers are planting bananas on the lake side where the water used to be but now has receded. As they turned the land to banana farm, they cut down the trees that were in the shallow water by the shore. The local people calls the tree. "soke". It is very light and soft wood that can be easily chopped into a stool and other simple furniture. The fish like to eat its soft, sweet roots, but now, Abera says, cattle are plucking it out of the ground. "The lake was being overfished until African Parks came three years ago and began the protection of part of the lake from illegal fishermen," said Abera. And he fears that with the departure of African Parks, the scouts they hired will quit and parts of the lake, hitherto protected will be invaded by illegal fisher men again.

The Arba Minch Fishermen Cooperative, a registered and tax-paying association, is now unable to fish on the part of the lake closer to the town of Arba Minch. That part is controlled by the illegal fishermen who are hostile to anyone who would like to work there except themselves. So, the registered fishermen have to row for two hours to the other side of the lake for fishing or sail a motor boat which results in consumption of more oil than the association can afford.

"Our men spend a whole day once they set off upon their way to gather fish from nets cast on the other side of the lake" Zaise, Umade, Ghenta and other fishing spots along the shore have fallen under the influence of the illegal fishermen. The association has recently received warnings from people on the eastern side of the

lake because that part is in the Oromia region, said Abera.

The fishermen's association is licensed to work on Lake Chamo as well. But, there they are occasionally being attacked by the Guji pastoralists. "Every year two or three members of our association are killed while at work on Lake Chamo. We have reported this to the authorities, but we have received no help. We continue to work nonetheless, for we have no alternative work"

During the former regime, the association had rifles issued legally to it but were confiscated from it 16 years ago. Abera said that the association had repeatedly asked for legal ownership of guns for protection of the lakeshore and members of the association during work on Lake Chamo.

However, as the authorities of the region had not responded to the request in either supplying arms or sending police force, the fishermen's association remains defenseless.

## 2. Bericht zum Omo Park

Good morning,

I'd like to react on your announcement stating that AP has decided to terminate its programme in Omo, south east Ethiopia, decision taken partially motivated by the "attacks" from Survival against AP's activities.

First of all I have to tell you I'm a member of Survival International and a passionate reader of your articles, but I am above all a truly motivated defender of ethnic groups, their diversity and their roots.

It happens that I know Omo National Park and its Mursi people well, I have paid visits several times. It must be noticed that this region and its different ethnic groups are located on one of the world's remotest areas. These forgotten people have a unique personality, they are proud and often aggressive, certainly a consequence of their tough life that has hardly evolved through the years. This is a fact and not an assumption.

It is believed that Omo National Park is a place extraordinarily conserved, but this is not the reality. The different ethnic groups inhabiting the area harvest an enormous number of animals, most of which are either extinct or they will soon become. I believe AP carries out an extremely difficult task, trying to approach and explain to the ethnic groups the utility and benefits they could get from the area which is extremely complex. One cannot imagine the distortion between outsider's judgements and the reality one finds in the field. In this particular case, Ian Stevenson, who has lived in Omo for 2 years now under AP, is committed to integrate, not only the Mursi, but all the other ethnic groups inhabiting the surroundings, to the dynamic of the park, keep them in the park, and preserve its fauna This was above all a long term project with unrecoverable funds; I honestly believe that the vision of these ethnic groups, often in armed conflict, cannot be considered as a serious alternative to what AP has wanted to start. It astonishes me that Survival International did not want to learn more before stating in its bulletins that the "Mursi celebrate a victory".....this means to not know the local reality It is a shame that Survival International did not send one of its representatives to participate on this project. Certainly Survival must commit itself to make AP respect the traditional hunting areas, but it should have been taken into account that the ancient hunting methods have been

displaced by the Kalashnikovs coming from Sudan. The disequilibrium that follows will certainly produce a rapid disorganisation at the core of these ethnic groups, which will result in their disappearance.

I am extremely disappointed. I did not expect from our organisation a judgement being so far from the reality found in the field, which is an essential element to understand and secure the survival of these people.

And what if a non profit organisation such as AP wanted to do right? Have we given them an opportunity? Have we helped them to find solutions for the future? Who is now going to be interested in taking its place? Who will our friends, the Mursi, deal with? These are the questions I face with sadness. And tell to myself that humility should always prevail over radical positions.

It is under these feelings that I allow myself to write to you today.

Yours,

Patrick Walbaum

## Hoffnungsschimmer für äthiopische Wälder

von *Ingrid Hartmann*

Die dramatische Verringerung der äthiopischen Waldbestände gab Betroffenen und Beobachtern seit Jahren Anlass zu größter Sorge, nun scheint jedoch die auf der Bonner Artenschutzkonferenz verabschiedete Live-Web-Initiative der deutschen Bundesregierung Hoffnung zu geben, dass zumindest Teile der wertvollsten Waldbestände Äthiopiens erhalten bleiben.

Der äthiopische Waldbestand verringerte sich in den vergangenen 50 Jahren von 40% auf 3% der Landesfläche, kleinflächig durch Köhlerei, Brennholzgewinnung, das Vordringen kleinbäuerlicher Landwirtschaft etc. und großflächig durch illegalen Holzeinschlag, Umsiedlungsprogramme und die Anlage von Plantagen. Obwohl innerhalb der vergangenen Dekade schon zaghaftere Schutzmaßnahmen eingeführt wurden wie die Allokation von Nutzungsrechten durch partizipatives Forstmanagement, die Designierung von Genetischen Kaffeeservaten (EU) und die Ausweisung von unberührten Primärwaldgebieten, war dies nicht ausreichend, um die wertvollen genetischen Ressourcen der äthiopischen Wälder und deren überlebenswichtigen ökologischen Funktionen zu sichern.

Der Umstand, dass der Erhalt lokaler genetischer Ressourcen besonders in Gebieten großer Artenvielfalt, wie sie sich auch in den äthiopischen Hochlandwäldern finden, angesichts des globalen Artensterbens überlebenswichtig für den Fortbestand unseres Planeten ist, war u. a. Thema der vergangenen Bonner Artenschutzkonferenz vom 19. bis 30. Mai 2008, bei der die deutsche Regierung, vertreten durch Umweltminister Sigmar Gabriel, ein in seiner Art vollkommen neuartiges Programm, die Life-Web Initiative, vorstellte. Ausgehend von einer Studie durch Greenpeace, die belegt, dass eine Sicherung der globalen genetischen Vielfalt nur erfolgen könne, wenn die Anzahl der bisher unter Naturschutz stehenden Gebiete mindestens verdoppelt würde, und sogenannte – ebenfalls häufig in Äthiopien anzutreffende – paper parks in tatsächliche Naturschutzgebiete umgewandelt würden, sieht die Life Web Initiative vor, auf schnellem Weg und ohne große formalen Hürden die Finanzierung von neuen oder bereits bestehenden Schutz-

gebieten zu ermöglichen. Die Aufgabe, die Deutschland dabei übernommen hat, ist es, Vorschläge von den jeweiligen Staaten für neue Schutzgebiete zu sammeln und auch andere Geber aktiv zur finanziellen Unterstützung aufzurufen. Insgesamt liegen bereits Vorschläge für neue Schutzgebiete von einer Fläche vor, die das Eineinhalbfache der Fläche Deutschlands beträgt.

Äthiopien, das explizit von Deutschland, vertreten durch NABU-Mitarbeiterin Svane Bender, zur Teilnahme an dieser Initiative ermuntert wurde, zeigt allerdings bei dem Angebot, an der Life-Web-Initiative für den Schutz der einheimischen Wälder teilzunehmen, noch einige Anlaufschwierigkeiten. Wie der für die Umsetzung der geplanten Biosphärenreservatgebiete in Äthiopien verantwortliche äthiopische Delegierte, Dr. Girma Balcha, Direktor des Institute of Biodiversity Conservation in Addis Ababa, erklärte, seien die gesetzlichen Grundlagen für die Einführung von Biosphärenreservaten in der bisher existierenden äthiopischen Gesetzgebung bislang noch nicht etabliert. So war es ihm noch nicht möglich, ein erstes „Memorandum of Understanding“ mit der deutschen Regierung zu unterzeichnen, das lediglich vorsieht, die Idee der Etablierung eines Biosphärenreservates in Äthiopien auf nationaler Ebene zu unterstützen (bekannt zu machen).

UNESCO-Biosphärenreservate kombinieren sowohl die Ziele von Umweltschutz als auch von nachhaltiger wirtschaftlicher Entwicklung. Anders als in Naturschutzparks, die häufig zu Lasten der ansässigen Bevölkerung angelegt werden, wird hier die traditionelle Bewirtschaftungsweise explizit gefördert, da davon ausgegangen wird, dass es gerade die kulturspezifischen indigenen Wirtschaftsweisen gewesen seien, die zur Erhalt der natürlichen Ressourcen über Jahrtausende beigetragen hätten. So wird auch in den äthiopischen Wäldern vor allem die Produktion von Honig und spezieller Kaffeesorten vom Public Private Partnership Programm in Zusammenarbeit mit der gtz parallel gefördert.

