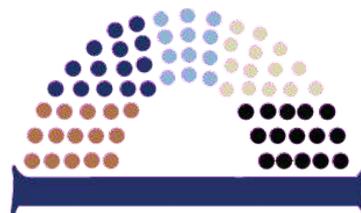




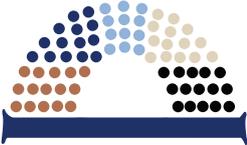
**ETHIOPIAN
PARLIAMENTARY DIGEST**



ENDERASIE

**ENDERASIE IS A PARLIAMENTARY MONTHLY
DIGEST ISSUED BY BRIDGE RESEARCH AND
INNOVATION.**





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BRIDGE Profile

Bridge Research and Innovation for Democratic Governance and Enhanced Peace (BRIDGE) is an independent, non-profit think tank based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Registered under the FDRE Civil Society Organization Proclamation No. 1113/2019, which specializes in parliamentary affairs, peace, and development in the IGAD region.



Mission

To advance democratic governance and enhance peace through evidence-based research and innovative policy analysis.



Vision

To be a leading research hub and trusted source of analysis on parliamentary affairs, peace, governance, and development in the IGAD region.



Core Values

- Rigor: Delivering high-quality, evidence-driven research.
- Innovation: Pioneering creative and adaptive solutions for governance and peace challenges.
- Trust: Upholding credibility through transparent and reliable analysis



Objectives

It aims to strengthen legislative institutions in federal and local parliaments in Ethiopia and the IGAD region by:

- Conducting evidence-based research.
- Providing capacity-building support to enhance the performance of parliamentarians.
- Monitoring parliamentary activities to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

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ETHIOPIAN REPRESENTATIVES IN NOVEMBER

The House of Peoples' Representatives of Ethiopia has carried out its various constitutional responsibilities during the month of November. Among these primary responsibilities, the major activities of the House for the month include lawmaking, hearing reports from executive bodies, visiting federal institutions, representation work, and parliamentary diplomacy. Additionally, while the House reviewed its own three-month performance and provided capacity-building training for its representatives, it also commemorated November 29, which is believed to be the great day on which the FDRE Constitution was ratified. This tenth edition of Bridge includes these monthly activities of the House, along with a brief survey regarding the day that proclaims the sovereignty of nations, nationalities, and peoples, as well as related topics beyond the day itself.

1. 6TH HOUSE OF PEOPLES' REPRESENTATIVES 5TH YEAR TENURE

Session	Date	Agendas
3 rd Regular Meeting	November 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Ratifying the draft proclamation to amend the Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration and Election Code of Conduct Proclamation No. 1397/2018;* Approving appointments;* * Ratifying various loan agreements;

2. LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE HOUSE

The House of Peoples' Representatives, during the month of November, ratified one draft amendment proclamation and referred four draft proclamations to the relevant standing committee.

2.1 RATIFIED LAW

The only law ratified by the House of Peoples' Representatives during the month of November was the draft amendment proclamation presented regarding **Ethiopian political parties**. Although this proclamation had previously been ratified in July, the House approved the amendment following a grievance submitted by the Joint House of Ethiopian Political Parties. According to information from the House, it was indicated that the amended proclamation will resolve grievances raised by political parties in connection with candidate registration and answer their questions, thereby creating conducive conditions for the seventh round of general elections. The Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives, Honorable Tadesse Chafo, in the explanation he presented regarding the amendment proclamation, noted the importance of ensuring the right to participate equally and freely in comprehensive elections held at every level. In this regard, it was reported that he further reminded

that the Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration and Election Code of Conduct Proclamation has been ratified and is being implemented.

According to this proclamation, it is stipulated that political parties must provide support signatures for each candidate they present for the House of Peoples' Representatives and Regional Houses. However, the Speaker reminded that the requirement for support signatures had been suspended during the sixth round of national elections due to the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the requirement for support signatures had been ratified with an amendment to be implemented in the seventh round of national elections, Honorable Tadesse noted during that regular meeting of the House that political parties had expressed they would face difficulties in collecting support signatures because there are many tasks to be performed from the pre-election preparation stage until the time the election is held, and there is insufficient time.



The Honorable Speaker Tadesse Chafo, during the discussion

According to the Speaker's explanation, in order to create conducive conditions for political parties to participate in the seventh round of national elections, the article stipulated regarding support signatures has been amended. He stated that according to the amended proclamation, political parties participating in the seventh round of national elections will not collect support signatures for candidates. He also explained that the removal of the requirement for political parties to collect support signatures for candidates, which had been set in an article of the proclamation, will enable the conduct of an inclusive and democratic election. It was stated that this proclamation renders Article 32(2) of the previously ratified Proclamation No. 1162/2014 and the newly added sub-article 8 null and void. The report of the House mentioned that the representatives supported the amendment proclamation, stating it is an appropriate and correct amendment as it was prepared with the intention of benefiting the country. The representatives ratified

this draft amendment proclamation as Proclamation No. 1397/2018 with a unanimous vote.

2.2 DRAFT LAWS

During one of its regular sessions held in November, the month covered by our report, the House of Peoples' Representatives referred four draft proclamations to the relevant standing committee.

The first draft proclamation considered by the House was **the agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Government of the People's Republic of China**. Explaining the necessity of the draft proclamation, the Government Whip in the House of Peoples' Representatives, Honorable Dr. Tesfaye Beljige, explained to the representatives that as the comprehensive relations between the two countries continue to grow, the agreement includes obligations for extradition and the prevention of attempts by citizens to commit crimes and hide in either country. The representatives, designating it as Draft Proclamation No. 1/2018, referred it to the Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee for detailed review.

On the same day, the other draft proclamation the House chose to consider was **the agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons between the governments of Ethiopia and China**. Honorable Dr. Tesfaye Beljige also provided the explanation for this

draft proclamation; he stated that the draft proclamation helps sentenced persons of the two countries to be transferred to their respective countries to complete their prison terms and reintegrate into their societies as productive citizens. The representatives, designating the draft as Proclamation No. 2/2018, referred it to the Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee.



The Honorable Dr. Tesfaye Beljige, Government Whip at the House of Peoples' Representatives, while explaining the necessity of the draft proclamations

In the regular meeting of the House held on November 25, the other draft proclamation referred by the representatives to the Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee was **the agreement between the governments of Ethiopia and Brazil** regarding the transfer of sentenced persons. While referring this draft to the standing committee for detailed review as Proclamation No. 3/2018, information obtained from the House shows that it similarly referred the draft proclamation of the extradition agreement for persons wanted for criminal matters, concluded between the

governments of Ethiopia and the Republic of South Africa, to the same Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee as Proclamation No. 4/2018.

2.3 EXPLANATORY FORUMS

The primary explanatory forum conducted by the Ethiopian representatives in November, in terms of periodically, was regarding the draft proclamation prepared concerning **Payments for Ecosystem Services**. At this explanatory forum, the Madam Chair of the Water, Irrigation, Lowland, and Environment Development Affairs Standing Committee of the House, Honorable Mrs. Fetiya Ahmed, urged that since the proclamation is new and transcends sub-economic sectors, the institution must work on expanding awareness to economic sectors at every level down to the regions. The Madam Chair further suggested that a platform should be prepared to prevent conflict between entities that benefit from the ecosystem and those that do not. On his part, the Deputy Chairperson of the Plan, Budget, and Finance Affairs Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Abraham Alemayehu, stated that beyond caring for and preserving the environment, the proclamation has high economic significance, and noted that establishing such systems that are beneficial to the country is an encouraging action.

The Director General of the Environmental Protection Authority, Engineer Lelise Neme, explained that the proclamation helps in giving focus to the country's current green development journey

as well as environmental protection works, according to the information from the House. The Director General, who stated that establishing the system helps us gain additional economic benefits from the international Climate Change Fund, added that it will have great significance in encouraging sustainable economic growth.

