

IGAD



MONTHLY DIGEST





BRIDGE Research & Innovation



BRIDGE Profile

BridgeResearch 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 be a knowledge hub on the affairs of IGAD and strengthen peace and socio-economic development throughout the Horn of Africa by:

- Conducting rigorous, evidence-based research that informs policy and practice on the IGAD subregional organization and on the Horn of Africa.
- Delivering specialized training programs on the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and regional dynamics in the Horn of Africa.
- Monitoring IGAD's activities for knowledge dissemination and engagement with academicians, the diplomatic community, and pertinent stakeholders, to amplify IGAD's impact and reinforce its commitment in the region.

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CONTENTS

Contents	1
1. Peace and Security	3
Peace, Security & Progress: The Future is Youth-Led.....	3
Quintet Joint Statement on de-escalation of the conflict in Sudan	3
Enhancing Regional Security Governance and Cooperation	4
Strengthening Engagement for Peace and Regional Stability	5
IGAD Encourages Continued Somali-Led Dialogue and National Cohesion	5
IGAD and Qatar Consult on South Sudan Peace Efforts	6
IGAD–UN Strengthen Cooperation for Peace	6
IGAD Special Envoy Consults the Federal Republic of Somalia on the Republic of South Sudan.....	7
IGAD Engages the United States on Peace and Security	7
IGAD Validates Draft Regional Framework for Transitional Justice.....	8
Executive Secretary Meets U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan on Regional Peace and Security	8
IGAD Reaffirms Commitment to Peace in South Sudan.....	8
IGAD Convenes Regional Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security.....	9
High-Level Engagement for Regional Peace	10
2. Climate Resilience and Natural Resources	11
Securing Our Future Through Smart Land Governance	11
Climate Watch Advisory: The Evolving Dry Conditions in Eastern Africa - February 2026 Update	11
The 5th Sub-Regional Climate Outlook Forum (Sub-COF5) was held on 10–12 February 2026 in Moyale, Ethiopia, focusing on the Marsabit–Borana cross-border region (IGAD Cluster II).	12
Djibouti Groundwater Resilience and Water Supply Project (P511492)	13
Africa Diplomacy Week Opens with IGAD Groundwater Initiative	13
IGAD Drives Regional Action on Resilient Seed Systems.....	14
In Lodwar, Cluster One reaffirmed its commitment to coordinated action for Peaceful Resilient Borderlands. 15	
Strengthening Regional Action on Fisheries Monitoring and Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in the IGAD Region	16
3. Social and Humanitarian Affairs	17
Strengthening Regional Preparedness. Protecting Our Future.	17
Strengthening Digital Health Systems Across the IGAD Region	17
IGAD Hosts Second Regional Training on Business and Human Rights in Djibouti	17
The 2nd PREPARE Project Bulletin	18
Strengthening the Capacities of Legislators for Improved Protection of Displaced Persons.....	19
Refugees & Asylum Seekers: Solidarity in Action	20
Empowering Teachers, Transforming Education, Building Peace	21
Celebrating Somalia’s Tourism Promise	21