Für die Etablierung von Biosphärenreservaten wirft dies jedoch wiederum neue Probleme auf: Das Interesse daran ist fast so groß, vielfältig und divergierend wie die diversen Gruppen, die bislang durch Übernutzung dem Wald Schaden zufügten.

Bezüglich der Entscheidung über das Gebiet des ersten zu etablierende Biosphärenreservates ist daher noch erhebliche Vorarbeit zu leisten. Nichtsdestotrotz ist der Favorit bereits bekannt: Der Bonga-Coffee Forest in Kafa. Wesentliche Entscheidungskriterien hierfür sind seine genetische und ökologische Vielfalt sowie die bereits traditionell vorhandenen nachhaltigen Wildkaffee-Nutzungssysteme, Gebiete mit partizipativem Waldmanagement und erste Infrastruktur beispielsweise für den Aufbau von Ökotourismus. Die Hauptökosystemtype sind feuchter immergrüner Hochlandwald mit zahlreichen wilden Varietäten von *Coffea arabica*, schützenswerter Bienenflora und Medizinalpflanzen. Ferner finden sich dort auch schützenswerte Bambuswälder und Feuchtgebiete. Ca. 106 Gehölze aus 74 Genera und 38 Familien sind dort beheimatet, 100 Vogel- und 48 Säugerarten. Prof. Michael Succow, Biosphärenspezialist insbesondere für Feuchtgebiete und erfahrener Äthiopienkenner wird als wissenschaftlicher Berater die Aktivitäten begleiten.

Bis dahin wird es jedoch noch ein weiter Weg sein. Aber zumindest wurde der Beschluss gefasst, den ersten Schritt zu tun.

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## Verschiedenes

### Photo Competition "Literature in Africa"

[www.literaturfestival.com](http://www.literaturfestival.com)

The eighth international literature festival berlin (24.9. – 4.10.2008), with the focus on "Africa", is organizing the photo competition "Literature in Africa". All submissions of analogue or digital photos (300dpi) in black / white or colour are welcome: photos of bookshops with their owners, libraries, children reading, youth and adults, or other motifs that are associated with the theme.

These photos, as far as possible, will be displayed in an exhibition that will take place during the festival. The "best" photo to be selected by the jury as the main motif for the festival, which among other things will grace the festival poster and website, will be awarded with \$500.

Additional information required: name of the photographer, contact details, place where and date when the picture was taken.

The international literature festival berlin announces a one month's extension of the photo competition "Literature in Africa". The new deadline is the 30th of June 2008. By this day all photos must have arrived at the festival office.

Address: *international literature festival berlin, Photo Competition, Chausseestr. 5, 10115 Berlin (Germany) or digital: [foto\\_competition@literaturfestival.com](mailto:foto_competition@literaturfestival.com)*

### Global Education Week 2008

*Gemeinsam für die Menschenrechte!*

Anlässlich des 60. Jahrestages der Allgemeinen Erklärung der Menschenrechte wird die Global Education Week 2008 vom 17. bis 23. November zu dem Thema Menschenrechte stattfinden. Ob das Thema Menschenrechte in Ihren Projekten schon einen zentralen Stellenwert einnimmt oder Sie erst jetzt Lust bekommen, ihre Arbeit in einem Workshop, einer Ausstellung oder einer

Filmvorführung an Schulen vorzustellen: wir geben Ihnen die Gelegenheit. Zum Beispiel könnten Sie aufzeigen, wie sich der derzeitige Biospritboom auf das Leben der Menschen in Ihren Partnerländern auswirkt, die Öffentlichkeit dafür sensibilisieren, dass das Recht auf Bildung in vielen Ländern noch immer missachtet wird, oder auf die fortwährende Verletzung der Rechte der Frau in vielen Regionen aufmerksam machen.

Der angegebene Zeitraum vom 17.-23. November 2008 soll einen Rahmen darstellen, um intensiv und bundesweit auf das Thema aufmerksam zu machen, ist aber keineswegs bindend. Ziel der europaweiten Global Education Week ist es, Themen des Globalen Lernens in das öffentliche Bewusstsein zu rufen. Die inhaltliche Auseinandersetzung sollte eine globale Perspektive aufweisen und zu solidarischen Nord-Süd-Beziehungen beitragen. Insbesondere ist auch das Engagement von Partnern aus dem Süden wünschenswert.

Wir laden Sie deshalb ein, sich mit einer Veranstaltung zu beteiligen, um dem Globalen Lernen durch die Global Education Week einen Anstoß zu geben, der eine längerfristige und nachhaltige Auseinandersetzung auf deutscher, europäischer und außereuropäischer Ebene fördert.

#### **Wie der World University Service Sie unterstützen kann:**

- In den nächsten Wochen wird der World University Service (WUS), der die GEW innerhalb Deutschlands koordiniert, seine Homepage zur Global Education Week 2008 [www.globaleducationweek.de](http://www.globaleducationweek.de) beständig aktualisieren und erweitern. Hier werden wir Ihre Angebote vorstellen, wodurch diese deutschlandweit und darüber hinaus wahrgenommen werden. Des Weiteren können Sie sich so mit anderen Interessierten vernetzen.
- Wir werden bundesweit Schulen anschreiben und diese auf die Angebote während der Global Education Week aufmerksam machen.

- Wir bewerben die GEW in online-Newslettern und Zeitschriften zur Entwicklungspolitik und -zusammenarbeit.
- Wir geben Ihnen Tipps, wo Sie Informationen zu einem Thema oder einer Region finden können.
- Wir geben Informationen des Nord-Süd-Zentrums an Sie weiter. Das Nord-Süd-Zentrum des Europarates in Lissabon ist der europaweite Ausrichter der Woche zum Globalen Lernen und stellt auf seiner Homepage Informationen zum Globalen Lernen und zur Global Education Week zur Verfügung: [http://www.coe.int/t/e/north-south\\_centre/programmes/3\\_global\\_education/](http://www.coe.int/t/e/north-south_centre/programmes/3_global_education/)
- Der Rundbrief Bildungsauftrag Nord Süd Nr. 58 widmet sich dem Thema Menschenrechte und stellt verschiedene Materialien der Menschenrechtsbildung vor. Er ist unter [www.wusgermany.de/index.php?id=101&L=](http://www.wusgermany.de/index.php?id=101&L=) als pdf abrufbar.
- Eine Linkliste zum Thema Menschenrechte steht auf unserer Homepage unter [www.wusgermany.de/index.php?id=1263&L=](http://www.wusgermany.de/index.php?id=1263&L=) bereit.

Treten Sie für sich und andere ein, indem sie Menschenrechte vorstellen, diskutieren, öffentlich machen und ... verwirklichen!

Wir freuen uns über zahlreiche Veranstaltungsideen, Fragen und Anregungen:

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## Press Review

### Extracts from ETHIOPIA Seven Days Update<sup>1</sup>

compiled by  
Harmen Storck

#### - Conflict with Eritrea -

Eritrea, which earlier this year obliged a UN peacekeeping force to leave its disputed border with Ethiopia, is now calling for the Security Council to wind up the mission altogether. The demand, in a letter from the Red Sea state's permanent UN representative, came after the council said it would consult Eritrea and Ethiopia on the future of the 1,700-strong force. The force, known as UNMEE, had patrolled the border since 2000, when a two-year war between the Horn of Africa neighbors ended. It pulled out in February, saying Eritrea had cut off fuel supplies, and most of its troops have returned to their countries of origin (*Reuters, May 1*).

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon presented alternative proposals to the UN Security Council on the fate of the controversial Ethiopia-Eritrea border. The alternatives include decreasing the number of UNMEE peacekeeping forces to terminating its mission. The first alternative indicates that if Eritrea lifts its fuel ban on UNMEE, the peacekeeping operation could continue fully. If not, the second alternative notes the peacekeeping mission will be discontinued. Other alternatives include deploying a minimal peacekeeping force near the border or establishing liaison offices in Asmara and Addis Ababa. UNMEE's mandate will end on July 31, 2008. It is expected that the Security Council will decide on the fate of the peacekeeping mission before that date (*VOA, April 14*).

There was heavy exchange of fire Monday between Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers around the town of Zalanbessa. Quoting residents of the town, the report said that five Eritrean soldiers had surrendered. The exchange of fire took place in the wake of the withdrawal of UN peacekeeping forces from Zalanbessa. Although their numbers are unknown, ambulances from Adigrat transported injured people twice (*VOA, March 19*).

More than 700 peacekeepers have been temporarily relocated to their home countries from Eritrea, UNMEE reported. A total of 397 Jordanian blue helmets and 305 Indian troops have returned to their respective countries, and the Mission notes that more flights out of Asmara are scheduled for next week to fly remaining UN personnel in Eritrea home. The decision to temporarily move UN personnel and equipment out of Eritrea was made last month after the country cut off fuel supplies to UNMEE, paralyzing the operation on that side of the disputed border (*UN News Center, March 11*).