Two weeks later, at another forum held regarding the same draft proclamation, the Deputy Chairperson of the Water, Irrigation, Lowland, and Environment Development Affairs Standing Committee of the House, Honorable Dr. Awoke Amzaye, stated that the draft proclamation helps in properly utilizing the country's ecosystem resources. Additionally, the Deputy Chairperson cautioned that since the provision related to the payment system is set in general terms, it needs to be stated clearly so that it does not create challenges during implementation. The Chairperson of the Plan, Budget, and Finance Affairs Standing Committee of the House, Honorable Desalegn Wedaje, for his part, urged that corrections are needed regarding definitions and the scope of application and that ambiguous expressions should be adjusted, according to the information.

The Honorable Mrs. Fetiya Ahmed, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Water, Irrigation, Lowland, and Environmental Development Affairs in the House of Peoples' Representatives, at the explanatory forum

The second explanatory forum, held on November 27, 2025, was regarding the **Plant Protection and Quarantine draft proclamation**; the forum was conducted by the Agriculture Affairs Standing Committee of the House of Representatives. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Solomon Lale, was heard stating that in view of the current era's stage and the damage occurring to plants and biodiversity, it became necessary to issue this proclamation because the previous legal framework was unable to function. Furthermore, the Chairperson, who stated that to transform the agricultural sector and ensure food security, it is necessary to prevent plant pests that spoil produce, noted that the draft proclamation would have high significance in implementing this. The State Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Meles Mekonnen, on his part, stated that the draft proclamation's significance is prominent in increasing the type, volume, and quality of exported products and ensuring their safety, according to the report of the House.





*The Honorable Solomon Lale, Chairperson of the Standing Committee
on Agricultural Affairs in the House of Peoples' Representatives*



3. OVERSIGHT OF EXECUTIVE BODIES

The representatives of the FDRE House of Peoples' Representatives consider the oversight of executive institutions to be one of their primary tasks. In this regard, during the month of November covered in this edition, they heard the reports of fifteen executive institutions. Additionally, moving outside the House, they conducted numerous field visits to personally observe various institutions through their respective committees.

3.1 INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

During the month of November, various federal government institutions presented their 2018 first-quarter performance reports to the various standing committees of the House to which they are accountable. Additionally, the House heard feedback regarding the performance of certain institutions.

At the beginning of the month, **the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs** presented its three-month performance for the budget year. The Minister, Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye, submitted her institution's report to the Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sports Affairs Standing Committee of the House. The Minister stated that work has been done to increase the participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, adding that it was possible to bolster economic benefits by creating job opportunities for women

and youth. Dr. Ergogie further noted that to ensure the economic and social benefits of women and children, the Ministry has worked in collaboration with various local and international organizations by preparing operational frameworks and documents to facilitate reform activities and strengthening coordinated systems. Through these supports, it was possible to benefit vulnerable sections of society. The Minister mentioned that the monitoring and support provided by the standing committee build capacity for the Ministry. She also stated that since addiction recovery centers are limited relative to the scale of the problem nationally, all partner entities should consider the community's problem as their own and work towards expanding such centers. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Tadele Buraka, for his part, noted that beyond making credit services available to ensure the economic benefit of women, the efforts made to ensure land ownership for women in rural areas are viewed as a significant strength, according to information obtained from the House.



Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, while presenting her report

At the beginning of that same month of November, **the Ministry of Culture and Sport** was called to present its three-month report, and the institution's report was heard by the Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs Standing Committee. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Tadele Buraka, noted as a strength that the institution's average quarterly plan performance stood at 99.3 percent. Regarding the activities performed by the Ministry in the social sector during the quarter, he urged that legal frameworks regarding the participation and benefit of persons with disabilities, the elderly, vulnerable women, and children should be ratified and put into operation. The Chairperson added that beyond preventing illegal human trafficking, the rehabilitative psychological and social service support for returnee citizens must continue in a strengthened manner.

The Minister of Culture and Sport, Honorable Mrs. Shewit Shanka, stated in her report that this was the year Ethiopia went beyond becoming a member of the African Cultural Sport to securing a Vice Presidency position. Additionally, she noted that because the Ministry is working with focus on promoting Ethiopian culture, the flow of foreign tourists is increasing; she further explained to the members of the standing committee that they have begun the work of taking and promoting Ethiopian culture abroad.



The Honorable Mrs. Shewit Shanka, Minister of Culture and Sports, while presenting her report

On the third day of November, the federal institution called to present the report for this fiscal quarter was **the Ministry of Health**, and the Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs Standing Committee of the House heard the report. Presenting the report, the Minister, Dr. Mekdes Daba, was heard stating that her Ministry was able to execute 89 percent of the activities it planned to work on in the first quarter of 2018. The Minister stated that through the work done in the quarter to improve maternal reproductive health, it was possible to increase the number of mothers nationwide receiving follow-up at health institutions from the previous 37 percent to 41 percent. Mentioning that it was possible to reduce deaths resulting from cholera and measles outbreaks through the work done to control them, the Minister reportedly stated that 63 million citizens have benefited from community-based health insurance coverage.

The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Tadele Buraka, suggested that

coordinated work with relevant institutions to prevent non-communicable diseases must be strengthened; regarding audit findings, he urged that the Ministry should follow up and report the results by December 30, 2018.



Dr. Mekdes Daba, Minister of the Ministry of Health, at the time she presented her report

The other report presenter of the month was **the Ministry of Agriculture**, and the information noted that it was the Minister, Addisu Arega, who presented the report of the Ministry and its accountable institutions. Minister Addisu indicated in his report that work to modernize livestock resource development is being carried out by widely involving youth and investors in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, he explained to the Agriculture Affairs Standing Committee of the House that treating acidic soil to make it productive was one of the core plans held for the budget year. The Chairperson of the Agriculture Affairs Standing Committee, Honorable Solomon Lale, for his part, stated that transforming the agricultural sector is a fundamental issue for prospering Ethiopia and noted that it is necessary to utilize agricultural mechanization. The Chairperson

added that to achieve agricultural transformation, fertilizers and improved seed inputs must be adequately supplied; he further suggested the need to modernize data management to determine the ratio of land suitable for farming and to analyze the amount of land currently being cultivated to properly utilize the natural resources of each region. Not stopping there, the Chairperson urged that as the agricultural sector is the source of the country's domestic and foreign trade revenue, efforts to increase the production of coffee and spices should focus not only on quantity but also on quality to enhance its preference in the global market. Information shows that other members of the standing committee noted that although the performance regarding farmland, cluster mechanization, and the Bounty of the Basket initiative was better during the quarter, it still requires focused work relative to national demand.



Addisu Arega, Minister of Agriculture, while presenting his institution's quarterly report

The Ethiopian Investment Holdings was told it must strengthen its contribution to the country's

economic growth during another executive oversight event where the institution presented its quarterly performance report. The Chairperson of the Government Development Organizations Affairs Standing Committee, Honorable Melesse Mena, urged that as a government development organization representing the hopes of citizens, it must deliver the expected results. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Engineer Sileshi Kore, stated that the institution is growing itself in accordance with the reform and indicated the need to work effectively in terms of profitability and accessibility. While members of the standing committee raised various questions, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the institution, Mr. Habtamu Hailemichael, reportedly stated that although the organizations are established for profit, the expected profit for the services they provide is being managed in a way that aligns with the macro-economic reform and considers their expenses. He further requested the standing committee members to provide the necessary financial support for development organizations that have recorded low performance.



*The Honorable Melesse Mena, Chairperson of the Standing Committee
on State-Owned Development Enterprises Affairs*

On November 15, the **Ministry of Education** presented its three-month performance for the year to the Human Resource Development, Employment, and Technology Affairs Standing Committee. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Dr. Negeri Lencho, stated that promising results are beginning to be seen in the Ministry's efforts to improve the quality of education. Dr. Negeri also suggested that the Ministry should work closely with partner entities to make inputs, education quality, and standards equitable to improve the disparity in educational quality seen between government and private schools. The Minister of Education, Prof. Berhanu Nega, explained that to solve the problem of education quality, an incentive system should be implemented based on the results teachers achieve after being trained in their respective teaching fields in accordance with the educational reform. Regarding input supply, the Professor noted in his report that more than 105 million dollars was spent on the implementation of the new educational system for secondary schools, and 68.2 million textbooks were printed and distributed on a one-to-one ratio; he also stated that work is being done in collaboration with regions to solve the textbook supply problem for primary and pre-primary students.