Tourism Spotlight: Uganda	22
Industry Driving Regional Transformation	22
Investing in People. Strengthening Regional Capacity	23
4. Regional Integration	24
ICPAC Launches Regional Cross-Border Consultation Workshop on Disaster Displacement.....	24
At Moyale, collaboration across borders moved from commitment to action.....	25
Strengthening Regional Infrastructure Planning in the Nile Basin.....	25
5. Organizational Affairs.....	27
Statement by the Secretariat of IGAD On the Return of the Republic of the Sudan to IGAD.....	27
6. IGAD at the African Union	28
IGAD at the 39 th African Union Summit Meetings	28
IGAD at AU Summit - Setting the Pace	29
Driving Regional Priorities at the Continental Table.....	29
IGAD Backs New African Financial Architecture at AU Summit Consultations	30
IGAD Delegation Concludes Successful Participation in the 39 th African Union Summit.....	30
IGAD Concludes AU Summit Mission with Renewed Commitment to Impactful Partnerships.....	32
7. IGAD Bilateral Engagements	33
IGAD Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware met the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.	33
IGAD and HISPASAT Signed an MOU.....	33
IGAD-ITALY: 40 Years of Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity.....	33
IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Letters of Credence from Canada's Ambassador	34
IGAD Chairperson Receives Special Envoy for the Republic of South Sudan	34
IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Sudan	35
IGAD Executive Secretary Meets Ethiopia's Foreign Minister	35
Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Greater Impact	36
Investing in People. Strengthening Regional Capacity	36
IGAD Strengthens Cooperation with the Russian Federation	37
IGAD and GIZ Strengthen Stability in Borderlands.....	37
IGAD Advances Regional Digital Trade Solutions to Boost Cross-Border Agricultural Trade.....	38
IGAD Executive Secretary Engages Türkiye Ambassador on Strengthening Partnership	39





1. PEACE AND SECURITY

Peace, Security & Progress: The Future is Youth-Led

On February 3, IGAD noted that over 60% of the population in the region is under 30 years old. IGAD is focusing on youth as a key part of its regional peace and security strategy.¹ Recognizing that stability in the Horn of Africa relies on the hopes and leadership of young people, IGAD is moving beyond traditional diplomacy to create a governance framework that reflects the digital energy of the next generation.

At the heart of this effort is the implementation of the **2023 IGAD Youth Policy**², now being translated into concrete regional action:

- **IGAD Youth Forum for Peace:** A newly appointed Advisory Team for 2025–2027 will lead mediation and peace-building initiatives across the region.
- **WPS-YPS Evidence Hub:** Harnessing technology and “PeaceTech” tools to counter misinformation and amplify narratives of peace on social platforms.
- **Youth Skilling for Stability:** Expanding opportunities in the digital and green economies to reduce vulnerability to conflict and create sustainable jobs.

¹ Peace, Security & Progress: The Future is Youth-Led <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1K7v72W79S/>

² The IGAD Youth Policy 2023 is a comprehensive regional framework adopted in September 2023 to empower youth across the IGAD region. It aims to ensure meaningful youth engagement in economic, social, and

- **High-Level Dialogue:** Organizing summits and ministerial meetings to align governance priorities with youth voices and the rule of law.
- **Inclusive Innovation:** Supporting youth-led PeaceTech hubs to strengthen transparency and ensure young people have a seat at the decision-making table.

By fostering accountable governance and leveraging technology, IGAD aims to ensure that the drive for change among young people is matched with the tools for progress. This initiative underscores IGAD’s commitment to building a region where governance is not only for the people, but with the people.



Quintet Joint Statement on de-escalation of the conflict in Sudan

On February 12, the Quintet, comprising the African Union, IGAD, the League of Arab States, the European Union, and the United Nations, has issued a joint statement expressing grave concern about the escalating conflict in Sudan.³ The group called for an immediate halt to further military escalation, warning that the use of increasingly destructive means of warfare is inflicting devastating harm on civilians.

The Quintet highlighted the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Kordofan region and Blue Nile State, citing reports of deadly drone strikes, sieges around population centers, attacks on hospitals, schools, and humanitarian assets, as well as forced displacement and severe constraints on humanitarian access. The statement underscored the urgency of preventing

political life, while providing a, unified guide for national-level planning to foster a resilient, peaceful, and prosperous, youth demographic. <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/IGAD-YOUTH-POLICY-Popular-Version.pdf>

³ Quintet Joint Statement on de-escalation of the conflict in Sudan <https://igad.int/quintet-joint-statement-on-de-escalation-of-the-conflict-in-sudan/>



atrocities, recalling the horrors witnessed in El Fasher, where earlier warnings went unheeded with catastrophic consequences for civilians.