The United Nations is being forced to prepare an imminent pullout from Eritrea and plans to relocate all its peacekeeping troops there across the border in Ethiopia. Because of restrictions imposed by the Eritrean government, UN personnel are down to their last remaining emergency reserves of diesel fuel to power generators, vehicles and other equipment for the 7 1/2-year-old peacekeeping operation. At last count, that operation had about 1,500 troops and 200 military observers, along with several hundred civilians and dozens of volunteers based out of Asmara, Eritrea and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (*AP, Feb. 8*).

#### - Conflict with Somalia -

troops in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, have distributed food aid bought with their own salaries. About 400 bags of sorghum were handed out to about 500 people in southern Baynile district. An

Ethiopian soldier said his colleagues had organized the collection to help their neighbours in need. Ethiopian troops, who support Somalia's interim government, are not popular and the food was accepted with surprise (*BBC News, May 14*). - Somali elders on sneered at Ethiopian troops for doling relief food to hungry Mogadishu residents, saying the exercise was just a gimmick to cover their blood-soaked hands (*AFP, May 15*).

Amnesty International has accused Ethiopian troops of committing war atrocities during their mission to support the UN-backed government of Somalia. A report by the human rights group accuses Ethiopian soldiers of killing civilians, slitting people's throats and gang raping women. Troops with the transitional Somali government and their Ethiopian allies have been battling Islamist-led insurgents since 2006. The country has also been torn apart by violence between rival clans. The report says all parties in the Somali conflict have carried out rights abuses, but it singled out Ethiopian troops as some of the worst violators. - Amnesty International says the people of Somalia face a dire human rights and humanitarian crisis growing worse by the day. The group called on the international community to step forward and help put an end to the bloodshed. Amnesty International said about 6,000 civilians have been killed in attacks since last year and one million have been internally displaced (*VOA, May 6*).

A government spokesman says hundreds of Ethiopian troops have died fighting the Islamist insurgency in Somalia. Foreign Affairs spokesman Wahide Belay said that Ethiopia has about 3,000 troops in Somalia. They deployed in December 2006 and drove out Islamist fighters who had seized control of most of southern Somalia including the capital, Mogadishu. But since then they have got bogged down and failed to halt the insurgents (*International Herald Tribune, May 6*).

A Somali human rights group says two days of fighting in the capital, Mogadishu, has killed 81 people. The Elman Human Rights organization says another 119 people were wounded in fighting Saturday and Sunday between Islamist insurgents and Ethiopian troops. The chairman of the rights group, Sudan Ali Ahmed condemned the use of artillery shells in residential areas of Mogadishu. There was no independent verification of the death toll, but residents had reported escalating clashes since Saturday. Somali Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein expressed regret Sunday for Somalis who are forced to flee the violence, but he said his interim government and its Ethiopian allies have the right to self-defense (*VOA, April 20*).

At least 10 Ethiopian soldiers have been killed and 13 others injured in a landmine explosion in south of the Somali capital, Mogadishu. The Ethiopian troops were killed when their vehicle hit a landmine in Waaberi district. Several civilians were also injured in the attack, witnesses said. Another roadside bomb, targeting Ugandan peacekeepers went off near Adan Adde international airport in southern Mogadishu, but there were no immediate reports on the number of casualties, witnesses said (*Press TV, April 9*).

More Ethiopian troops are pouring into Somalia to join local government soldiers in a battle against Islamist insurgents that has sent tens of thousands of people fleeing Mogadishu, witnesses said on Sunday. "Convoys of Ethiopian troops have been passing. I counted 30 army vehicles," shopkeeper Farah Abdikarim said from Afgoye, describing columns he saw on Saturday driving east from the town on a 40 km road to the Somali capital Addis Ababa officially recognizes having about 4,000 soldiers in Somalia. But Somalis and regional diplomats say there are far more than that (*Reuters, March 26*).

#### - Economics, Finance, Commerce -

##### GNP, Economic Growth, Budget

Ethiopia will grow at 7.5% in 2008 and 7.4% in 2009 on industry, agriculture and service sector expansion, a joint U.N./African

<sup>1</sup> Waag Communications News Digest Service, Addis Ababa



Development Bank (AfDB) statement said on June 2. Ethiopia 's finance ministry had said earlier this month that it expected growth of 10.8 percent this year, boosted by agriculture and service sectors. The joint U.N./AfDB report said Ethiopia 's industry grew at 11% of GDP in 2006/07 and manufacturing at 10.5%. Agriculture, which dominates Ethiopia's economy, grew 9.4% in real terms in 2006/07, compared to 10.9% in 2005/06, it said. Ethiopia 's export trade grew by 18.5% to \$1.2 billion in 2006/07. The Horn of Africa nation expects to export \$1.8 billion in 2008, according to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (*Reuters, June 2*).

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development told the House of Peoples' Representatives that the Federal Government is facing a budget deficit. It said the total income including direct budget subsidy and debt reduction in the last nine months amounted to 22.72 billion birr while total expenditure reached 25.2 billion birr. The government has a budget deficit of 2.47 billion birr (*Reporter, May 18*). - Although income from exports was said to have grown by 30%, Ethiopia's fuel expenditure in the first nine month of the budget year has exceeded its export earnings. While export earnings stood at 9.46 billion birr, the fuel expenditure was 10.08 billion. The fuel cost was ten percent higher than the same period the previous year and the expenditure grew by 67 % (*Reporter, May 25*).

Ethiopia will register a 10.8% economic growth during the current fiscal year, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) announced. MoFED Minister, Sofian Ahmed, disclosed that the nation will register a 'double digit' economic growth for the fifth consecutive time. However, the price of food grains has been soaring over the last two years, he said, and the inflation rate in the country reached 19% in March 2008 from 18% during the previous month (*state media, May 14*).

### Inflation

Ethiopia's annual inflation rate increased to 22.9% in February led by rising food costs, the Central Statistical Agency said. Inflation expanded from 19.4% in January, the Addis Ababa-based agency said in a report today. Food prices climbed 30.2% on an annual basis, from 28% in January, according to the report (*Bloomberg News, April 9*).

The government has lifted all tax imposed on cooking oil and surtax on soap as of March 29, 2008, the Ministry of Trade and Industry announced. The lifting of the tax on cooking oil alone will cost the government an estimated 400-500m birr. The lifting of the various tax titles and increase in the supply of consumption goods are some of the measures being taken by the government to stabilize the market (*ETV, March 28*).

The government has announced that value added and turnover tax imposed on grain and flour would be lifted. The measure was taken to address the rising inflation rate that has affected particularly low income people (*state media March 18*).

Information from the Central Statistics Agency has indicated that inflation has shown an upward trend since July 2007. Economic experts say that there are no indications that food prices would go down. The agency's national and regional food prices index issued for Tir 2000 indicates the inflation in July 2007 of 17.9% spiraled to 22.8% in Jan./Feb. 2008 increasing every month (*Enbilla, Feb. 29*).

### Debts, Grants, Loans and Credits

Irish Aid, the Irish Government's official program of development assistance, announced a contribution of 11m € in 2008 to the Productive Safety Net Program in Ethiopia, the Embassy of Ireland to Ethiopia said. According to a statement, 10.5 million Euros of the stated amount will directly support the Food Security Bureau to implement the Safety Net (*ENA, May 29*).

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) announced that it would provide development assistance of 2.5 billion birr over the next year to help Ethiopia achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). UK Ambassador to Ethiopia, Norman Ling, told a press conference that the assistance to be provided to Ethiopia is greater than any development assistance the UK is providing to any other African country. He said the support would be continued in a strengthened manner. Over the past four years DFID's programs in Ethiopia have been supporting efforts to build democracy, promote long-term growth and make education, health, agriculture, water and sanitation services better and more widely available (*State media, May 7*).

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) and Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) signed a soft loan agreement amounting to 86.19m birr. BADEA has so far provided 104.73 million USD support for the development activities being executed by the government (*ETV, May 6*).

The African Development Bank (ADB), International Finance Corporation (IFC), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) have agreed to provide loans to Derba Midroc Cement Factory. The loan is the first of its kind to the private sector in Ethiopia. Ato Nebiyu Samuel, special advisor to Sheikh Al-Amoudi, owner of Derba-MIDROC, said an agreement involving loans of 100m \$ from ADB and IFC would be signed after a month. EIB and DBE have agreed to provide 45m \$ and 450m \$ respectively, he added (*WIC, April 20*).

Ethiopia has secured a 7 billion birr loan and grant over the last six months, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development said. It also enjoyed debt cancellation amounting to 869.4m birr during the reported period. The head of the Public Relations and Information Department in the Ministry said 3.84 billion birr was secured in the form of loan and the rest in grant. Most of the fund will be spent on agricultural and rural development, hydroelectric power, health, education and water development activities (*ENA, Feb. 10*).

### Foreign Trade

The Ministry of Mines and Energy said Ethiopia secured over 60m USD from the export of precious metals in the past nine months. The amount secured from the export of metals during the reported period has significantly increased compared to that of the previous year. The revenue was obtained from gold, tantalum, platinum and other precious metals exported through the National Bank (*ENA, May 11*).

