

CONCRETE OUTCOMES FOR A SHORT-TERM COOPERATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND ETHIOPIA

Report of the visit in France of a delegation of the House of Peoples Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia by the friendship group France - Horn of Africa region of the French Senate

8 au 14 juillet 2014

From July 8-14, 2014 an Ethiopian delegation of the House of people Representatives composed of 5 members from the Franco-Ethiopian friendship group, led by Mr. Bashir Ali Mahdi, President of the Franco-Ethiopian friendship group, has paid official visit to France upon invitation by its French Senate counterpart, who visited Ethiopia twice over the past years.

The goal of the visit was to strengthen the people to people relationship in addition to the traditional good diplomatic relations and translate those ties into mutual economic and development partnership.

Composition of the Ethiopian delegation

1. **M. Bashir ALI MAHDI**, head of allied parties in the House of people Representatives and Chairman of Franco-Ethiopian Friendship group Constituency; Somali Regional State, Jijiga Town
2. **M. Getachew MELESE**, Chairman of Science and Technology Standing Committee, Deputy Chairman of Franco-Ethiopian friendship group, Constituency: Amhara Regional State, Gojjam
3. **M. Mohammed YUSUF**, Chairman of pastoralists affairs standing committee, member of franco-ethiopian friendship group, Constituency: Dire Dawa city administrative council.
4. **M. Adinew TESFAYE**, member of Culture and Tourism Standing committee and member of Franco-ethiopian friendship group, Constituency: Southern nations and nationalities regional state, Arbaminch Zone
5. **Mme Marta LUWIGI**, Advisor at the House of people Representatives.



Ethiopian delegation and senators of the friendship group France-Ethiopia after the interparliamentary dinner offered by the French Senate

The delegation was warmly welcomed by senators upon arrivals and held various productive discussions with senators, deputies, officials from ministry of foreign affairs, big business enterprises, regional and municipal officials.

The delegation held talks among others with :

- Hon.Senator Mr Louis Duvernois, President of the friendship group France - Horn of Africa region of the French Senate ;

- Hon. Senator Mrs Christiane Kammermann, vice-president of the friendship group ;
- Hon. Senator Mr Pierre-Yves Collombat, President of Franco-Ethiopian friendship group ;
- Hon. Senator Mr François Trucy, member of Franco-Ethiopian friendship group ;
- Hon. Mrs. Virginie Duby-Muller, President of Franco-Ethiopian friendship of the French National Assembly ;
- His Excellency Mr Christophe Belliard (and his colleagues), Director of Africa department of the ministry of foreign affairs ;
- Hon.Senator Mr Michel Teston and Mr Jean-Jacques Filleul, members of the Sustainable Development Standing Committee of the Senate ;
- Some French Multinational Companies (Aéroport de Paris, RATP Dev) as well as regional and municipal officials.

In addition to those talks the delegation observed certain innovative water treatment and water channel management society in Var (Société du Canal de Provence), region in the south of the country, that are simple and affordable technically and financially. Finally the delegation was invited by H.E Mr. François Hollande President of the Republic to attend the celebration of July 14th Festival and National Parade (Bastille Day) and subsequent reception at diplomatic garden with international diplomatic core and dignitaries.



Ethiopian delegation with M. Pierre-Yves Collombat (au centre) during the visit of « La Société du Canal de Provence » (Tholonet, Var)

On the other hand, French companies showed keen interests to participate in various sectors such as energy, infrastructure building such as railway lines

and airports as well as integrated urban infrastructure developments where they have world class experiences and technical competences as global companies doing business all over the world. Ethiopian delegation welcomed their expression of interests and urged them to come and make use of these existing opportunities.

1- Core agendas and discussed outcomes

The French senators welcomed the delegation and highlighted the historical good diplomatic ties between the two countries adding the need for enhancing that relationship for the mutual benefits of both peoples and desire to see that relationships further enhanced in business, investment, and culture and security cooperation.

They have recognized the role Ethiopia is playing in keeping peace and security in the volatile region of Horn of Africa by commending the mediation role in south Sudan and in its efforts to defeat extremism and terrorism. French officials pointed out the importance of enhancing the people to people relationship such as sisterization of French cities and towns with Ethiopian twin towns and cities. They also praised the political stability and economic growth in Ethiopia adding that such stability and sustained economic growth are of paramount importance for the whole region.