Reaffirming that the protection of civilians and critical infrastructure is a fundamental obligation under international law, the Quintet stressed that international humanitarian law applies to all parties engaged in hostilities. It insisted that civilians and civilian premises must be safeguarded, humanitarian access must be ensured, and serious violations of international humanitarian law must not go unaddressed, with perpetrators held accountable.

The Quintet emphasized the need for coordinated and effective collective efforts, particularly by actors with the greatest influence, to de-escalate the conflict, restore conditions conducive to civilian protection, and halt the flow of weapons and fighters sustaining the violence. With the holy month of Ramadan approaching, the group strongly urged all parties to seize the opportunity to broker a humanitarian truce, enabling life-saving assistance and paving the way toward a broader cessation of hostilities.

The statement reaffirmed the Quintet's commitment to Sudan's sovereignty, unity, independence, and

⁴ Resulting from a revitalized IGAD's Peace and Security strategy and the concurrence of the Member States, IGAD has sought to restructure ICPAT to enable it meet the challenges posed by an environment exhibiting a convergence of various threats. The new structure, re-named IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP), absorbs the best practices from the four years of ICPAT while at the same time addressing regional security matters in a holistic manner. ISSP was launched and became operational on October 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The IGAD Capacity Building Program against Terrorism (ICPAT) was launched in 2006 and aimed at building

territorial integrity, warning that continued escalation risks further undermining civilian protection and national infrastructure. Looking ahead, the Quintet pledged to support a Sudanese-owned, inclusive political dialogue aimed at ending the war and laying the foundations for a peaceful transition.



Enhancing Regional Security Governance and Cooperation

On February 22, IGAD highlighted its efforts to address evolving security challenges across the Horn of Africa through its **Security Sector Programme (ISSP)**.⁴ The initiative works closely with Member States to reinforce security governance frameworks and promote professional, transparent, and rights-based security institutions⁵.

The ISSP supports regional collaboration in counter-terrorism, prevention and countering of violent extremism, and responses to transnational organized crime. It also advances policy dialogue, institutional reform processes, and capacity development to ensure that security institutions are responsive to citizens' needs and aligned with democratic principles. By fostering partnership, knowledge exchange, and practical support, ISSP contributes to safer communities, stronger institutions, and a more secure and stable IGAD region. Officials emphasized that coordinated, accountable, and forward-looking responses are essential to meet the region's complex

national capacity to resist terrorism and promoting regional securing cooperation. It comprised of five main components, namely; enhancing judicial capacity, optimizing interdepartmental cooperation, enhancing border control, providing training, and promoting strategic cooperation. <https://mediation.igad.int/index.php/our-network/384-igad-security-sector-program>

⁵ Enhancing Regional Security Governance and Cooperation <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Dbdad57Ci/>



security environment. The programme reflects IGAD's commitment to building resilient governance structures that uphold human rights while ensuring peace and stability.



Strengthening Engagement for Peace and Regional Stability

On February 22, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, received Amb. Mohammed Saeed, Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan to the Republic of Djibouti and to IGAD, for discussions on institutional priorities and the evolving peace and security situation in Sudan.⁶



The meeting reaffirmed the importance of continued engagement between IGAD and Sudan to advance peace for the Sudanese people and promote stability across the region. Both sides underscored the need for sustained dialogue and cooperation to address the challenges facing Sudan, while strengthening IGAD's role as a regional platform for peace and security.

The consultation reflects IGAD's ongoing commitment to supporting Member States in navigating complex transitions and fostering collective solutions for regional stability. It also highlights Sudan's active

⁶ Strengthening Engagement for Peace and Regional Stability <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1AABmwfpwL/>

⁷ On October 2, 2025, Jubaland and Puntland regional leaders, alongside key Somali opposition figures, announced the formation of the Somali Future Council (SFC) during meetings in Nairobi. The council aims to coordinate positions on Somalia's political transition,

engagement with IGAD as the organization works to deliver on its mandate of peace, security, and development in the Horn of Africa.