The Honorable Dr. Negeri Lencho, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, Employment, and Technology Affairs

In this same month, like all other institutions, **the Ministry of Industry** was called to present its quarterly report; the Chairperson of the Industry and Mining Affairs Standing Committee of the House, Dr. Amarech Bekalo, stated that the office is performing major tasks and gave a reminder that the nature of the industrial sector is not something to be worked on by a single institution but requires the integration of other institutions. The Chairperson explained that to increase leather production in a modern way, sophisticated technology that matches the era is needed. The Minister of Industry, Honorable Melaku Alebel, stated that his institution has achieved good results by modernizing Information Communication and Technology operations. The Minister further explained that regarding the increase of input supply for the manufacturing industry sector in the first quarter of the budget year, the plans for textiles,

leather, food and beverage, chemicals, and construction were performed one hundred percent.



The Honorable Melaku Alebel, Minister of the Ministry of Industry, at the time he presented his report

On November 18 information shows it was the turn of **the Ministry of Innovation and Technology** to present its institutional report to the Human Resource Development, Employment, and Technology Affairs Standing Committee of the House. Describing the Ministry as an institution that supports other sectors, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Negeri Lencho, explained that an operational system enabling coordinated work with other institutions should be designed. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Dr. Bethlehem Lakew, was noted as stating that the primary goal of innovation and technology is to increase production and productivity by utilizing new discoveries and technological results.



The Honorable Dr. Negeri Lencho, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, Employment, and Technology Affairs, and the Honorable Dr. Bethlehem Lakew, the Deputy Chairperson, during the report

Another monthly activity of the representatives' institutional oversight was the announcement that 376,615 tourists visited the country, exceeding the planned target of 250,000 foreign tourist arrivals for the quarter. It was reported that **the Ministry of Tourism** presented the report, and the Trade and Tourism Affairs Standing Committee of the House heard it. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Mrs. Aisha Yahya, stated that it is necessary to expand destinations by properly identifying, developing, and promoting the country's cultural and natural tourism resources. The Chairperson added as a strength that work had been done to promote Ethiopia's status as a land of origins in renowned European media using "Lucy" and "Selam." Minister Selamawit Kassa noted in her report that while the plan was to reach 0.938 billion dollars from the tourism sector over the past three months, 1.4 billion dollars was obtained, representing a performance of over one hundred percent. The Minister further indicated that while

the target was to reach 15 million domestic visitors in the first quarter, 23.5 million visitors were active. Regarding revenue, she mentioned that 32 billion birr was obtained, surpassing the target of 26.06 billion birr from domestic tourism.



Minister Selamawit Kassa, Minister of the Ministry of Tourism, at the time she presented her report

At the end of the first week of November, the Director General of the **Immigration and Citizenship Service**, Mrs. Selamawit Dawit, went to the House of Representatives to present the three-month report; she reportedly stated that her institution provided five hundred fifteen thousand passports to citizens during the specified period. Furthermore, the Director noted that they were able to collect over ten billion birr, against a plan to collect eleven billion birr. The Director also indicated in her report that during the quarter, eight hundred sixty foreigners and Ethiopians who tried to obtain passports using forged documents were placed under control to be held legally accountable.



Mrs. Selamawit Dawit, Director General of the Immigration and Citizenship Service, while presenting her report

On November 18, one of the federal institutions, **the Ministry of Mines**, presented its three-month performance report to the Industry and Mining Affairs Standing Committee of the House; the Minister, Engineer Habtamu Tegegn, presented the capacity-building works and major activities being carried out in the mining sector, as well as other achieved results, to the standing committee. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Amarech Bekalo, stated that mining development is promising and noted that the completion of projects started by the government has enabled the creation of additional capacity in the sector. Minister Engineer Habtamu, on his part, told the members of the standing committee that they had worked to answer questions previously raised by the committee during the quarter.



Engineer Habtamu Tegegn, Minister of the Ministry of Mines, while presenting his report

Information obtained from the House indicates that the **Investment Commission**, like the other aforementioned institutions, presented its quarterly performance report for the budget year to the Trade and Tourism Affairs Standing Committee of the House. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Mrs. Aisha Yahya, mentioning that the primary purpose of investment flow is to create jobs, facilitate technology transfer, and generate foreign exchange, indicated that the Commission should plan and work according to its given responsibility. The Chairperson, who noted as a strength that domestic investors hold a 67 percent share, stated that it is necessary to encourage both foreign and domestic investors. The Commissioner of the Commission, Dr. Zeleke Temesgen, stated that the foreign investment flow shows an 8 percent increase over last year; he explained that this result came because of the national macro-economic reform and the promotional work targeted at demand carried out by the Commission in coordination with diplomats.



Mrs. Aisha Yahya, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Trade and Tourism Affairs in the House of Peoples' Representatives

Information from the House mentions that the next scheduled presenter of the monthly performance report was the **Civil Service Commission**, and the report was reviewed by the Human Resource Development, Employment, and Technology Standing Committee of the House. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Dr. Negeri Lencho, stated that the work done to expand the "Mesob" one-stop service to make government services fast, efficient, and effective has recorded a great leap. The Chairperson further noted that the national government salary increment implemented to improve the living conditions of civil servants is encouraging. Nevertheless, the Chairperson added that solutions must be provided by monitoring and correcting gaps in information and payment delays seen in some areas. The Commissioner of the Commission, Dr. Mekuria Haile, explained that regarding the realization of a Digital Ethiopia, the "Mesob" one-stop service is being provided in 23 institutions and for 180 services in collaboration with Innovation and Technology, INSA, and Artificial

Intelligence. Regarding employee evaluation, he explained that it is not intended to reduce staff but to empower employees by providing gap-centered training to prepare them for institutional missions.



Dr. Mekuria Haile, Commissioner of the Civil Service Commission, at the time he presented his institution's report

A report heard from the **Ethiopian Refugees and Returnees Service**, presented to the Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs Standing Committee of the House, indicated that Ethiopia has received and is hosting refugees from 34 countries, including those from outside the region. The head of the institution, Mrs. Tayiba Hassan, noted in her report that South Sudanese make up the highest number among refugees in Ethiopia, while 33 percent are from Somalia and 17 percent are Eritrean refugees. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Dima Nego, stated that relative to the number of refugees Ethiopia has, the effort the institution is making to seek alternative sources of support is encouraging, as the impact of decreasing support from donors and partner countries for refugees globally is not simple. The Deputy

Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Fethi Mahdi, for his part, noted that Ethiopia ranks 2nd in Africa in hosting refugees and stated that social services must be made extensively accessible so that it does not create pressure on the country's citizens regarding infrastructure, economy, security, and natural resources.



The Honorable Dr. Dima Nogo, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs

The report of the House mentioned that another institution reviewed by the Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs Standing Committee was the **National Intelligence and Security Service**. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Dima Nego, stated that numerous national tasks are being carried out relative to the institution's mission and said the standing committee will provide the necessary support and monitoring to ensure the institution properly fulfills its national and public mission. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Fethi Mahdi, in turn, cautioned that since the intelligence and security works performed by the institution involve the public and ensure its safety, current efforts to make the

work more community-centered should continue in a strengthened manner.

3.2 INSTITUTIONAL AND FIELD VISITS

The House of Peoples' Representatives did not conclude the month of November merely by enacting laws and hearing institutional reports. Beyond that, through its various standing committees, it visited federal institutions across regions ranging from Addis Ababa to Sidama, Amhara to Gambella, and Oromia to the Somali Region. The House conducted approximately forty-two field visits; Enderasie has summarized these visits, which the House considers exemplary, as follows.

3.2.1 INSTITUTIONAL VISITS

A primary example of the federal institutions visited by the representatives in November is the visit conducted by the Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee to the **Gelan, Kality, and Qilinto federal prisons**. During its field observation at the prisons, the standing committee toured and observed inmates' shelters, dining areas, water and food supplies, various vocational training centers, and secondary school classrooms for inmate students.

