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Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry was in Addis Ababa for further talks on Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam. The Minister met his counterpart, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, to discuss the construction and progress of the dam which has been at the centre of a crisis between Cairo and Addis Ababa for months. A breakthrough in talks between both countries seemed to have been reached when Egypt's Irrigation Minister Hossam El-Moghazi said last week that 85% of the issues concerning Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam had been resolved. Top officials from Egypt and Ethiopia were engaged in tripartite talks in Khartoum in late August. Ethiopia maintains that Egypt's water share will not be negatively affected by the successful completion of the project, set to be Africa's largest hydroelectric dam (*state media, Sep. 2*). - Egypt's foreign minister returned from the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa confident that the two countries would work together to protect Egypt's water rights as the construction of the Grand Renaissance Dam goes ahead. Sameh Shoukry said his Ethiopian counterpart showed understanding towards Egypt's concerns about the massive project. "The basis of our talks was built upon the recognition of Egypt's water rights and needs; those needs cannot be touched because they are related to the Egyptian people's life," said Shoukry, as quoted by Egypt's state news agency (*Zegabi, Sep. 6*).

Egyptian leaders will work in the upcoming year 2015 to increase Egypt's share of Nile water and that the government will not yield to external pressure to adjust shares, Minister of Agriculture Adel Al Beltagy said when asked about the Egyptian government's view of the Nile Renaissance Dam problem with Ethiopia. The Egyptian people will face major economic losses from the Ethiopian dam, which could reach up to 20 billion EGP annually, professor of agricultural resources at Cairo University, Nader Nour al-Din, told reporters (*Geeska Afrika Online, Sep. 7*).

The government has denied media reports that about 16 journalists and publishers of the free press have fled the country. It was earlier reported that 16 media people had fled the country following the summoning of six media institutions by the Ministry of Justice. Ato Shimelis Kemal, State Minister of Government Communications Affairs Office, said there were no journalists who fled the country because of harassment. He said those who fled did so to seek economic gains abroad and not because of harassment related to their work (*Addis Adams, Sep. 6*).

The 2013 survey released by anti-graft body, Transparency International, ranked Ethiopia the least corrupt nation in Africa. The survey, which was carried out in 95 countries worldwide indicated that Ethiopia is the least corrupt country in Africa with corruption levels standing at 6%. Rwanda ranked second at 13%. In East Africa, Uganda is the second most corrupt with 61% of the people having said they bribed public officials to access services in 2013 (*WIC, Sep. 3*).

Ethiopia has been registering 'substantial' economic progress with a stabilizing factor in the entire East African region, Parliamentary State Secretary of the German Economic Cooperation and Development, Thomas Silberhor, said. The strong political commitment and the broad based economic growth have brought a bright future for the country, he stated. Agreement has been finalized between the two countries for the extension of the existing development cooperation for the coming three years (*ENA, Sep. 4*).

Nyota Minerals Ltd said it has recently submitted renewal applications for both of its Northern Block licenses, and added that technical reports for the license and field work for the year just ended are being prepared. In addition, the company said it is continuing discussions with the Ethiopian Ministry for Mines (MoM) over the potential for its Towchester subsidiary to mine and treat the alluvial river gravel deposits adjacent to the Abay River, or Blue Nile, that bisects the Northern Block licenses. According to Nyota, the gravels are known to be gold-bearing and are being hand dug and panned for gold by local people at a number of localities within the licenses. Alluvial gold deposits in Ethiopia are usually reserved for exploitation by artisanal miners (*Alliance News, Sep. 3*).

As Ethiopia is constructing a multi-billion dollar dam project on the Nile among several power-generation projects, European partners are chipping in with an off-grid electrification project that aims to bring electricity to the country's rural areas. Hannes Utescher, head of GIZ Corporate communications in Ethiopia, said, falls under the Energizing Development Program – a joint global initiative by Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Australia, United Kingdom and Switzerland. The venture aims to help low-income households in off-grid areas gain sustainable access to modern energy services, which would also enable them to access education, communication and refrigeration among others, the GIZ official added. The program is being implemented in the rural areas of the Amhara, Tigray, Oromia and Southern Ethiopian Peoples regions (*Anadolu Agency, Sep. 7*).