IGAD Encourages Continued Somali-Led Dialogue and National Cohesion

On February 24, IGAD has welcomed the recent dialogue between the Federal Government of Somalia and the **Somali Future Council**⁷, underscoring the importance of constructive engagement in advancing national cohesion.⁸

In his press release, IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu acknowledged the efforts undertaken and encouraged continued dialogue in good faith to address outstanding issues. He emphasized that inclusive and Somali-led processes remain central to achieving sustainable peace and stability.

The regional body recalled its longstanding engagement in Somalia's peace and state-building efforts, reaffirming its commitment to supporting Somalia, a founding Member State, in advancing durable peace for the benefit of the Somali people and the wider region.

IGAD reiterated its solidarity with the Somali people and confirmed that it will remain seized of the matter, working alongside national stakeholders and partners to promote unity, resilience, and stability.

governance reforms, and security responsibilities as African Union forces continue their phased withdrawal. <https://www.africansecurityanalysis.com/updates/somali-future-council-emerges-opposition-and-regional-states-unite-in-nairobi>

⁸ IGAD Encourages Continued Somali Led Dialogue and National Cohesion <https://igad.int/igad-encourages-continued-somali-led-dialogue-and-national-cohesion/>



IGAD and Qatar Consult on South Sudan Peace Efforts

On February 26, Saad Mubarak Al Naimi, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, received Amb. Moussa Djama, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, for consultations focused on the evolving political and security situation in South Sudan.⁹

Discussions centered on the implementation of the **Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)**¹⁰ and explored avenues for constructive engagement in support of dialogue and mediation. Both sides recognized the State of Qatar's role in facilitating peace processes at regional and international levels.



Ambassador Al Naimi and Ambassador Djama underscored the importance of strengthened cooperation and coordination to advance peace, stability, and inclusive political processes in South Sudan. The meeting highlighted the shared commitment of IGAD and Qatar to supporting the South Sudanese people in their pursuit of lasting peace and democratic transition.

⁹ IGAD and Qatar Consult on South Sudan Peace Efforts <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CNsq8dNpQ/>

¹⁰ The Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) is a peace agreement signed in September 2018 in Addis

IGAD–UN Strengthen Cooperation for Peace

On February 25, IGAD and the United Nations have reaffirmed their commitment to closer collaboration in advancing peace and stability across the Horn of Africa.¹¹ Ambassador Moussa Djama, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, received Guang Cong, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, for consultations in Addis Ababa. The two Envoys exchanged views on regional peace and security, with particular focus on the situation in South Sudan and the outcomes of the recent AU C5–IGAD Summit.



Both sides emphasized the importance of strengthened coordination and sustained collaboration between IGAD and the UN in supporting peace processes, fostering regional cooperation, and promoting stability. The meeting highlighted the shared commitment of the two organizations to work together in addressing challenges and advancing inclusive solutions for the benefit of the people of South Sudan and the wider Horn of Africa region.

This engagement underscores IGAD's role as a key regional actor in peacebuilding and reflects the

Ababa, Ethiopia, under the mediation of the IGAD. It was designed to end the civil war in South Sudan that began in December 2013. <https://docs.pca-cpa.org/2016/02/South-Sudan-Peace-Agreement-September-2018.pdf>

¹¹ IGAD–UN Strengthen Cooperation for Peace <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1AVXHUL3Nu/>



growing synergy between regional and international partners in promoting security and development.



IGAD Special Envoy Consults the Federal Republic of Somalia on the Republic of South Sudan

On February 18, IGAD Special Envoy for the Republic of South Sudan, Amb. Moussa Djama, held consultations with the Federal Republic of Somalia's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to discuss regional peace and security.¹² The meeting placed particular emphasis on South Sudan's peace process and inclusive democratic transition, with the Special Envoy underscoring the importance of Somalia's continued support as a Member State of IGAD.