The Madam Chair of the Standing Committee, Honorable Mrs. Etsegenet Mengistu, noted that to properly fulfill its assigned responsibility, the Gelan Protection Center's handling of inmates must respect laws and regulations. She further indicated that they should work to ensure the institution is a place

where inmates are reformed and rehabilitated during their stay, specifically fostering brotherhood and sisterhood. The House report mentioned that the Madam Chair added that convenient dining and sleeping areas should be arranged with consideration for inmates with disabilities, and that inmates with mental illnesses should be handed over to mental health centers based on their medical information.



The Standing Committee on Legal and Justice Affairs during its visit to the Galan, Kality, and Qilinto Federal Prisons

According to information from the House, this same standing committee observed the activities of the **Office of the Attorney General** within the Ministry of Justice. The Madam Chair, Honorable Mrs. Etsegenet, suggested that the Ministry's efforts in working collaboratively and in coordination with relevant bodies to elevate the justice system to a higher level must continue in a strengthened manner. The Minister of Justice, Mrs. Hanna Arayaselassie, explained to the standing committee members she met there that it has been possible to carry out effective work by collaborating and

coordinating with relevant legal bodies to improve the justice system and make it accessible to the public. Furthermore, the information mentioned the Minister's statement that since the role of coordinated leadership is prominent, justice institutions will work to further strengthen coordinated operations to properly fulfill their missions.

Another example of an institution visited during the month was the **Addis Ababa Airport Customs Branch Office**; information shows that those who arrived at this institution were the Plan, Budget, and Finance Affairs Standing Committee of the House. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Desalegn Wedaje, stated that the purpose of the visit was to ensure public benefit by seeing that the office is performing activities free from malpractice by establishing transparency and accountability, based on the laws, regulations, and directives issued to implement government development plans. The Coordinator of the Planning and Reform Work Process of the branch office, Mrs. Ayelech Tumdolo, presented the office's quarterly performance to the standing committee members she met there. The coordinator, who noted that 12.99 billion birr was collected against a plan to collect 13 billion birr in the quarter, suggested to the standing committee members that the directive for the disposal of confiscated warehouse goods should be amended to take the actual conditions of the airport into account.



The Standing Committee on Plan, Budget, and Finance Affairs during its visit to the Addis Ababa Airport Customs Branch Office

In the first week of November, members of the Government Expenditure Administration and Control Affairs Standing Committee of the House arrived at **St. Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College**; information obtained from the House shows the purpose of the visit was to verify that corrective adjustments had been made according to the recommendations given by the Federal Auditor General to improve operational audit findings at the college. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Mrs. Arrare Mosissa, stated that the completion of preparations for the Ecosteryl machine, installed for the proper disposal of dry waste, to begin operation is viewed positively. On the other hand, the Chairperson stated that the failure to issue and implement a legal framework regarding waste handling and disposal through the Ministry of Health is a problem still seen as an operational audit finding in hospitals.



Members of the Standing Committee on Government Expenditure Administration and Control Affairs, while visiting the college

In the middle of November, another institution visited by the members of the Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee of the House was the **Federal Supreme Sharia Court**. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Issa Boru, cautioned that the Supreme Sharia Court must correct gaps regarding service delivery, budget and technology utilization, as well as training and empowering staff and judges. On their part, members of the standing committee cautioned that procedures related to utilizing the budget for its intended purpose should be reviewed and corrected. In related information, it was known that the standing committee provided feedback in the presence of high-level leadership of the Federal Supreme Court in a manner that enables the resolution of problems encountered in relation to the Supreme Sharia Court. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Issa Boru, cautioned that although the Supreme Sharia Court is a government institution, it must implement reform works to provide appropriate service to the Muslim

community by establishing modern government operational systems.



Members of the Standing Committee on Legal and Justice Affairs, during their visit to the Federal Supreme Sharia Court

Another institution visited by this same standing committee during the month was the **Ethiopian Police University**; information shows that the standing committee observed the university's criminal investigation laboratories, forensics, and various investigative sample results that enable crime prevention in the sector. The Chairperson, Honorable Issa, stated that the university's work to protect the peace and security of the people and ensure the rule of law by using modern technology supported by forensic criminal investigation is encouraging. It was reported that members of the standing committee cautioned the institution to continue its efforts to realize the national vision for a digital system in a strengthened manner.

The Ethiopian Insurance Corporation, visited by the Government Development Organizations Affairs Standing Committee of the House, was one example of an institution visited during the month. According to the information, the standing committee

conducted a surprise observation at the corporation and toured the reform works being carried out there. In this regard, it was mentioned that the Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Engineer Sileshi Kore, stated that the corporation has started reform works, its quarterly performance is better compared to the same period last year, and the work done to equip the corporation with capable human resources has been effective. Additionally, the Deputy Chairperson cautioned that there is a limitation regarding the creation of a convenient work environment for employees and that the corporation's expenses should be applied to appropriate and effective works.



Members of the Standing Committee on State-Owned Development Enterprises Affairs, while visiting the Ethiopian Insurance Corporation

In the month of November, another institution among the federal institutions visited by the representatives was **the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority**; it was reported that those who went to the institution were the members of the Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs Standing Committee of the House. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable

Dr. Tadele Buraka, suggested that the institution needs to take the experiences of others so that its quality standards match what other countries have achieved, and urged it to examine issues that have hindered the institution from moving as fast as it should. The Chairperson, who added that ensuring accountability is not something to be left for tomorrow, stated that the Authority must establish a system that encourages those who perform well and holds accountable those who do not. The Deputy Director General of the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority, Mr. Negash Sime, on his part, noted that the institution has started the year by making the annual plan common to all officials and employees and reported that they are working to protect public health by ensuring quality and effectiveness in food, medicine, tobacco, and medical equipment.

These same standing committee members, who arrived at another federal institution, **the Ethiopian Public Health Institute**, noted that they traveled to observe what is concretely being done regarding the prevention and control of the Marburg virus. The Deputy Chairperson, Honorable Dr. Tadele Buraka, raised for the institution's officials the status of work being done in border areas given that the disease is transboundary, as well as what surveillance work and quarantine site preparation in border areas look like. The Director General of the Institute, Dr. Mesay Hailu, on his part, mentioned that according to its given mission, the institute performs surveillance work, early warning, and the prevention and control of transboundary diseases. It was mentioned that members of the standing committee stated that

sufficient awareness-raising work should be done and that it is necessary to work in coordination with government and private health institutions to prevent the disease.



Members of the Standing Committee on Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs, during their visit to the Ethiopian Public Health Institute

The final example of the institutions visited during the month was the **National Lottery Administration**; it was noted that the visit was carried out by the Government Development Organizations Affairs Standing Committee of the House. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Melesse Mena, by reviewing the 2018 budget first-quarter preparation phase plan performance report, indicated that the standing committee would provide professional and administrative support. The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Engineer Sileshi Kore, on his part, cautioned that to achieve the works the institution has started, national and institutional reform should be considered to ensure their implementation within the plan. Information from the House mentioned that members of the standing committee cautioned

that procedures should be executed with strict discipline to enable the government to obtain the necessary taxes by preventing illegal practices through strengthening technology-assisted control and monitoring activities.



Members of the Standing Committee on State-Owned Development Enterprises Affairs, while visiting the National Lottery Administration

Another institution visited during the month of November, which we have covered in this edition, was **the Geological Institute of Ethiopia**; the House report noted that the visit was conducted by the Standing Committee on Industry and Mineral Affairs. The report mentioned that the Honorable Dr. Fekadu Mengistu, Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, stated that the Geological Institute is playing an irreplaceable role in stimulating and transforming the mining sector. Other members of the Standing Committee, for their part, urged that the laboratory being built by the Institute and other ongoing projects must be completed according to their set schedules."