As basic wages soar in China, low-end manufacturing is starting to shift to cheaper locations round the world, and frontier African nations such as Ethiopia are positioning themselves to reap the benefits. With rockbottom wages, cheap and stable electricity and improving transport infrastructure, the continent's most populous nation after Nigeria is building a reputation for producing clothes, shoes and other basic goods. The sector is still in its infancy. Bureaucracy and poor transport links mean business costs aren't quite as low as they might be (*Reuters, Sep. 5*).

Swedish fashion retailer H&M in partnership with Swedfund will help in development of a responsible textile industry in Ethiopia, with high social and environmental standards. H&M will contribute with its expertise of the textile market and adopting sustainable practices to its suppliers, in whose ventures Swedfund will invest in. On the other hand, Swedfund will provide local market expertise and capital to expand to H&M suppliers. The main objective of the partnership is to build a strong domestic industry, crucial for job creation in Ethiopia and ensure that added value from the textile industry will to a larger extent remain in the country. The cooperation which will start in autumn of 2014, will also involve both parties setting standards for sustainable production and follow-up indicators such as water use and wages. Swedfund owned by the Government of Sweden provides risk capital, expertise and financial support for investments in the emerging markets of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Together with its partners like H&M, Swedfund has invested in more than 220 companies during the 30 years of its existence (*Fiber2Fashion.com, Sep. 3*).

A four person Chinese business delegation led by Kong Xiangjun, Board Chairman of Giangsu Lianfa Textile Company Limited has disclosed that it has finalized pre-investment assessment to build a huge textile factory in Addis Ababa with over 500m USD. The textile industry will create more than 20,000 jobs when it goes (*Yarns&Fibers News (Sep. 3)* operational.

The Ministry of Agriculture said 251.5 million q agricultural output was harvested during the 2005/2006 production year. The Minister, Tefera Deribew, said agricultural productivity has been increasing by 5% every year. The output increased by 31.5% compared to production harvested in 2003, which was 191 million quintals. Harvest from one hectare of land increased to 20 q/ha from 17 q/ha in 2002 E.C. The priority given to small-scale irrigation development during the GTP period also bore fruit, he said, adding, 243 million q was harvested in 2006 E.C. currently, the size of land cultivated through small-scale irrigation reached over two million ha, exceeding the target by 200,000 ha. Regarding livestock development, priority has been given to improving health and cattle breed as well as fodder development, and meaningful results have been gained in this, the Minister said. The activities to improve animal health included successive vaccination services and the construction of vet clinics. These combined activities enabled the country to increase health coverage to 60% from 40% in 2003 E.C. (*State media, Sep. 1*).

The Yabelo-Mega road that connects Ethiopia and Kenya has been inaugurated and opened to traffic. Speaking at the inauguration, Ethiopia's Minister for Transport, Workneh Gebeyehu, said the road is one of several projects underway in the country aimed at linking Ethiopia with its neighbors through infrastructure. The President of the Oromia Regional State, Muktar Kedir, said the road plays a critical role in connecting different woredas of the Borena Zone and in enhancing health, education and other public services to the local communities. The Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) said the construction of the road lasted for over three years and cost the authority 740m Birr. The road was built by a Chinese company (*Addis Standard, Sep. 3*).

Ethiopia plans to launch medium research satellite within the next five years. The Entoto Observatory and Research Center (EORC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Finland based Space Technology and Science Group (STSG) to this effect. The main objective of the satellite development agreement is to develop, build and launch 20-25 Kg medium research satellite within the next five years. Director of EORC, Dr. Solomon Belay, said Ethiopia will benefit a lot by owning Satellite (*Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Sep. 1*).