Ambassador Djama congratulated Somalia on its recent election to the African Union Peace and Security Council, noting that the country's role in continental peace and security frameworks strengthens IGAD's collective efforts to foster stability in the Horn of Africa.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing peace initiatives in South Sudan and enhancing regional cooperation. The discussions highlighted IGAD's ongoing diplomatic engagement with Member States to ensure that South Sudan's transition remains inclusive, sustainable, and firmly anchored in

¹² IGAD Special Envoy Consults the Federal Republic of Somalia on the Republic of South Sudan
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1D7S3ukhCu/>

democratic principles. This consultation reflects IGAD's broader mandate to promote peace, security, and development across the region, while reinforcing the role of Member States in supporting collective solutions to shared challenges.



IGAD Engages the United States on Peace and Security

On February 13, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, received Mr. Nick Checker, Senior Bureau Official at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of African Affairs, for an exchange on matters of mutual interest concerning regional peace and security¹³.



The meeting, held on the margins of the African Union Summit, underscored a shared commitment between IGAD and the United States to coordinated efforts aimed at advancing peace and stability across the Horn of Africa. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of collaboration in addressing regional challenges and strengthening partnerships that support resilience and sustainable development. This engagement highlights IGAD's ongoing diplomatic outreach to global partners, ensuring that regional priorities on peace, security, and integration remain central to international cooperation.



¹³ IGAD Engages the United States on Peace and Security
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CPZxS7Qxb/>



IGAD Validates Draft Regional Framework for Transitional Justice

On February 5, the IGAD Peace and Security Division convened a high-level Validation Workshop in Addis Ababa to review the Draft Regional Framework for Transitional Justice.¹⁴ The meeting, organized in collaboration with UN Human Rights, the African Union, the European Union, and the **International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)**,¹⁵ brought together representatives from IGAD Member States, regional experts, and key stakeholders.

The workshop aims to refine and strengthen a shared regional approach to justice, accountability, reconciliation, and sustainable peace, marking an important step toward advancing collective responses to transitional justice challenges across the IGAD region.



Executive Secretary Meets U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan on Regional Peace and Security

On February 3, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary, received Michael J. Adler, U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan, at IGAD headquarters in Addis Ababa.¹⁶

¹⁴ IGAD Validates Draft Regional Framework for Transitional Justice.
<https://x.com/IGADPeace/status/201939813122648479?s=20>

¹⁵ The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) is a non-profit international organization founded in 2001 that works to help societies in transition address the legacy of massive human rights violations. Headquartered in New York City, it provides technical expertise and support to victims, civil society, and state actors to seek accountability and build sustainable peace.
<https://www.ictj.org/>



The meeting focused on the regional peace and security situation, with particular attention to advancing dialogue and stability in South Sudan. Both leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to promoting peace, resilience, and long-term stability in the region.

The discussions underscored IGAD's role as a key convener in regional diplomacy and highlighted the importance of continued collaboration with international partners such as the United States. By strengthening dialogue and supporting inclusive governance, IGAD and the U.S. aim to contribute to lasting peace and sustainable development in South Sudan and beyond.

IGAD Reaffirms Commitment to Peace in South Sudan

On February 2, on behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary, Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware received **Amb. Maj. Gen. (Rtd) George Owinow**,¹⁷ Interim Chairperson of the **Reconstituted Joint**

¹⁶ Executive Secretary Meets U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan on Regional Peace and Security
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18MyJCueHv/>

¹⁷ Amb. Maj. Gen. (Rtd) George Aggrey Owinow, is a retired Kenyan military officer with over 40 years of service in military and diplomatic roles across Africa and internationally. He served as Deputy Force Commander of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and as Brigade Commander of the Kenya Army Corps of Engineers, where he oversaw the nomination, training, and deployment of engineer units to AMISOM. He also served as Defense Advisor at the Kenya Mission to the United Nations in New York, also served in UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) as a military observer and negotiator within the Joint Military Ceasefire Committee. In November 2020,



Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC),¹⁸ for a briefing on the status of the peace process in South Sudan.¹⁹



IGAD reiterated its call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and emphasized the importance of the full implementation of the **Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)**.²⁰ The organization underscored that inclusive dialogue remains the only viable path toward

achieving durable peace, stability, and reconciliation in the country.