While the Standing Committee on Industry and Mineral Affairs was visiting the Geological Institute of Ethiopia

3.2.2 FIELD VISITS

Among the field visits conducted by the representatives during the month of November covered in this report, the visit carried out by the Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs Standing Committee of the House in the **Sidama** National Regional State stands out in terms of duration. During its observation, the standing committee reportedly looked into the overall activities of the Hawassa Millennium Health Center and the Moteti Fura Primary Hospital under the Health Department of the Hawassa City Administration. The honorable member and coordinator of the standing committee, Dr. Mahteme Haile, stated that the hospital, which provides quality medical services to the community by making its operational system completely paperless, faces a shortage of X-ray machines and infant warming machines, according to information from the House. The General Manager of the hospital, Mr. Henok Gelfeto, on his part, explained

that the hospital faces difficulties in carrying out expansion constructions due to space constraints while trying to make its services better accessible to the community. On the other hand, the head of the Millennium Health Center, Mr. Ephrem Tessema, reportedly stated that the delay in reimbursement payments for the free medical services provided at the health center is creating problems for the health institution.



The Standing Committee on Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs, during its visit to Sidama

The same standing committee conducted a field visit to the Sidama Region Public Health Institute located in the region. The team leader, Honorable Dr. Mahteme Haile, reportedly praised the activities performed regarding the institute's establishment within a short period, its provision of quality reference laboratory services, the establishment of a system where TB patient test results—which can be a model for the country—are reported to health organizations on time, and the development of software for recording epidemic rumor information. The Director General of the Institute, Dr. Damen Debalke, reportedly stated that to help prevent the Marburg virus, which has currently occurred in a neighboring region, the regional government and administrative levels at every tier have allocated two million birr to prevent and control the outbreak; he added that they were able to create awareness about the disease by establishing a task force comprising health professionals from government and private health institutions and providing training.

The **Hawassa University College of Medicine and Health Sciences** Comprehensive Specialized Hospital was also one of the notable institutions visited by the representatives in mid- November. The Honorable Dereje Debela, a member of the House Standing Committee on Government Expenditure Administration and Control Affairs and leader of the visiting group, urged the college to exercise caution in its solid and liquid waste management and disposal to prevent environmental pollution. Honorable Dereje added that the waste management and disposal systems must be modernized to ensure that hospital waste does not contaminate the environment. For their part, the Standing Committee members stated that caution should be taken as the smoke from the solid waste incinerator could pollute the local air, according to information obtained from the House.



While the Standing Committee on Government Expenditure Administration and Control Affairs was visiting the Hawassa University College of Medicine and Health Sciences

The Standing Committee on Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs, during its visit to Bahir Dar Stadium

Among the field visits conducted by the Ethiopian representatives in November, the visit made to the seat of the **Amhara Region** can be mentioned. Those who visited the Bahir Dar Stadium were the members of the Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport Affairs Standing Committee of the House; the Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Dr. Tadele Buraka, reportedly stated that although our country has a proud history in the sports sector, it has been unable to host international competitions due to the lack of standard sports facilities that match its history in the field. The Minister of the FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sport, Mrs. Shewit Shanko, on her part, noted that although the construction of Bahir Dar Stadium was completed years ago, it had been banned from hosting international competitions because it did not meet the standards of the Confederation of African Football (CAF). Now, however, she told the standing committee members that the stadium is capable of hosting all types of continental and international competitions.

In the middle of November, members of the Plan, Budget, and Finance Affairs Standing Committee of the House arrived in the eastern **Somali Region** and, beyond discussing with the Regional President, they conducted a field visit. The standing committee member and team leader, Honorable Mrs. Aster Keftaw, reportedly noted that monitoring and follow-up are conducted to ensure that subsidy and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation budgets are properly utilized. The head of the Regional Finance Bureau, Mr. Deib Ahmed, on his part, explained that strong performance has been recorded in education, health, infrastructure, and various sectors based on the budget allocated to institutions. In its feedback, the standing committee reportedly stated that the first-quarter performance of the bureau is encouraging in terms of managing government finance, regular budget utilization and performance, and the region's utilization and management of the budget allocated to it from the federal government for 2018.

The standing committee, which was reported to have also held discussions with the Regional President, His Excellency Mustafe Mohammed,

indicated that it confirmed through field observation that the region's efforts to fulfill infrastructure needs are encouraging; information from the House shows it mentioned that the One Plan, One Report initiative started at the national level has also been implemented in Jijiga. Regional President Mustafe Mohammed, on his part, expressed gratitude for the periodic monitoring and oversight conducted by the standing committee and indicated that work will be done to ensure that points raised as strengths continue and those needing adjustment are corrected by accepting the feedback provided.



Members of the Standing Committee on Plan, Budget, and Finance Affairs, while holding discussions with the Regional President, His Excellency Mustafe Mohammed

It was reported that the representatives who carried out such field visits also reached the western **Gambella Region** through the Law and Justice Affairs Standing Committee of the House. The coordinator of the standing committee team that arrived in Gambella, Honorable Mrs. Kedija Yasin, reportedly stated that during their field observation, they saw the works performed in terms of making judicial work accessible in all areas, establishing an effective and fair criminal system, as well as the Justice Bureau providing efficient service supported by technology. Information from the House indicates

that the other members of the Industry and Mining Affairs Standing Committee who went to the same region stated that feedback would be given after evaluating challenges encountered regarding the production capacity of industries, foreign exchange earnings, community benefits, job creation, and attracting investment flow, according to the team leader Honorable Fekadu Mosissa.



The Standing Committee on Legal and Justice Affairs, during its field visit to the Gambella Region

At the end of November, members of the House Government Development Organizations Standing Committee traveled to **Wolaita Sodo** and conducted a field observation with zonal officials to determine the status of the construction of the new 15-kilometer Gesuba-Garbe-Kanko road. The Chairperson of the Standing Committee, Honorable Melesse Mena, reportedly stated that the government is ready to solve the development demands of the people. Furthermore, the report of the House mentioned the Chairperson's statement that the people should not only be demanders of development and wait for the government's hand, but should also be workers themselves.

4. REPRESENTATION WORK

In accordance with the Vacation and Working Hours Amendment Proclamation No. 263/2002, the recess period for the Representatives is established annually from February 1 to February 30 and from July 1 (July 8) until the eve of the last Monday of September. Nevertheless, during the month of November covered in this report, two members of the House also carried out their constitutional responsibility of representation.

In the first week of November, Honorable Mrs. Letifa Abatema, who went to Seka Chekorsa, reportedly coordinated the natives and friends of the district to solve the long-standing complex rural road maintenance problem, resulting in the purchase and provision of a grader for 24 million birr. It was also explained that during the past years when the representative consulted with the people who elected her, the complex problem of rural roads was one of the issues the people had been repeatedly raising.

Honorable Dr. Elias Ahmed, who was present for a similar constitutional duty in **Deder**, coordinated various bodies and, through the participation of the district and city administration as well as the local community, enabled the establishment of digital libraries at Deder Comprehensive Secondary School, Kiyo Junior Secondary School, and Soka Secondary School, according to information obtained from the House.



The Honorable Dr. Elias Ahmed, during his representation work



The Honorable Mrs. Letifa Abatemam, during her representation work

5. PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

Information from the House indicates that there was one instance of parliamentary diplomacy conducted by the representatives during the month of November.

The Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives, Honorable Tadesse Chafo, held discussions with the **Special Envoy of the President of Azerbaijan**. The Speaker noted that Ethiopia is currently modernizing its banking, finance, and trade sub-sectors and indicated that focused work will be done to enhance cultural, people-to-people, and tourism relations between the two countries. The Special Envoy of the Azerbaijani President, Honorable Elchin Amirbayov, expressed Azerbaijan's interest in strengthening its multifaceted relations with Ethiopia. According to the report from the House, the Special Envoy stated that Azerbaijan is interested in engaging in Ethiopia's trade, industry, and agriculture sectors, and noted that his country is currently providing scholarship opportunities for Ethiopian students.



The Speaker, the Honorable Tadesse Chafo, while holding discussions with the Special Envoy of the President of Azerbaijan

6. THE REPRESENTATIVES ON THEMSELVES

The House of Peoples' Representatives concluded the month of November not only by fulfilling the constitutional responsibilities outlined above but also by providing training sessions deemed necessary for its members and evaluating the 2018 first-quarter performance.