The Ministry of Trade and Industry said more than 1.2 billion USD was secured from the export of various products over the past nine months. The income exceeds that of the same period the previous year and the target by 254,000 USD and 85.5% respectively. - Coffee, oilseeds and cereals constitute the majority of the income. Minerals, veterinary medicines, capsules and various food items and products which were not exported in the pervious budget year have also contributed to the success. The products were exported to Europe, America, Asia and the Middle East (*state media, May 4*).

The best coffee beans from East Africa particularly from Ethiopia are to gain from steadily growing coffee prices at the global market due to sophistication of coffee drinkers. The Economist reported that as consumers in India and China develop a taste for the drink, prices are likely to keep rising. Europeans, Americans and Japanese are switching to higher-quality coffee. Discerning consumers now demand authenticity: they want stories about where their coffee beans come from. So the best coffees will increasingly be differentiated and sold at previously unthinkable prices (*ENA, April 19*).

Ethiopia plans to buy 100,000 tons of sugar in 2008-2009 to meet growing demand of its 80 million strong population, an official told. The director of the state-owned Ethiopia Sugar Support Enterprise, Musa Mohammed Zeinu, said expansion work on the country's

three sugar estates had taken longer than planned (*Reuters, March 27*).

Ethiopia, Africa's leading coffee exporter, planned its coffee export to increase by one third this year, Ethiopia's Agriculture ministry disclosed. Export promotion official under the ministry, Solomon Tilahun, said, Ethiopia will ship 220,000 MT of beans in the year to June 30, 2008. "In five years we plan to increase coffee production by 15%," Tilahun said. The Horn of Africa nation also plans to encourage foreign participation in the industry to help expand production and to boom foreign income (*Sudan Tribune, Feb. 19*).

### Investment and Investment Policy

The General Manager of the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EPCo), Mehret Debebe, announced the corporation is in a national crisis that will last for a short period of time. Ato Mehret stated the corporation has started to provide Addis Ababa with electric power from generators. Shortage of rain and growing demand caused the shortage, he said. The corporation spends 100m birr monthly to run the generators (*ABBI-Weekly, April 4 to 10*).

The Ministry of Trade and Industry and Eastern Industrial Zone, a Chinese company, signed an agreement for the company to execute 80 investment projects in Dukem town, Eastern Shewa Zone of Oromia State at a cost of five billion Chinese Reminibi. The company will carry out 80 projects including textile, food, shoe, electric manufacturing factories within 5-sq.km reserved as industrial zone. The company's president, Lu Qilyuan, told the necessary infrastructure will be built at a cost of 2.8 billion Reminibi. Five of the projects will be carried out soon, and a total of five years is needed to finalize all the projects. When the projects become operational, they will create some 20,000 jobs, he said. Ethiopia will also obtain over 800 billion Reminibi from project tax (*State media, March 17*).

Ethiopia has won trademark rights for its specialty Sidamo coffee in the United States, the country's intellectual property office said. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has confirmed that Ethiopia is the sole owner of the Sidamo coffee trademark, the Ethiopian Intellectual Property Office (EIPO) said in a statement. - Ethiopia has already secured trademark rights for Yirgacheffee coffee in the United States. Ethiopia has filed an application for trademark rights for its Harar coffee (*Reuters, March 5*).

The Trade and Industry Minister Girma Birru said that the government is launching the construction of a sugar factory in Tendaho, besides the ongoing expansion of sugarcane plantations in Wonji, Metehara and Fincha sugar factories. Although Ethiopia is currently importing sugar to curb shortages, the country will be able to export some amount of sugar upon completion of the programs within the next two years, the minister added. Tendaho Sugar Factory alone will have the capacity to produce 15 million q of sugar annually, thereby raising the sugar production of the country by twofold. Out of the two billion USD needed for the execution of the program, 61% will be covered by the government and 640m USD was secured in loan from the Indian government. The program will create jobs for more than 80,000 people (*WIC, March 3*).

Dutch investors will establish an olive oil extraction factory in Tigray State, the state's agricultural marketing promotion agency said. Tigray State, in collaboration with Mekele University and the State's Agricultural Research Association, envisages nurturing olive seedlings around Maichew and distribute the olive tree seedlings to different parts of the state, he said. The investors are expected to launch the construction of the factory in July 2008 (*ENA, March 7*).

Holland Car P.L.C, the first car assembly company in Ethiopia, reached agreement with Het Zuiden Investment BV to export Abay, a locally assembled automobile, to Holland. The company's general manager, Engineer Tadesse Tessema, and the representative of Het Zuiden Investment BV, Carlo Van Hal said "We intend to export 3,000 cars annually in the future." Abay automobile, which was

inaugurated in Nov. 2007, has been accepted overwhelmingly by the market. The company has decided to expand the factory to meet the market demand (*ENA, Feb. 23*).

At the opening ceremony of the newly established Ethio-German partnership for electrification, renewable energy and communication, Germany's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Dr. Claas Dieter Knoop, said the main purpose of the project is to facilitate cooperation of Ethiopian electrical and electrochemical contractors with small and medium enterprises from Germany in undertaking projects in Ethiopia as partners, mainly in the areas of electrification, renewable energy and communication (*ENA, Feb. 14*).

Sher Ethiopia Plc, a company established by Dutch investors, constructed a 200 ha greenhouse for flower and vegetable development at a cost of 40m euros. The company has started leasing this greenhouse constructed outside Zway, 163 km south of Addis Ababa, with 20 partitions to local investors interested to grow flowers and vegetables. According to the Chairman, it needs an additional 18 months to cover a total 500 ha of plot with greenhouses. - Sher collects lease payments from such companies for eight consecutive years and afterwards the plots will be transferred to the companies themselves. Gerrit declined to divulge the lease prices of the plots. However, according to sources, the lease price per sq. m. ranges from 7.43-9.45 birr (*AllAfrica.com, Feb. 11*).

### Mining

Ministry of Mines and Energy and CGC Overseas Construction-Ethiopia, a Chinese company, signed an agreement on large-scale silica sand mining around Lemi locality, North Shoa Zone of Amhara State. The company has an exclusive right to carry out large-scale silica sand mining on 1,000,000 sq.m in the zone for the next 20 years. The company has allocated over 16.4m birr to carry out the mining, and envisages producing more than 2.8 million m<sup>3</sup> of silica sand in the next 20 years (*Radio Ethiopia, March 19*).

### Transport and Communication

The Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ethiopian Water Works Construction Enterprise signed an agreement to construct the second dry dock in the country in Semera town of Afar State at a cost of over 26m birr. The dry dock, which will be established on 100 ha, will contribute to saving hard currency and boosting trade and investment as it is near the ports of neighbouring countries, the statement quoted the state minister as saying. The construction of the dry dock is expected to be finalized in January 2009 (*ENA, May 3*).

The Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) and Keangnam Enterprise, a Korean company, signed an agreement amounting to over 460.3m birr for the construction of the Alaba-Humbo-Arbaminch road. The finance for the construction finance of the route covering 85.5 km which will be upgraded to concrete asphalt was secured from the Road Fund Office. The road is expected to be completed within 30 months. The project is part of the third Road Sector Development of the country (*Radio Ethiopia, May 7*).

A community radio station has been established in Debrezeit town of the Wombera District, Metekel Zone of the Benishangul Gumuz State, the district administration said. The establishment of the radio aims at providing reliable and dependable information to the public on various issues. The district administration has constructed a building for the community radio station at a cost of 15,000 birr. An international humanitarian organization has donated 500,000 birr for the procurement of radio equipment (*ENA*).

Ethiopian Airlines (EAL) said it has started code share flights with Lufthansa, German airline, as of March 30. These flights will operate on the Addis Ababa-Frankfurt route. With this agreement, the two carriers jointly provide daily flights on the Addis Ababa-Frankfurt route (*ENA, April 2*).

The Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority said the 4th community radio station will soon be launched in Jimma town. The expansion of state-owned and private radio stations in the country has enabled the society to get access to relevant and timely information, the coordinator of the broadcast service promotion, licensing, and research section of the authority said (*ENA, March 30*).

The Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC) and the Chinese telecom ZTE have scaled up an agreement involving mobile phone network expansion and fiber optics installation project. The project, which will involve a mobile phone network expansion for additional 3.4 million lines and a 6.9 km fiber optics installation, is expected to cost over 5.2m birr. The overall project will be financed by the Chinese government via ZTE, which offered ETC a long-term soft loan. ZTE has completed the first phase of the grand telecom project involving a 1.2 million additional cell phone line network installation about six months ago (*Reporter, March 15*).

The Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) has concluded over 1.4 billion birr agreement with a Korean company to upgrade the Jimma-Bonga-Mizan road. ERA Human Resources and Finance Deputy Director General Gelaso Bori said the 220 km road project is part of the third road sector development program designed by the government and the continuation of the road program to link Addis Ababa with Jimma. The finance for the execution of the project will be covered by the government and a loan secured from the Africa Development Bank. The construction is expected to be finalized in 34 months and the roads will be upgraded from gravel to asphalt. The road will also connect SNNP and Oromia states (*WIC, Feb. 21*).