IGAD Convenes Regional Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security

The IGAD Ministerial Meeting on Women, Peace and Security, held in Nairobi from February 25 to 27, 2026, brought together ministers, civil society leaders, and international partners to strengthen women's role in peacebuilding across the Horn of Africa.²¹ Over the course of the meeting, delegates reaffirmed the **IGAD Regional Gender Strategy**²² and the **Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security**,²³ first introduced in 2023, and agreed on new measures to ensure accountability and implementation.

One of the most significant outcomes was the establishment of an Advisory Board to guide the IGAD

Owinow was nominated by the Government of Kenya and endorsed by IGAD to serve as the Interim Chairperson of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) for South Sudan.

<https://www.jmecsouthsudan.com/index.php/about-rjmec/leadership#:~:text=Interim%20Chairperson,Amb.>

¹⁸ The Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was signed in Addis Ababa on 12 September 2018 under the auspices of IGAD. The Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission is constituted under Chapter VII of the R-ARCSS and is responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the Revitalised Peace Agreement and the mandate and tasks of the RTGoNU, including the adherence of the Parties to the agreed timelines and implementation schedule. In case of non-implementation of the mandate and tasks of the RTGoNU, or other serious deficiencies, the RJMEC shall recommend appropriate corrective action to the RTGoNU. RJMEC reports directly to the Heads of State and Government of IGAD. <https://www.jmecsouthsudan.com/index.php>

¹⁹ IGAD Reaffirms Commitment to Peace in South Sudan. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17mxgipgV9/>

²⁰ See the preceding footnote.

²¹ IGAD Convenes Regional Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security <https://web.facebook.com/share/v/1DcppMYF5E/>

²² The IGAD Gender Statistics Strategy is a regional framework developed by the IGAD to strengthen the collection, analysis, and use of gender-disaggregated data across its member states. The strategy is designed to support evidence-based policymaking, promote gender equality, and align with IGAD's broader Vision 2050 and the Regional Gender Equality Strategy (2023–2030). <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/IGAD-Gender-Strategy-2023-2030-2.pdf>

²³ The IGAD Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2023–2030) is the guiding framework for advancing gender equality and women's participation in peacebuilding across the Horn of Africa. It was developed through broad consultations with governments, civil society, and international partners, and serves as the foundation for the commitments discussed at the IGAD Ministerial Meeting on WPS. It outlines IGAD's region strategic priorities to accelerate the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820, and related commitments. It emphasizes women's participation in peace processes, protection from gender-based violence, prevention of conflict, and integration of gender perspectives in relief and recovery. The plan was produced by IGAD in collaboration with member states, UN agencies, and civil society, and is intended to serve as a practical tool for harmonizing national action plans with regional strategies. https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/IGAD_RAP_WPS.pdf



Women Peace and Security Forum. The board will include ministers responsible for gender equality, foreign affairs officials, civil society representatives, and IGAD Secretariat staff. Its role is to ensure that women's voices are central in peace negotiations and that national policies align with IGAD's regional framework. The conference endorsed the roadmap to establish the IGAD women and youth mediation advisory board, which highlights IGAD's commitment in building lasting solutions to women in leadership and peace making process.²⁴



Participants committed to institutionalizing women's participation in peace talks, strengthening monitoring of WPS indicators, supporting national chapters of the forum, and mobilizing resources with UN agencies and development partners. While optimism was high, delegates acknowledged challenges such as limited female representation in political leadership, funding constraints, and ongoing conflicts in South Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia.