The FDRE House of Peoples' Representatives stated that it provided training for the leadership and staff of the Secretariat titled "**Enhancing Ethical Leadership.**" During the event, the Deputy Secretary General of the Professional Support Sector of the House Secretariat, Dr. Nigussie Meshesha, reportedly stated that fostering good ethics helps increase the institution's executive capacity by enhancing innovation and creating trust between leadership and employees. The Deputy Secretary General added that employees are expected to work with commitment toward a single goal by building team spirit and providing service free from discrimination. The trainer, Dr. Tesfaye Hirpasa from the Civil Service University, indicated that ethics is collectively developed and practiced within a society. According to the House report, the trainer noted that corruption is a type of crime committed when there are driving factors, opportunities, or justifications related to government or public service, and stated that the problem can be reduced by working on the new generation.



The Representatives while in training

The second training forum of the month for the representatives was one where the Deputy Speaker of the House, Honorable Mrs. Lomi Bedo, stated that preventing **Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus** requires the attention of all stakeholders. Information indicates that the training was provided on the occasion of Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Day, celebrated for the 14th time internationally and the 7th time in Ethiopia. Honorable Mrs. Lomi, who delivered the opening speech at the awareness-raising forum organized for the representatives by a humanitarian organization called Reach Another Hope (Hope) in collaboration with the House, stated that since these conditions significantly impact not only children but also the country's growth, all stakeholders are expected to bring results by working in coordination. She further cautioned that the standing committees of the House should develop joint plans to ensure that enacted laws are implemented and to establish accountability. The founder and Director General of the organization, Mrs. Beza Besha, suggested that the prevention of these neural tube and brain disorders in children

should be supported by both budget and law, and noted that the attention given to the issue by the House has created motivation for further work.

The third training forum of the month was organized for female representatives on the subject of **strategic plan preparation**. The Deputy Speaker, Honorable Mrs. Lomi Bedo, who attended the forum, mentioned that the Women's Caucus of the House has carried out numerous tasks to increase the political participation of women. She further indicated that it is a time for the Women's Caucus to evaluate the results of its past activities to ensure women's political participation and prepare for future tasks. The country representative of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), the organizer of the training, Dr. Yinebeb Nigatu, noted that women have a significant role in a country's politics and stated that they must be heard and participate actively.

Information obtained from the House indicates that the representatives also discussed their own **quarterly performance for the current budget year** during November. The Reform Committee of the FDRE House of Peoples' Representatives conducted the performance evaluation of the House Secretariat's 2018 first-quarter plan in the presence of high-level Secretariat officials, executive leads of various departments, and relevant stakeholders. The report was presented in detail by the Strategic Affairs Executive, Mrs. Felegush Werku, and discussions were held on performance areas requiring further clarification and response.

The Chairperson of the Reform Committee, Honorable Melesse Mena, stated that all Secretariat leadership and staff must work diligently to continue the efforts that strengthen the Secretariat's procedures and effectiveness during the budget year. The Deputy Chairperson of the committee, Honorable Dr. Abraham Berta, noted that the reform work carried out within the Secretariat has enabled a spirit of active and coordinated unity to be seen across various departments during the quarter. The report noted that Dr. Nigussie Meshesha, the Deputy Secretary General of the Professional Sector at the Secretariat, mentioned that numerous tasks were performed during the quarter, specifically highlighting that basic training was provided to enable various old and new structures to perform knowledge-based work in connection with the Secretariat's reform. The Head of the Office of the Government Whip in the House of Peoples' Representatives, Andinet Adnew, noted that there are many improvements seen through the committee's monitoring and stated that they should follow a system of solving problems that allows tasks to proceed successfully.



The Representatives, while evaluating their first-quarter budget year plan for 2018

7. WHAT DID ETHIOPIA AGREE TO?

The House of Peoples' Representatives spent the month of November approving two loan agreements the country entered into with an international institution.

The first loan agreement approved by the representatives was for the implementation of a program intended to accelerate the transition to sustainable and clean energy access, entered into between **the Government of Ethiopia and the International Development Association (IDA)**. Regarding this \$294 million loan agreement, which the representatives approved unanimously, the Government Whip, Honorable Dr. Tesfaye Beljige, stated that the loan is to be repaid over 31 years, including a grace period. The representatives unanimously approved the draft proclamation of the agreement as Proclamation No. 1398/2018.

Information from the House indicates that the other draft proclamation approved by the House on the same day was a \$20 million interest-free agreement between **the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the same International Development Association (IDA)**. Honorable Dr. Tesfaye Beljige provided the explanation to the representatives regarding this agreement; he reportedly explained to the House that the loan is to be repaid over 38 years, including a six-year grace period.

It was noted that members of the House stated the two loan agreements between Ethiopia and the IDA have multifaceted benefits for achieving Ethiopia's ongoing transformation plan. Honorable Melesse Mena stated that the loan agreements have high utility in terms of Ethiopia's development direction to achieve rural transformation by supporting agriculture with technology, transitioning Ethiopia to agro-industry, expanding renewable energy options in addition to power sources, creating jobs, transferring technological knowledge, and realizing a prosperous Ethiopia in all sectors. The representatives unanimously approved this loan agreement as Proclamation No. 1399/2018.



The Representatives, while approving the loans

8. NOVEMBER IN RETROSPECT

The Ethiopian representatives also observed a national occasion during the month of November. While reports indicate they vibrantly celebrated the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day, which is observed every **November 29**, high-level officials of the House also delivered various messages during the ceremony. Regarding this 20th anniversary of the festival celebrated under the theme "Democratic Consensus for National Unity," the representative of the Secretary General of the Secretariat, Kereyu Banata, indicated that respecting the diversity and inclusivity of citizens has a prominent contribution to the country's economic, social, and political growth.

It was reported that a discussion document titled "Democracy and the Federal System in Ethiopia: Prospects and Challenges" was presented by Mrs. Werkenesh Wejo, the Executive for Competency and Human Resource Management at the Secretariat; the presenter stated that by discussing, consulting, and listening to one another to build a democratic system, it is necessary to build a strong, inclusive state that fosters a sense of ownership by resolving problems and restraining emotional ideas. The Head of the Office of the Government Whip in the House of Peoples' Representatives, Andinet Adnew, stated that diversity can be accommodated by respecting each other's rights and that the state should be built by including diversity and reaching consensus through the application of democratic principles.



While celebrating the 20th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day

9. APPOINTMENTS

Among the activities performed by the representatives during the month of November covered in this edition, the appointments given to officials of various federal institutions cannot go unmentioned. During the 3rd regular session of the 5th year of the House held on November 25 the House confirmed three appointments. The House approved the appointments of Mohammed Idris as Minister of Peace, Addisu Arega as Minister of Agriculture, and Binyam Eron as Chief Executive Officer of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, all of whom were appointed/assigned by Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed. The appointees appeared before the House and took their oaths of office.



Addisu Arega, who was appointed as the Minister of Agriculture, and Mohammed Idris, who was appointed as the Minister of Peace; (From left to right)



Binyam Aeron, who was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)

10. BRIDGE RESEARCH & INNOVATION'S SHORT OBSERVATIONAL INSIGHT: - REGARDING THE NATIONS, NATIONALITIES, AND PEOPLES' DAY AND BEYOND

The decision to grandly celebrate November 29, the day the FDRE Constitution was ratified, as the Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day at the national level was made during the second regular meeting of the first year of the third House term of the House of Federation on April 21, 1998. It is clear that this decision is an unwritten rule intended to ensure that the peoples of Ethiopia reflect on the benefits brought to them by the Constitution they consulted upon and voluntarily ratified, and not only to protect their rights and freedoms but also to introduce and link them with one another. It cannot be denied that the House of Federation primarily decided for the Day of Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples to be celebrated every year on November 29 to enable the peoples of our country to reflect on the benefits gained from the Constitution they ratified through consultation and consent, and to deliberate on future tasks to be performed. Recalling the themes of previous festivals points to this very goal of the Federation; mentioning them briefly will broaden the picture for us.