#### Energy Supply

Power rationing will continue until June 2000 E.C., the Ministers of Water Resources and Mines and Energy announced. Asfaw Dingamo and Alemayehu Tegenu called on the public to wait patiently until the problem of power caused by shortage of water due to climate change is addressed in the coming main rainy season (*ENA, May 10*).

The Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EPPCo) has announced that there would be power cuts of 12 hours twice a week in every locality. This is related to the shortage of power the corporation faces currently. (*Reporter, April 9*). - According to EPPCo General Manager Meseret Debebe, lack of expected seasonal 'Bely' rain for prolonged time compounded by evaporation of water from dams has left power generating stations crippled from fully operating. Furthermore, the ever increasing high power demanding industry, wide investment and the delay in completion of hydropower projects under way has contributed a lot to the power shortage the nation is facing (*Sudan Tribune, April 9*).

The two billion birr Tekeze hydro electric power project, faced with a geological phenomenon, has incurred the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EPPCo) another 400m birr. Mihret Debebe, general manager of the EPPCo, says the obstacle faced at the site would cost the corporation about 15% of the total project cost. He said that despite the huge the project is expected to be completed before the rainy season that ends in September (*Capital, April 6*).

A company established by Indian and Mauritian citizens is preparing to start producing fuel from waste plastic bags. Established at a cost of 90m birr, the company says it prefers Sebeta or Akaki as a location to build the factory. The Ambassador of Mauritius in Ethiopia said the company would start operation after it obtains land (*Addis Admas, Feb. 23*).

#### Development Projects

The government of Ethiopia and the World Bank (WB) have reached agreement for a 100m USD loan from the World Bank for infrastructure development, the Ministry of Works and Urban Development said. The loan will be used to strengthen the ongoing

development and good governance activities in urban areas. The loan will benefit 19 cities and towns including Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Awassa, Dire Dawa, Harar, and Mekele. The construction of roads, sewerage canals, business centers, and safe water projects are some of the major development activities that will be executed in the areas. The agreement includes environmental and social affairs management packages aimed at curbing the negative impact of the projects on the environment (*Radio Ethiopia, March 17*).

#### Other Issues

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said that the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECE) Enterprise will bring about transparency, efficiency in market, quality in production, and enhance productivity. The launch of the system in Ethiopia, where agricultural production is mainly carried out by small holding farmers indicated that the government has been implementing a sound development policy (*State media, April 4*). - The Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECE) Enterprise announced that it is engaged in various activities aimed at realizing its plan of commercialising small holder farmers. The Enterprise has obtained 194m birr for the Ethiopian government and other foreign donors. The enterprise has constructed six grain warehouses in Addis Ababa, Nazret, Shashemene, Burre, Nekempte and Humera. Dr. Eleni said that the enterprise would begin marketing maize, wheat, sesame, haricot bean, while plans have been set to launch coffee and teff marketing within a few months.. The Enterprise serves the purpose of creating an efficient marketing system by linking producers and buyers (*ETV, April 3*).

Police were closing shops in Addis Ababa that exchange foreign currency in the black market. The Ethiopian birr has been falling recently in its exchange value. Meleskachew Amha has the details. Eye witnesses say that police were closing the shops in the Merkato and the Ghandi Hospital areas after registering their property. Sources indicate that in the past few days, the rate of exchange for one USD was 10.50 birr in the black market. Conversely, the bank exchange was 9.60 birr to the USD (*VOA, March 13*).

Close to one million people are engaged in the informal economic sector to make life in major towns of Ethiopia, a research conducted by Initiative Africa revealed. The Program Manager with Initiative Africa said that one million people are engaged in the informal economic sector in over 90 towns across the nation. About 60% of them are women. Though the informal economic sector supports a large portion of the nation's population, no legal framework has been put in place to protect the rights and benefits of people engaged in the sector. The number of people that join the informal economic sector has been increasing each year, the manager said, and noted that those engaged in the informal sector could protect their rights and benefits if they are organised under associations (*ENA, Feb. 26*).

### **- Agriculture, Food Aid, Drought -**

#### Agricultural Input and Output

Ethiopia will play a key role in the world flower market within two years if the present growth trend continues in the floriculture investment sector, the Ministry of Trade and Industry said. A special advisor of the ministry, Fantaye Biftu, said the country has a highly favourable agro-climatic condition to grow all varieties of roses, summer flowers, pot plants, shrubs and trees. Fantaye said floriculture green house coverage is expected to reach 1,000 ha by mid 2008. Some 70% of the country's flowers are exported to The Netherlands while 10-15% is exported to Germany. He said there is a need to diversify the market and expand the export to other European countries (*ENA, March 31*).

Ethiopia expects an overall harvest of 16.5 million t in the current 2007/08 season thanks to good weather and a greater number of

crops planted, a 10% increase over the previous year, Samia Zakaria, director the Central Statistics Agency, told. 11.2 million ha are currently planted with crops, an increase of 4% over 2006/07. Some 83% of all Ethiopians earn their living from agriculture. The country's top export is coffee, followed by sesame seeds and then flowers (*Reuters, Feb. 16*).

### Energy Production

Company to Plant, Harvest and Produce High Quality Oil for BioDiesel and Other Applications with Non-Edible Castor Global Energy (OTCBB:GEYI) has announced that the company has successfully finalized the first stage of its agricultural activities – castor farming in Ethiopia. Global, in conjunction with its subsidiaries, Global NRG Pacific and Global Energy Ethiopia ("GEE"), is involved in a project to plant, harvest and produce non-edible oil for the biodiesel industry and a myriad of other uses. GEE expects to commence seeding of castor in April 2008 and harvest in August/September 2008. The expected yield of the harvest is 28,000 t of seeds producing approximately 12,000 t of castor oil. The current commodity price for castor ranges from \$700.00 to \$1100.00 per ton. During the past five months, GEE has developed an infrastructure for an agricultural cooperative, in the regions of Wolaita and Gamo Gofa. This includes, but is not limited to, signed agreements with over 25,000 families, to farm castor on approximately 7,500 ha of their land. GEE's operations centre is based in Sodo, Ethiopia, and includes a logistics centre, computer centre and a staff of company trained agricultural supervisors. The castor initiative is located in southern Ethiopia, approximately 320 km south of the capital of Addis Ababa and comprises land area totaling 220km by 110km (*Business Wire, March 27*).

### Drought, Flood, Famine and Food Aid

The Ministry of Health, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA), UNICEF and WFP declared in a joint statement that the condition of over 75,000 children is serious because of shortage of balanced food in Oromia and SNNPS. Root crops have not been available in SNNPS because of the absence of rain from October to December and the failure of the Belg rains in some zones and districts in Oromia State. DPPA Director-General Ato Simon Mechale stated the number of malnourished children below the age of five has reached 4.5 million (*Reporter, June 4*).

Deputy Prime Minister Addisu Legesse visited the flood accident site in Jijiga town, Somali State, and comforted the people affected by the flood. The chief of Somali regional state, Abdulahi Hassan, said so far, 29 people have been confirmed dead. The flood also destroyed 161 houses and washed away domestic animals. Abdulahi said two police members and 37 people who were on a rescue mission have sustained heavy injuries. The federal government, in collaboration with the regional government, will find ways to rehabilitate the more than 200 people and their families who have been affected by the disaster (*ETV, May 31*).

Some 3.2 million people are now in urgent need of food aid in Ethiopia because of the continued drought, up from 2.2 million just one month ago, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) warns that as many as 6 million children under the age of five are at risk of acute malnutrition (*UN News Service, May 19*).

Ethiopia's disaster response agency on April 18 appealed for US\$ 7.6m to help hundreds of thousands of flood-affected people in the country's southeastern Somali state. Sisay Tadesse, the head of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency, said a total of 362,000 people have been affected, of which 80 people have reportedly died and 122,500 are displaced. Residents in villages surrounding Kelafo and Mustahil towns, 80 and 150 km from Gode - the capital of the far-flung Somali state, are the most affected, after river Wabe Shabelle breached its banks (*AFP, April 19*).

Nearly 9 million people in Ethiopia's pastoral regions will need food aid this year despite a projected bumper harvest for 2007/08, a U.S.-funded research group said. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS Net) - funded by the aid wing of the U.S. government - said pastoralists in Ethiopia's Somali, Oromo and Gambella regions were the worst hit. The report said livestock prices and demand have declined especially for goats and cattle (*Reuters, March 11*).

The United Nations called for \$4m to help over one million people suffering drought in Ethiopia's Somali and Borena regions. The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the money was needed to fund water, sanitation, health, livestock and agriculture programs. - So far, Ethiopia's military has dispatched 23,156 t of food to five zones in the remote and arid Somali region, along the Horn of Africa nation's border with Somalia, the statement said. The UN is also seeking money to help fight water shortages for people and livestock in Borena, part of the Oromia region (*Reuters, March 5*).

### Other Issues

Land holding certificates were issued to some nine million farmers in four states in the country over the past three years, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) said. MoARD State Minister, Ahmed Nasser, said through his representative, that the government has been reforming rural land administration and use since 1997. The representative, Sileshi Getahun, said that some 30% of the households in the four states (Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and SNNP) where the reform has been implemented had obtained the certificates (*State media, June 2*).

