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Kenya and Ethiopia reaffirmed their commitment to work closely in tackling terrorism, piracy, human trafficking and other organized crimes that continue to pose a challenge to security and peace in the region. In a communiqué issued after holding bilateral talks with visiting Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn in Nairobi, President Mwai Kibaki said the two governments are also working together to eradicate any form of threats to stability of the region and the Horn of Africa. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to safeguarding security, common values and other fundamental interests of the region and reaffirmed their resolve to jointly address the other challenges to peace and stability in the region, including drought and climate change, terrorism, piracy, human and drug trafficking, as well as other organized crimes. The Ethiopian PM arrived in Nairobi for a 2-day visit aimed at boosting ties between the two countries (WIC, Nov. 22).

Members of the Ethiopian public diplomacy delegation drawn from various sections of the society will travel to Egypt to explain that the construction of the Hidasse Dam on the Nile is beneficial and not harmful to Egypt. The members will explain that far from straining bilateral relations, the dam would help further strengthen Ethio-Egyptian relations and raise it to a new level. The members include university scholars, prominent personalities, media representatives, religious leaders and men of the arts. The members have received briefings from Acting Foreign Minister, Berhane Gebre Kristos. Members of the delegation include Ato Berhane Deressa, Professor Bahru Zewdie, Dr. Yacob Arsano, Laureate Tibebe Yemane Berhan, Ato Amare Aregawi, Ato Wubishet Workalemahu, Woizerit Hayat Ahmed, Ato Mushe Semu, Dr. Ashebir Wolde Giorgis and Dr Lapisso Delebo (Reporter, Nov. 17).

Ethiopia's Federal Supreme Court has postponed hearing an appeal of the conviction of prominent Ethiopian journalist Eskinder Nega and opposition leader Andualem Arage. But the court gave its first indication that charges brought by prosecutors under the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation may not be that strong by demanding that prosecutors justify the June convictions. Journalist Eskinder Nega received an 18-year sentence, while opposition politician Andualem Arage is serving life in prison on terrorism-related charges. Andualem's lawyer, Abebe Guta, said the court has found many irregularities in the prosecution's charges (VOA, Nov. 22).

The number of Somalia refugees sheltered at Ethiopia's Dollo Ado refugee camp has hit a record high of 170,000 making it the world's second largest refugee complex, according to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR). The number of new arrivals to Dollo Ado have seen a decline, however, the newest camp located in Ethiopia's South East has continued to receiving new arrivals. Since the beginning of this year, over 60,000 Somalis have fled into neighboring countries, including 25,000 to Ethiopia - making the Horn of Africa nation the largest recipient of Somali refugees in the region so far this year (Sudan Tribune, Nov. 19).

Ethiopia earned close to 700m USD from various products exported in the first quarter of this Ethiopian budget year, according to the Ministry of Trade (MoT). The ministry's

Deputy Head of Public Relations, Abdurahman Seid, said the nation managed to attain 66% of its target in the first quarter mainly due to coffee price fluctuation and overcrowding at port. Ethiopia earned over 752 million USD in the first quarter of last budget year (WIC, Nov. 20).

Ethiopia earned over 39m USD from conference tourism last Ethiopian budget year, according to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT). The ministry's International and Public Relations Director, Awoke Tenaw, told the revenue was secured from the local, continental and international conferences the country hosted in the reported period. Last year, some 49,685 participants attended the conferences held in the country with the majority held in Addis Ababa. According to Awoke, conference participants stay in Ethiopia for 6 days and spend 121 USD per day on average for accommodation, shopping and other services. There are 426 tourist friendly hotels in the country, he added. Efforts are underway to expand conference tourism to regional towns such as Adama, Bahirdar, Hawassa and Bishoftu to boost Ethiopia's income from the sector (WIC, Nov. 21).

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) launched on Nov. 17, 2012 a new five-year project called "Livestock Market Development" in support of the Government of Ethiopia's Agricultural Growth Plan (AGP). The project, valued at 38m USD, will operate in selected districts in Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and SNNP regions, according to a statement issued by the US Embassy in Addis Ababa. Through investments in livestock markets including beef, dairy, and hides, the project is expected to improve smallholder farmers' income and nutritional status, generate 2,600 new on and off farm jobs, and improve the livelihoods of some 200,000 households (WIC, Nov. 19).