The Ethiopian delegation has on its part underlined the significance of multifaceted bilateral relations between the two countries and saluted the French soldiers who are paying ultimate life sacrifice in Mali and Central African Republic to avert humanitarian catastrophe and defeat Jihadists enemies. The delegation assured to French friends that Ethiopia will continue its efforts to make peace and fight terrorists in the region in all its forms. The delegation explained to the French legislators about Ethiopia's position on the Great Renaissance Dam.

Furthermore, the Ethiopian delegation noted that Ethiopia with a population of 90 million which enjoys successive and sustained double digit growth, offers huge investment opportunities for foreign investors in many sectors characterized by : political stability, stable macroeconomic situation, cheap skilled labor forces, constitutionally

guaranteed property rights, ever improving infrastructure, ever increasing domestic market, dynamic investment code which is periodically updated to meet the demands of the investors, energy security and various incentives including tax holidays and duty free importation of equipment and others.

II. Concrete outcomes for short term cooperation

Six concrete outcomes for a short term cooperation can be listed :

1. To study or further investigate why French traders are not buying flowers directly from Ethiopia. It came up during the discussions that French households purchase rose flowers originating from Ethiopia from Dutch traders after it loses freshness. The Ethiopian ambassador was instructed to have discussion with flower importers if there are obstacles need to be eliminated.
2. The delegation requested the French legislators to help Ethiopian Airlines increase its flights to Paris from five days to seven days believing it can facilitate business ties between the two countries specially flower exports while French legislators responded positively and prompting by writing letter of inquiry to relevant authorities.
3. Capacity building for Ethiopian Parliament and its supporting staff in coming years-by giving training opportunities organized by the prestigious French School of National Administration (ENA) for two persons every year to help improve legislative process and support service delivery.
4. Increase and strengthen the existing sisterization or twining of French and Ethiopian cities and towns to promote people to people direct relationships
5. To seek French assistances in water governance, water protection and urban water supply especially in devising comprehensive water policy (regime) through French Development Agency and French Embassy in Addis Ababa
6. And to strengthen the already started French language teaching at Ethiopian pilot schools with the assumption to scale up later on seeing the success of those pilot schools while the objective of this initiative is more cultural and civilization exchange for global competitiveness.



Ethiopian delegation visiting innovative water treatment in Ampus (Var) with M. Pierre-Yves Collombat and the mayor of the village

III. Conclusions

All the discussions went on in friendly atmosphere and spirit of mutual understanding. Both parties took common positions on all agendas underlining that the interests of the two countries are not contradicting but rather reinforcing each other. The two parties underscored the importance of advancing their strategic partnership particularly in maintaining of peace and security in the region and to defeat terrorism.

The delegation was escorted by senators wherever they went and welcomed warmly with Ethiopian flag raised alongside French flag. The delegation came back being inspired, learned and delighted by the friendly treatments they found on the ground and the tangible and useful outcome of the talks.



Ethiopian delegation with Mrs Christiane Kammermann (on the left side) for the National Fest of July 14th on the Champs-Élysées

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The friendship group France - Horn of Africa region of the French Senate subscribes completely to the axes of cooperation retained by the Ethiopian delegation.

In narrow relation with the embassy of France to Addis Abebba, it will do its best to contribute, as far as possible, to the full success of the projects of cooperation committed during this fruitful and friendly visit.

Composition of the French delegation



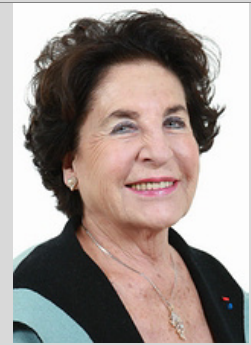
M. Louis DUVERNOIS
Président du groupe
Sénateur des Français établis
hors de France (UMP)



M. Pierre-Yves COLLOMBAT
Président délégué pour
l'Éthiopie
Sénateur du Var (RDSE)



M. François TRUCY
Vice-président du groupe
Sénateur du Var (UMP)



Mme Christiane KAMMERMANN
Vice-présidente du groupe
Sénateur des Français
établis hors de France (UMP)

Composition of the friendship group of the Senate : http://www.senat.fr/groupe-interparlementaire-amitie/ami_588.html

Composition of the Ethiopian delegation



M. Bashir ALMAHDI
Chairman of Franco-
Ethiopian Friendship group
Somali Regional State, Jijiga
Town



M. Getachew MELESE
Deputy Chairman of the
friendship group
Amhara Regional State,
Gojjam



M. Mohammed YUSUF
Member of the friendship group
Dire Dawa city administrative
council



M. Adinew TESFAYE
Member of the friendship group
Southern nations and
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Arbaminch Zone

House of Peoples Representatives Website : <http://www.hopr.gov.et/web/guest/home>