The NGO Biruk Ethiopia has reportedly been carrying out a pack animals care project with 4.8m birr in North Gondar Zone of Amhara State. Amhara State Project Coordinator, Amsalu Bitew, said the project has been under implementation in nine districts of the zone. The project is making efforts to provide care for close to 160,000 pack animals out of the over 300,000 in the zone, Amsalu indicated (*WIC, March 16*).

## **- Social, Cultural and Political Aspects -**

### Elections

The inaugural conference of the Addis Ababa City Administrative Council elected Kuma Demekssa as Mayor, and Kefyalew Azeze as Deputy Mayor of the metropolis. The council appointed the same day Sinkinesh Atane as its Speaker, Elias Seid, as Deputy Speaker, and Negede Girma as Secretary. Ex-mayor Berhane Deressa ceremoniously handed over the key of the city to the incoming city mayor, Kuma Demekssa, in the presence of ministers and other prominent personalities (*ENA, May 20*).

The EPRDF has won 137 out of the 138 seats in the Addis Ababa City Council. CUDP led by Ato Ayele Chamiso won the one remaining seat in the council (*Reporter, April 20*). -The Head of the office of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), Tesfaye Mengesha, announced Wednesday the EPRDF had won all the 14 seats for Addis Ababa City Council. The opposition parties CUD, OFDM, ONC, UEDP-MEDHIN, AENM, EDU, OLNP and independent candidates had contested in the election, he added. Of the 586,571 registered voters in Addis Ababa, 415,091 cast their ballots (*WIC, April 23*).

Voting began throughout Ethiopia on Sunday with the exception of Somali State. By-election for Members of the House of Peoples' Representatives was to take place in some parts of the country and local elections in other parts. The by-elections for the Federal Parliament were held in Addis Ababa City Administration and local elections in Afar, Oromia, Tigray, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella States as well as Addis Ababa City Administration. Some

26 million eligible voters were expected to cast their votes all over the country (*State media, April 13*).

Ethiopia's largest opposition group said it would boycott this month's elections, claiming the ruling party has forced tens of thousands of candidates to drop out through intimidation, detentions and threats. "We are getting out of the whole process. The whole process is an illegal process," Beyene Petros, leader of the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces, a national coalition of opposition parties. - The Ethiopian government strongly denied the allegations. "That's simply baseless," said Bereket Simon, special adviser to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. "There is no harassment, that's why nobody can prove it. We haven't experienced that, and they haven't experienced it either. Both the opposition and the ruling party haven't experienced any intimidation." (*Associated Press, April 10*).

#### Internal Conflict in Ogaden

8 of the perpetrators of terror attacks by the self-proclaimed Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) committed last year against innocent civilians have been captured, the Joint Anti-terror Task Force of the National Intelligence and Security Service and the Federal Police said. The Task Force said that the apprehended persons were involved in the May 28, 2007 grenade attack in Jijiga and the atrocious massacre of Ethiopians and Chinese who were on duty at a petroleum exploration site in the Abule area (*ETV, March 30*).

The war in Ethiopia has been largely eclipsed by the humanitarian crisis in neighbouring Sudan's Darfur region, a report said. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that last year alone, hundreds of civilians were killed and thousands more were displaced from the homes as ethnic Somali rebels fight for autonomy for the Ogaden region. Part of the reason the crisis has received such little international media attention is that the battleground is remote and the Ethiopian government restricts access for humanitarian groups and journalists, the newspaper said (*UPI, March 23*).

309 police officers suspected of links with separatists rebels have been arrested in Ethiopia's restive Ogaden region as part of a government crackdown, regional police commissioner Yussuf Mohammed said (*state media, Feb. 18*).

#### Other Internal Conflicts

Residents and community leaders in western Ethiopia say thousands of people in several border regions have been displaced by Sudanese troops in recent weeks, following what they describe as a secret, illegal deal between the governments in Addis Ababa and Khartoum. Critics say the secret deal to demarcate the border gives Sudan the right to occupy areas Ethiopians historically consider sacrosanct. A former regional official in the southwestern Gambella region, Omod Oman Obono, tells that as many as 2,000 people have been displaced there in recent weeks in on-going clashes between residents and Sudanese soldiers (*VOA News, June 5*).

A bomb explosion in Ethiopia killed three people and injured five more at a hotel in the town of Negele in south-eastern Ethiopia. The attack happened as Ethiopians celebrated the anniversary of the overthrow of the former military government, known as the Derg. A Somali radio station reported that a Somali Islamic militant group had claimed responsibility (*BBC News, May 28*). - Ethiopian police said Thursday they had arrested suspects linked to this week's hotel bomb blasts that killed three people in the south of the country. Negele Borena is a small town located 595 km south of the capital Addis Ababa, in the Oromo region, where rebels have fought for years over claims of marginalization by the government (*AFP, May 29*). - A little-known Somali Islamist group claimed responsibility on Thursday for the bomb attack that killed three people (*AP, May 29*).

A member of parliament elected in Chilga District representing CUD, Captain Negussie Derso, has said farmers living near the Ethiopia-Sudan border are facing hardship and displacement. He said that on May 6, 2008, around 40 farmers in Jebel Sukar, Mertehad and Nefas Gebeya were abducted by Sudanese soldiers and that their whereabouts are not known. In late April, six people were killed in Metemma and the whereabouts of an unspecified number of people are not known. Captain Negussie added that 2,600 heads of family were displaced from Metemma, Quara and Chilga (*Negadras (May 30)*). - According to Captain Nigussie, Sudanese forces displaced Ethiopian soldiers and occupied 600 km of land. Ato Bekele Jirata, secretary-general of OFDM, said the conflict between members of the Oromo and Gumuz nationalities has spread to Gimbi. Ato Bekele expressed concern over the government's silence on the issue. The Gumuz and the Oromo lived for years as brothers with full respect for each other but they have been in conflict since May 17. According to Ato Bekele, several people are still being affected by the conflict. Three houses were burnt in Gimbi District, he said. The government should safeguard the security of the people, he added. So far, 130 persons have died and about 8,000 have been displaced, he said (*ABBI Weekly, May 30 to June 7*). Police sources admit that 60 people have died in the conflict. Sixty to 70 wounded persons received treatment at Nekempte Hospital. Several members of the Federal Police Commission have been deployed to the region (*Enbilta, May 30*).

A bomb blast killed five persons and inflicted serious and minor injuries on eight others, police disclosed. The bomb planted in a mini-bus taxi exploded at around 8 p.m. on Tuesday near the office of the Ethiopian Mapping Authority. According to the Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner there were 14 passengers in the taxi which was heading towards Mexico Square when the accident occurred (*ENA, May 21*). - The number of people killed in the minibus taxi blast was six - five men and one woman. Three dead bodies were found the same day, one body was discovered the next day in the nearby park. Two seriously injured people whose bodies were ripped died after arriving in hospital (*Enbilta, May 23*).

Clashes between Benishangul and Gumz and Oromo nationalities have so far claimed the lives of 120 persons. Several wounded persons are receiving medical treatment at Nekempte Hospital. A passenger bus was completely burnt and most of the passengers have died. There have been sporadic gun shots and tension in the area, sources said. The conflict was sparked by land use (*Goggle, May 23*).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said some mass media and irresponsible bodies have been disseminating groundless information by saying that the government has given a part of Ethiopia's territory to Sudan. - The government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has taken various measures to establish sustainable and reliable relations between the two governments and peoples. Accordingly, in 2001, the two governments set up a special committee responsible for finding solutions to problems regarding farmland and resettlement areas along the border of the two countries (*state media, May 11*).

Residents of Tach Armacheho in Gondar have protested against the demarcation line marked on the border between Sudan and Ethiopia. Ten days ago, a border task force comprising members of the Ethio-Sudanese Joint Border Commission had placed border demarcation rocks. But days later, the rocks were removed by residents in the area who have strong resentment against the border demarcation work, according to sources. The Sudanese government has also deployed some military forces near the border region between Ethiopia and Sudan (*Ethio-Channel, April 19*).

Three people were killed and 18 others injured in separate bomb blasts that occurred simultaneously on April 14 in areas locally known as Gerji and Lem Hotel, the Federal Security Forces Command Post said. The blast that set ablaze part of a depot in an area at the back of Imperial Hotel at 6:30 p.m. killed two people and caused heavy and light injuries on nine others, the Command Post said. The bomb blasts that occurred at the same time and damaged

another depot around Lem Hotel left one person dead and inflicted heavy and minor injuries on nine people (*State media, April 15*).

Clashes over grazing and farm land killed 18 people last week near the southern Ethiopian town of Wondo-Genet, police said. A police commander told the fighting on April 3 pitted members of the Guji Oromo and Sidama clans, some 260 km south of the capital Addis Ababa. "Clashes between the two clans have been brought under control and the government is investigating their cause," the public relations head of the Federal Police said (*Reuters, April 9*).

Ethiopian security forces arrested ten suspects in connection with the deadly bomb attack earlier this month at Ethiopia's northern Tigray region the police chief disclosed. All the arrested suspects are Ethiopians. The 10 suspects were hunted down after the joint efforts of regional police and residents in and around Humera town. The official strongly agrees that Eritrean agents are behind the attacks (*Sudan Tribune, April 2*).