REMEMBERING THE DESIGNATIONS

When the first Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day of our country was celebrated in Addis Ababa in 1999, organized by the House of Federation, the theme was: "Constitutional Covenant is the Manifestation of Our Togetherness."

The 2nd festival was grandly celebrated in Hawassa, the center of the then Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples; the theme was: "Our Diversity is Our Beauty, Our Beauty is Our Unity and Strength."

The 3rd was celebrated under the organization of Addis Ababa City, with the theme: "By Strengthening Our Democratic Unity, We Shall Accelerate Our Development."

The 4th festival was celebrated in Dire Dawa in 2002, jointly organized by the Dire Dawa Administration and neighboring regions (Oromia, Afar, Somali, and Harari, as well as Dire Dawa City Administration); the theme was: "Tolerance for Democratic Unity and Development."

The 5th was celebrated in Addis Ababa in 2003 in conjunction with International Federalism Day, with the theme: "Hand in Hand, the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia Will Bring Our Country's Renaissance to an Irreversible Level."

The 6th was celebrated in Mekelle in 2004, organized by the Tigray Regional Government; the theme was: “Our Constitution for Our Diversity, Our Unity, and Our Renaissance.”

The 7th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Bahir Dar City in 2005, organized by the Amhara Regional Government; the theme was: “Being Many and One, through Meles' Vision and Our Constitution for Our Renaissance.”

The 8th was celebrated in Jijiga in 2006, organized by the Somali Regional Government; the theme was: “Our Constitution for Our Renaissance.”

The 9th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day festival was celebrated in Asosa City, organized by the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional Government, under the theme: “Our Ethiopianness, Brightened by Our Constitution, for Our Renaissance.”

The 10th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' festival was celebrated in Gambella Region in 2008; the central idea was: “The Participation of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples for Higher Growth and Transformation.”

Similarly, the 11th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' festival was celebrated in Harar in 2009 under the theme: “Our Constitution for Our Democratic Unity and Our Renaissance.”

The 12th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Samara, the capital of Afar, under the

theme: “Our Multinationalism, Brightened by Our Constitution, for Our Renaissance.”

The 13th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day festival was colorfully celebrated in the capital city, Addis Ababa, under the theme: “Ethiopian Unity Brightened by Diversity.”

The 14th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Addis Ababa City, organized by the Oromia Regional Government, under the theme: “Our Constitutional Covenant for Sustainable Peace.”

The 15th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Samara City, Afar Region, under the theme: “Equality and Multinational Unity for Shared Prosperity!”

The 16th Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day festival was celebrated on November 29, organized by the Dire Dawa Administration, under the theme: “Brotherhood for Multinational Unity.”

The 17th Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day festival was celebrated with various programs at the African Union Hall in the main campus of Hawassa University, under the theme: “Multinational Unity for Sustainable Peace.”

The 18th Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Jijiga City, coordinated by the House of Federation and hosted by the Somali Region, under the theme: “Diversity and Equality for National Unity.”

The 19th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Arba Minch City under the theme: "National Consensus for Multinational Unity."

It is recalled that this year's 20th Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day was celebrated in Hosanna City, coordinated by the House of Federation and hosted by the Central Ethiopia Region, under the theme: "National Consensus for Multinational Unity."

POLITICS AND CULTURE

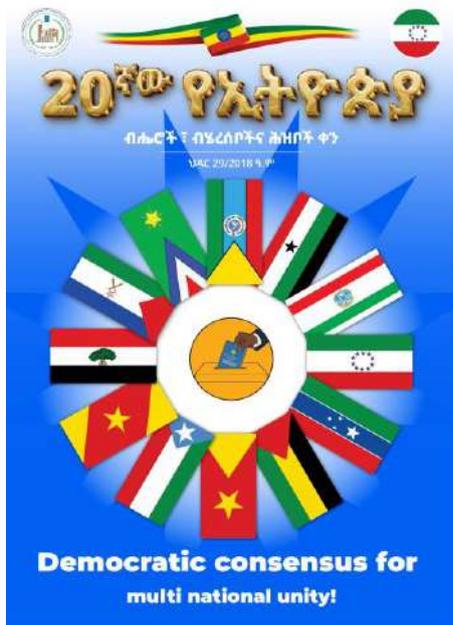
It is known that the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day celebrated annually on November 29 is based on the day the current Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was ratified. However, it can be understood from the festival preparations that its cultural implications appear more prominent than its political background. Many scholars state that in countries where differences in outlook, interest, and political stance are prevalent, festivals such as Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day can serve to promote the goals of peace and reconciliation, and further strengthen national unity. It is criticized that during the former EPRDF era, the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day in Ethiopia was merely intended for propaganda consumption and the goal of strengthening the system's acceptance. As the critics say, the system represented by the festival was one where fundamental problems were observed; it was during the years when the country's political space was deteriorating from bad to worse because the

principles of democracy and human rights could not be respected. It is necessary to understand that the public spectacles and workshops held in connection with the festival also have a contribution toward bringing respect among different nations, and achieving equal political participation as well as equal economic benefit. Furthermore, some say that the annually celebrated November 29 possesses both a cultural and political context.

On their part, writers who mention that Article 8 of the FDRE Constitution decrees that the sovereign political power in Ethiopia belongs to the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples, recall that the politics is designed to show the country's multinationalism and diversity. In the same article, it is mentioned under the political objective to establish equality and brotherhood among peoples. This makes it clear that it is also expressed through cultural spectacles. This is reinforced by the fact that the festival has been carried out since 1998 under the execution of the House of Federation, which has ethnic representation.

Just as there are those who view the November 29 Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' festival in a positive light, there are others who see it as an extension of ethnic politics. Even so, proponents who say the festival creates an opportunity for Nations and Nationalities to introduce their authentic traditional clothing and dance styles, argue that the spectacle enables the creation of cultural interaction among peoples. They also mention the holistic benefit of the festival by stating that it is

...serving as a starting point to enter the artistic industrial market, particularly in the fields of music and dance. They also say it has enabled many traditional vocalists and music professionals to join the professional sector by starting from here.



THE DAY AND THE HOUSE

Even though it is clear that the celebration of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day directly concerns the House of Federation, it cannot be denied that it also touches upon Ethiopia's representatives in valuable ways.

In the Ethiopian federal system, the relationship between Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day and the House of representatives can be described as a relationship of constitutional rights ownership and practical implementation. We believe it is possible to relate and mention this through at least two main points:

SYMBOL OF SOVEREIGNTY

As stated in Article 8/1 of the FDRE Constitution, the sovereign power holders of the country are the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia. From this perspective, the connection of November 29 with the House is that this day is when the Nations and Nationalities affirm their ownership of sovereign power; while the House of representatives is the highest authority of the federation through which the peoples practically express this sovereign power through their representatives. The fact that the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples are the owners, while the House is the highest institution of the federation to affirm that sovereignty, makes the bond even stronger.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONTRACT AND INSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION

It is well known that Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day is celebrated based on the day the Constitution was ratified. This Constitution is considered a shared covenant of will made among Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples, or a strong collective contract made to create a single political community. The second relationship between the November 29 festival and the House lies in this very point; the House of representatives was established based on this same constitutional contract. It is the reality that the House is compelled to maintain institutional certainty that all the laws it enacts and

all the decisions it makes protect and implement the constitutional rights celebrated on Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day (namely equality, self-administration, and the development of language and culture without interference).



During the celebration of the 20th Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE DAY

It is clear that the foundation upon which the festival stands is the FDRE Constitution. Bridge recognizes that there is an opportunity for Ethiopia's representatives to reconsider the matter, particularly regarding the nomenclature of "Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples," based on this day. Therefore, we believe that raising the two extremes regarding these designations is valuable, as it is a major topic for the National Dialogue Commission, which is expected to begin its work at least within this year.