There has been a deadly explosion in a bus on the disputed border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Ethiopian officials said at least seven people were killed and 10 wounded when the bus exploded in the Ethiopian-controlled town of Humera. The explosion took place on a crowded bus just as it was leaving the bus station at Humera at the western end of the Ethiopia-Eritrea border. Regional Vice-President Abadi Zemo said that he believed that Eritrea was behind the attack as it would have been easy on the Eritrean side to sneak across and cause the explosion. But contacted by the *BBC*, Eritrea's Information Minister Ali Abdu denied accusations that Eritrea was involved (*BBC News, March 13*).

Ato Bulcha Demeksa, OFDM chairman, has reiterated that only four OFDM members arrested in Agaro have been released after OFDM and UEDF issued a joint statement recently. There is no improvement, however, in 380 districts where OFDM intends to participate in the elections, he added. Ato Bulcha stated that OFDM leaders had a meeting recently with Ato Tesfaye Mengesha, head of NEBE, and Inspector Seifu Demissie regarding the arrests of OFDM members (*Soresa, Feb. 5*).

15 Sudanese and five Ethiopians were killed in clashes following attempts to demarcate the border near Abderafi on the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. The demarcation is being carried out through negotiations with representatives of both governments. A British border demarcation was assigned by the Sudanese side. The clashes occurred when Ethiopian elders raised the question who was assigned on the Ethiopian side (*Goggle, Feb. 29*).

### News about Culture and History

Minister of Culture and Tourism Ambassador Mohammed Dirir said the Ethiopian calendar draws great scholarly interest not only because it has outlived different challenges but also because it reflects the cultural values our heritage (*Radio Ethiopia, June 4*). - At a press conference, Professor Ephrem Yishak said the Ethiopian calendar is neither Julian nor Gregorian but is a computation of the months and days based on the Alexandria or Hellenistic Judeo-Christian calendar. He said only Ethiopia among all nations in the world has preserved this most ancient calendar (*ENA, June 2*).

The re-erection of the Axum obelisk which was returned from Italy will be completed by July 2008, the Authority for the Research and Conservation of Heritages announced. The Italian government will fully cover the budget for the re-erection which amounts to 4m USD (*ENA, April 7*).

A new book describing dozens of paintings in remote rock-hewn churches of Ethiopia was introduced by a Spanish art historian and a university lecturer, Maria-José Friedlander. The book entitled "Ethiopia's Hidden Treasures," describes the paintings, colour combinations, styles and wordings of the captions written beside the paintings. It focuses on the paintings found in the remote churches of Tigray, Gerahta and Tseäda Amba, Lalibela and Gondar. The 267-page book with six chapters also presents the history of the

Jesuit interlude in Ethiopia around 1622 during the reign of Emperor Susneyos who converted to Catholicism (*ENA, March 11*).

Nine ancient caves were discovered recently in Telo District, Keffa Zone of the South Ethiopia Peoples' State, the district information office said. Experts of the office uncovered the ancient caves in the area locally called 'Shimari' while trying to register relics in the district, an information expert in the office, Melese Woldie, told. Five of the newly discovered caves, which are located in a dense forest, are 40 m long, 25 m wide, and 3 m high, and can hold up to 600 persons at a time, the expert said. Ancient tools made of stone and ashes were also discovered inside the caves indicating human habitation. - The district has registered 37 ancient caves, he said. One of the ancient caves in the district is 44 m long, 40 m wide and 5 m high. A cornerstone was laid in the district for the construction of a museum around the cemetery of 13 prominent personalities of the Keffa dynasty (*ENA, Feb. 21*).

The third volume of Encyclopaedia Aethiopia was launched at the Ethiopian millennium celebration in Hamburg. Speaking at the launching ceremony, the founder and first director of the Addis Ababa Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Professor Richard Pankhurst, said this recent volume with over 1,200 pages is the heaviest of all the volumes and contains hundreds of articles written by over 200 authors from 28 countries. The Chief Editor, Professor Siegbert Uhlig, announced that the fourth volume will be completed in two years and the fifth will include a comprehensive index, supplementary articles and additional materials, he added. The Encyclopaedia Aethiopia is published by Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden (*WIC, Feb. 13*).

### Churches and Religion

Sources indicate that Abune Merkorios, former Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church who lives in exile in the U.S., would return to Addis Ababa for reconciliation. Abune Merkorios leads a Holy Synod in exile of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. He left the country after the overthrow of the Derg. Abune Merkorios is returning to Ethiopia following a recent agreement, the sources added. - Earlier, a group of elders, led by Professor Efreem Yishak had traveled to the U.S. to mediate between the rival church leaders. Patriarch Abune Merkorios resigned and fled to Kenya first and then the U.S. Abune Zena Markos, Abune Melkesedek, Abune Elias and Abune Yoseph also went into exile after him (*Enbilta, May 2*).

### Sports

The 16th African Athletics Championships featured some of the continent's premier track and field stars. The main stadium in Addis Ababa is packed with a highly partisan crowd for what is billed as Ethiopia's biggest-ever sports competition. The first day's hoped-for highlight failed to materialize when reigning Olympic champion Kenenisa Bekele did not appear for the 10,000 m race. But Ethiopian runners dominated the event, finishing one-two-three. Olympic hopeful Gebre Egziabher Gebre Marian took gold with a time of 28 min. 17 sec. The president of Mali's athletics federation, Idrissa Ba, is excited by the participation of 800 athletes from 42 African nations. He says this is an opportunity to show that Africa is more than just the continent of wars and famines that the rest of the world often sees (*VOA, May 1*). - Ethiopian athlete Meselech Melkamu picked the gold medal at the women's 5000m race. Ethiopian athlete, Gelete Burka won the 1500 m race (*State media, May 1*). - Gelete finished the distance in 4:08:25. Gelete has secured the 3rd gold medal for Ethiopia since the opening of the AAC. The former record of the championship, 4:11:75, had been held by Kenyan athlete, Jacqueline Maranga, in Dakar, Senegal, since 1998. Renowned Turunesh Dibaba took another gold in the women's 10,000m on Saturday followed by her sister Egiyayehu

Dibaba with silver. On Sunday, Kenenisa claimed the gold in the men's 10,000m. In the final overall results of the championship, South Africa ranked first with 22 medals, Nigeria second with 19 medals and Ethiopia third with 15 medals (*ETV, May 2*).

Ethiopia's athletics legend, Haile Gebr Selassie will build a five-star hotel in Awassa at a cost of over 200m birr. The new hotel is under construction on 40,000 sq. m. around Lake Hawassa, out of which the athlete leased 35,000 sq. m.. The four-storey hotel with the standard of Hilton International will have over 150 rooms and a yacht service (*Radio Ethiopia, April 22*). – In addition, Haile Gebr Selassie has announced that he would construct a five-star hotel on the shores of Lake Hora in Debre Zeit. The construction of a five-star hotel costs between 120 and 150m birr (*Reporter, April 23*).

Kenenisa Bekele set a new world record for the two miles at the Norwich Union Grand Prix in Birmingham. The Ethiopian took 0.34 off the mark of eight minutes 04.69 sec. run by countryman Haile Gebreselassie at the same National Indoor Arena in 2003 (*BBC, Feb. 17*).

### Foreign Relations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Ethiopia has decided to break diplomatic relations with the State of Qatar. The decision was taken after a long observation of Qatar's activities in the Horn of Africa, the Ministry said. Ethiopia has displayed considerable patience towards Qatar's attempts to destabilize the sub-region and, in particular, its hostile behaviour towards Ethiopia, the Ministry said. Qatar has now become a major source of instability in the Horn of Africa in a wider manner. This has gone beyond Qatar's strong ties with Eritrea. It has indeed provided direct and indirect assistance to terrorist organizations in Somalia and other areas. This has included the output of its media outlets. Qatar has become a source of support for armed opposition groups and their co-ordinators in neighbouring countries (*state media, April 21*).

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates has hailed Ethiopia for its contributions in the fight against international terrorism. The Bush Administration has given much focus to the international anti-terrorism fight in its 2009 budget. He said this would help strengthen the defense and security forces of countries that are America's allies in the fight against terrorism. He also cited Ethiopia's contribution in combating terrorism. Secretary Gates stated the current military assistance plan is to increase America's assistance to Ethiopia seven times (*ABBI-Weekly, March 14-20*).

### Other Social and Political Issues

The Ethiopian government is proposing a new law to restrict the activities of the NGOs in the country. The law will allow a government agency to assign a police officer or an official to attend any NGO's internal meetings without a court order. It will also authorise the seizing of property, conducting searches and removing NGO staff if their activities are believed to be unlawful. The law excludes international and non-Ethiopian organisations from democracy, human rights, good governance, and conflict resolution activities. - Known as Charities and Societies Proclamation, the law restricts local NGOs to source more than 90% of their funding from within the country. Observers have protested the development, saying the funding clause was unrealistic for a country dependent on high amount of foreign aid. Most NGOs depend on foreign aid, and local financing is negligible. The government has alleged some NGOs affiliated to international organizations operating in Ethiopia have a hidden agenda. - Minas Hiruy, the head and founder of Hope - a local orphanage - has asked the authorities to reconsider the move. "It's death penalty against us," Mr. Minas said. Five religious groups have also indicated they will be seeking audience with the authorities, saying the development would not only be limiting participation in

development activities, but will also threaten religious rights. - There are more than 3,000 NGOs covering various sectors in the country. They are estimated to be controlling more than \$1 billion (*Business Daily, May 15*).

The Awra Amba community in the Amhara regional state received this year's good will ambassador prize from the Interfaith Peace-building Initiative (IPI) for its role to build a just society, the initiative announced. PI said the community's rule which emphasizes on the motto: "Treat others the way you want to be treated" was acknowledged and thus designated a Golden Rule. The tribute was bestowed up on the community for the role in advocating good behaviour among the members of the community, IPI said in a statement. The Interfaith Peace-Building Initiative further indicated that the community played a significant role in building a consensus for peace and equality including good governance among its members who come from different cultures and religions. IPI is a peace building organization promoting the Golden Rule, interfaith harmony, a culture of peace, reconciliation, non-violence, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings. - Awra Amba is an Ethiopian community of about 400 people, located 62 km from Bahir Dar towards Debre Tabor. In Awra Amba commune men cook, women plow, and religion has no place (*Daily Monitor, April 17*).

Around three million babies born in Ethiopia each year were likely to join the millions facing discrimination in the East African country due to lack of official identification, according to UNICEF. "These children are deprived of their basic rights, and with no documentary evidence to prove how old they are or even who they are, they are likely to join the millions facing discrimination and the lack of access to basic services such as health and education," At present, Ethiopia has no system that enforces registration of births, deaths, marriage or divorce. "The provision of legal birth and marriage registration certificates is critical for the protection of young women from the deeply-rooted problem of early marriage and related problems of fistula," said Ubah Mohammed, State Minister in the Ministry on Women's Affairs (*Panapress, April 15*).

The government of Germany has donated 47 landmine detectors worth 100,000 Euro to Ethiopia in support of programs being undertaken in Afar, Somali and Tigray regions to clear landmines. The Ambassador of Germany to Ethiopia, Dr. Class Dieter Knoop, said last year, 7.5 million sq. m. of suspected hazardous areas were cleared of mines and handed over to the community (*ETV, March 13*).

The Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission has, through a court order, suspended land leases worth more than three billion birr obtained by co-operatives and individuals through what it described suspicious procedures in Addis Ababa. The director of the ethics education and public relations department in the commission told that the commission has been taking several measures beginning April 1999, with special focus on illegal land provision by the Addis Ababa Caretaker Administration (*ENA, Feb. 4*).

### **- Education -**

Education for All Program of the World Bank has decided to provide 70m USD to support Ethiopia's education sector. The results obtained in enrolling school age children to schools and directions set to improve education quality are believed to remarkably improve the education sector in Ethiopia. Accordingly, the Program would provide financial assistance over the coming three years, Joy Phumaphi, Vice President of Human Development at the World Bank said (*Reliefweb, March 26*).

The Ministry of Education's head of international and public relations services, Desalegn Samuel, said over the past 16 years, the primary enrolment coverage which had stood at a negligible 19% has leaped up to 91%, he indicated. 17 years ago, he said, the number of students nationwide had been 2,063,000 enrolled at 8,256 schools. Now, more than 14 million students are enrolled at

more than 21,000 primary schools. - The number of teachers has risen to 216,000 from only 68,000. Similarly, secondary education enrolment more than doubled from 453,000 to more than a million now, he said, adding the number of secondary school teachers also grew by more than two-fold to reach more than 23,000. In terms of academic higher learning, the number of students attending degree level education rose from only 2,000 to more than 56,000 students. The number of higher learning institutions also rose, excluding private establishments, to 21 from only two (*ETV, March 3*).

## - Health -

A study has revealed that mortality due to malaria in the country had declined by half in the past three years. The study was jointly carried out by the Ministry of Health, State Health Bureaus as well as pertinent institutions in SNNP, Oromia, Amhara and Tigray states. The study attributed the decline to the successful activities carried out in the country to prevent death due to the disease and to the concerted efforts of governmental and NGOs to train professionals and the provision of free medical treatment in malaria-prone areas (*Radio Ethiopia, June 4*).

*Save The Children* said in its annual report there are 11,317,000 children under five year old (84% of the total) without basic health care in Ethiopia, the fourth highest in the world. And in the 2008 Mother's Index rankings as the best and worst place to be a mom, Ethiopia ranks 137th. Ethiopia is ranked as among the 10 worst countries to be a mom. Ethiopia is at the bottom of the ranking in the Basic Health Care report card for children. 84% of children under 5 in Ethiopia do not get basic health care, the highest percentage of any country in the world.

The Ministry of Health said it would work out a strategy that would allow medical doctors working in government hospitals to use the hospitals' facilities and staff outside hospital hours and earn additional income. This is in a bid to decrease the number of medical doctors migrating to foreign countries in search of higher pay. Accordingly, medical doctors will get 60% of the income from services after 5:00 p.m. and the rest will be used for the hospital's running cost and for medical equipment. The system is expected to start after a month (*Addis Admas, May 3*).

Ethiopia's health coverage has reached 87% as the government has been giving special attention to states that had no access to health services, the Ministry of Health said. The head of the ministry's Public Relations Department, Ahmed Imano, said that the activities being carried out to build health institutions, provide drugs and assign professionals are fair and take into consideration the health coverage of all states. Special budgetary and health service support has been given to developing states, he said. According to Ahmed Imano, this budget year, 24,000 health extension workers were deployed to rural areas which had poor health coverage and lacked health professionals (*WIC, Feb. 19*).

The widespread use of state-of-the-art drugs and insecticide-treated mosquito nets has cut malaria deaths in half in Rwanda and Ethiopia, the two countries most heavily affected by the disease, the World Health Organization reported. The findings are the first to show a greater than 50% reduction in malaria mortality nationwide in "high burden" countries. Such dramatic reductions had been achieved previously only in smaller regions or in countries where the disease is less pervasive (*State media, Feb. 3*).

## - Human Rights -

### Freedom of Press

The draft press law, disputed on whether or not it discourages press freedom, was tabled to the House of Peoples' Representatives on May 8. Backed by the opposition party, United Ethiopian Democratic Party (UEDP-Medhin), the bill was sent to the Information and Cultural Affairs standing committee. The bill is expected to be back for endorsement by the House within the next 21 days after the standing committee organises public hearings. - This bill [mass media and information freedom] contains 51 articles which will govern the overall operations of mass media and information flow across the nation. The bill restricts access to various information including Council of Ministers documents, which haven't officially been made public. - The Ministry of Information is empowered to issue accreditation certificates to new national level media, whereas regional information bureaux will be in charge of those that target respective regional markets and audience. The existing media organizations are also expected to obtain certificates within ninety days after the law is published in the *Negarit Gazeta (Capital, May 11)*.

The Ministry of Information has provided licenses to two journalists who were released from jail recently to start publishing newspapers. Four freed journalists had applied for licenses to begin new newspapers. Ato Dawit Kebede, former editor-in-chief of *Hadar*, and Ato Wossenseged Gebre Kidan, former editor-in-chief of *Addis Zena*, obtained licenses to start newspapers called *Awramba Times* and *Harambe* respectively. Ato Sisay Agena and Ato Eskinder Nega did not, however, receive licenses (*Enbitta, Feb. 8*).

### Other Issues

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRC) said that extra-judicial killings, beatings, torture, wounding with weapons, imprisonment, threats, absence of justice, property destruction and robbery are being committed against citizens. It said 18 people were killed extra-judicially, 69 were beaten and tortured, 16 were wounded with military weapons, 302 people were illegally imprisoned, 5 people were threatened and one person was denied justice. Over 800,000 birr worth of property was destroyed and several houses were burned. The 32-page report indicated that the human rights violations were committed mostly by government security forces and that the situation is disconcerting (*Addis Admas, April 19*).

The U.S. Administration has criticized the Ethiopian government's handling and protection of human rights in Ethiopia. The U.S. State Department recently issued its annual human rights practices report in the world. The report outlines details regarding prison conditions, handling of inmates, freedom of the press and media, refugee handling and the judicial process in Ethiopia. The report says Ethiopia is one of the U.S allies in the fight against terrorism. Some members of Congress and Senate have put pressure to move forward with the adoption of HR-2003. However, U.S. Secretary of State says the Bush administration does not support HR-2003 (*ABBI-Weekly, March 14-20*).

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRC) stated in its latest report that 33 people were killed and 50 others wounded in clashes between government forces and the Gewada (Ale) nationalities in SNNPS. Nine policemen were also killed in the conflict. The conflict started after the nationalities' demand to be granted a special woreda status failed to get any satisfactory response. Members of the ethnic complained that they are being detained, expelled from work and that other retaliatory actions have been taken against them for having put forward their demand (*Addis Admas, March 1*).