It has now been nineteen years since the annual celebration of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day on November 29 began. However, questions are still heard today regarding the expression "We, the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia"

set out in the Constitution, which is the foundation of the festival. Some, for their part, argue that "Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples" does not seem to be a phrase with a single meaning but rather three distinct words. According to such analysts, it is necessary to look at the brief explanation prepared by the constitutional drafters to understand this correctly. In the explanation, it continues by saying, "Although there is a difference in size and scope between Nation, Nationality, and People..." Therefore, although it does not list their differences in the explanation, it broadly states that they have differences in "size and scope."

In this regard, as other commentators say, while "Nation" has one meaning, "Nationality" has another, and "People" likewise has another, they voice their criticism saying that our Constitution gathers the three words together, ignores the Ethiopian context, and gives them a "Stalinist" definition. Indeed, a uniform definition is given for all three in the Constitution. That is:

"A "Nation, Nationality or people" for the Purpose of this constitution, is a group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory" (Article 39/5)

It should not be forgotten that this interpretative idea is linked to Stalinism, which was the ideological background of the majority of the constitutional drafters. To reinforce this, let us quote two paragraphs to provide us with further reflective ideas

from Joseph Stalin's work, "Marxism and the National Question," published in 1913, which was read by the majority of the drafters who were members of the student movement during their period of political maturity:

"A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make up manifested in a common culture" (307): And;

"It must be emphasized that none of the above characteristics taken separately is sufficient to define a nation. More than that, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation." (Ibid)

Returning from such a definition by Stalin, if we cite a reference dictionary from here, it may broaden the matter for us. The "Dictionary of Marxism-Leninism," prepared by those considered matured left-wing scholars of the time, defines Nationality as:-

"Nationality is based on unity of territory, language, and culture rather than unity of blood. Nationality is the result of the fusion of many tribes, which is the highest stage of a tribe. . . In terms of what the development process requires, a Nation is the highest stage of Nationality that eliminates these differences by creating wider economic relations." (206)

It gives the following definition for Nation:-

". . . A nation is primarily distinguished by its existing common material conditions of life. Living in one geographical territory, being linked by economic relations, using one language, and the emergence of common psychological features and cultural outlooks in a shared historical process are the foundations of a nation." (Ibid, 213)

Be that as it may, those who say this definition needs at least some correction, for their part, cite a social science topic; specifically, by questioning the appropriateness of using "common character" for a Nation or Nationality, which are social groups, rather than for an individual, they raise inquisitive ideas such as: What is the character of a nation like? What is it not? Who is the judge of the definitions? And standing upon what?

When we look at the matter from another perspective, we can raise other points. Our example is the content of the constitutions of the regions that founded the federation. First, does calling the regional constitutions "constitutions" not lead to an epistemological doubt when compared with the Constitution that is the foundation of the federation? It does not seem possible not to raise this. Beyond that, the definition given in the regional constitutions is not by saying "Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples" in general, but by specifying the name of the Nation or the nations living within the region. It can be understood that no other difference in interpretation is seen in them. When we examine the matter from this perspective, while we try to understand "Nationality" as being settled in one area, the fact that the Jews, for example, live in different parts of the world but speak the same language and share the same culture makes them a nationality, yet their lack of specific settlement in one area makes them somewhat different from our definition of Nationality or People. If we go further to look at it from the perspective of sociological study, we are pushed toward calling similar social

groups that live in different areas but have the same culture a "Nation." When we take the term "People," those records written on the matter remind us that what makes a people one, beyond color and language, is the existence of one sovereign country, and they raise their complaints saying our Constitution did not set these apart.

One of the constitutional drafters, Dr. Negasso Gidada, who reminds us of the origin of this grievance-causing issue, recalls that they did not think about the matter properly at the time. The first President of the FDRE, who wrote his memoirs, stated, "First, we prepared 73 questions about what should be included in the Constitution, and the questions were prepared in the form of choices and went down to the people." He recalls that after the people discussed the questions, the ideas given at each Kebele were collected by region and then divided according to the articles of the Constitution. "Then, when the articles were divided, they became 106," says Negasso, but he does not recall any request for this constitutional expression to be clarified. Mr. Kifle Wodajo, who led the Constitutional Drafting Assembly as Chairman, says for his part, "The preamble was one of the parts that faced widespread opposition during the drafting of the Constitution." Both drafters of the time say, however, that Stalinism served as the starting point and the destination for the Constitution.

Bridge also believes that the fact that even the ruling Prosperity Party has submitted certain articles it wants to see amended to the National Dialogue

Commission creates a favorable condition to resolve such controversial issues.

The Denotation of “Enderasie” (አንድረሴ)

The term “Enderasie” is a conceptual expression that holds significant weight in Ethiopia’s ancient and modern political discourse and constitutional history. The etymology and denotation of the word, in a general sense, had/have the following meanings:-

The expression is derived from the combination of two words: “Ende” (አንድ) and “Rasse” (ረሴ). “Ende” signifies likeness, stead, or substitute; “Rasse” reflects the self-calling identity or the owner and when denoted, it reflects the authority. In its connotation, it is said to mean “as me” or “being me.” When referencing its title in Ethiopian constitutional history, the term “Enderasie” had different socio-political interpretations across various eras; to wit: -

A. *The Representative of the Emperor (Regent):* During the monarchical era, if the emperor was unable to lead the state for any reason (not coming of age, illness, or other reasons), the person granted full authority to administer the country was called “Bitwoded-Enderasie.”

B. *Regional or Provincial Governor:* Since the Emperor could not be present in every province personally at all times, the representatives who judged and administered in his name were called “Enderasie”; this grants the full representation of the King.

C. *Representation of the People:* Since the advent of the first Ethiopian Constitution, however, the word took on a new denotation. The people began to call the persons they elected to deliberate and make decisions in their stead in the council “People’s Enderasies” (Representatives). The denotation of this gave it the meaning of “one who works as the people,” “image of the people,” or “representative of the people.”

Today, it is used interchangeably with the word “Representative” (as in the beginning of Western parliamentary history). However, the word “Enderasie” holds a political and socio-cultural denotation of gravity that goes beyond representation, carrying the full honor and identity-based association of the body it represents.

The Bridge Denotation

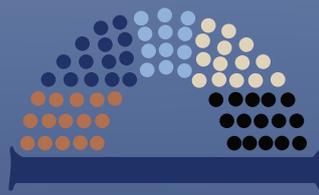
Our institution, Bridge, has utilized this word by denoting it from the past to the present era while maintaining the rules of Amharic grammar. Let us first cite what the noted scholars have established: Desta Tekle Wold defined “Enderasie” as “being me, one who works holding my authority”; Kidane Wold Kifle described it as “standing in the stead, in the substitute”; Tesemma Habte Michael Gitsew, in turn, gave it the definitions of “alternate, representative, plenipotentiary.” Even Mahteme Selassie Wolde Meskel raised that when a person appears not in their own name but in the name of another to perform legal acts, they are called “Enderasie.” As these references show, while the word was initially used only for the representatives of kings, its later application to representatives of the people served to express the supremacy of the people; furthermore, it provides the denotation that the representative appears as the people and is called as the people.

In this context, when we say “Enderasie”: on one hand, we have denoted it in alignment with the constitutional principle of ‘self-determination’ upon which the Ethiopian Federation stands, regarding the word “Ras” (Self). This means we have used a denotative translation to solve the “Rasie” within “Enderasie” through the nations, nationalities and peoples encompassed by the meaning of “Ras” in this principle. Beyond that, just as the elector in the former era was the emperor, in this era of ours, it is the people; therefore, note that when we say “Enderasie,” we use the definition:- one who becomes like the electing people, nation, or nationality. When we align it with the modern electoral system, the individual elector sends the Enderasie to the council to decide on the affairs of their life, saying, ‘speak with my lips, sit on my throne.’ It asserts that if the elected is not as the self to the elector, the elector can strip away their likeness of me (aka the representation).

The expression “Enderasie”:- although Amharic, the national language of the time, was the only working language of the council when the first Ethiopian Council of Enderasies was established; note that the expression is found within the other languages of the nations and nationalities of our country; for example: in Sidama—amaalete mina, in Afaan Oromo—Bakka bu’aa, in Tigrinya—kemay, in Wolaytta—Kal Atiya/Taga ton.

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ENDERASIE

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