The Nairobi meeting marked a turning point for IGAD's Women, Peace and Security agenda. By embedding women's leadership into regional peace structures, ministers signaled a shift from rhetoric to action. As one civil society representative noted during the closing session, peace in the region cannot be achieved without women at the table.

The initiative reinforces IGAD's commitment to advancing women's leadership in peace processes and strengthening inclusive, evidence-driven approaches to regional stability. By prioritizing women and

ensuring data-informed strategies, IGAD aims to enhance the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts and foster sustainable solutions to security challenges across the Horn of Africa.

This meeting marks a significant step in embedding gender-responsive approaches within IGAD's peace and security agenda, ensuring that women's voices and expertise are central to shaping the region's future.



High-Level Engagement for Regional Peace

On February 4, Abdoukader Kamil Mohamed, Prime Minister of the Republic of Djibouti, held a talk with Moussa Djama, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, to review the regional situation and explore pathways toward stability in the Horn of Africa.²⁵



The discussions addressed key political and security developments, the strengthening of mediation efforts, protection of civilians, and improved humanitarian access. The meeting reaffirmed Djibouti's strong commitment to the objectives of IGAD and to collective action in support of peace and stability across the region.

²⁴ IGAD Advances Women, Peace and Security Agenda Through Regional Convening
<https://x.com/IGADsecretariat/status/202692180008541439>
[5](#)

²⁵ High-Level Engagement for Regional Peace.
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18JNYhdVrg/>





2. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Securing Our Future Through Smart Land Governance

On February 2, IGAD highlighted that across the IGAD region, land is more than just territory; it is the foundation of livelihoods, investments, and social cohesion.²⁶ How it is managed today will shape food security, climate resilience, and peace for future generations. Through its **Land Governance Programme**²⁷ and **Agriculture and Environment**²⁸ mandate, it is supporting Member States to build transparent, inclusive, and climate-responsive land systems that serve both people and development.

IGAD focuses on:

- Strengthening land registration and tenure security
- Promoting fair access for women, youth, and pastoral communities
- Integrating land planning into climate adaptation strategies

²⁶ Securing Our Future Through Smart Land Governance. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DTA9YFpiu/>

²⁷ The IGAD Land Governance Program was launched in 2015 at a project level, as a joint initiative of the Africa Land Policy Centre (LPC) and IGAD Secretariat, within the Agriculture and Environment Division and thereafter the Land Governance Unit was established to increase Member States' capacity to address land-related challenges. <https://igad.int/landgovernanceprogramme/>

²⁸ The Agriculture and Environment Division (AED) was started in 1986 and has remained central to IGAD's mandate, vision, and mission. The division is in charge of IGAD's work on agriculture, environment protection,

- Aligning national policies with regional frameworks
- Empowering local institutions to manage land sustainably

By strengthening land systems and institutions, IGAD is helping communities invest with confidence, resolve disputes peacefully, and protect shared natural resources, laying the foundation for long-term regional resilience and prosperity.



Climate Watch Advisory: The Evolving Dry Conditions in Eastern Africa - February 2026 Update

On 16 February 2026, the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) released an updated Climate Watch Advisory, highlighting the continued deterioration of dry conditions across Eastern Africa.²⁹ Persistent drought hotspots remain evident in eastern Kenya, large parts of Somalia, central Uganda, southern Ethiopia, and sections of central and northern Tanzania.

Analysis of November–January rainfall based on the Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) confirms that significant rainfall deficits have affected most of these areas for at least three consecutive months. These

natural resource management, blue economy, and land governance. It leads the efforts of the Authority in building resilience and sustainable development. The AED mandates to support Member States in achieving food security, reducing poverty, and promoting sustainable development through regional cooperation. It focuses on enhancing agricultural production, sustainable natural resource management, environmental protection, and building resilience against climate change and drought. <https://igad.int/agriculture-environment/>

²⁹ Climate Watch Advisory: The Evolving Dry Conditions in Eastern Africa - February 2026 Update. <https://www.icpac.net/publications/climate-watch-advisory-the-evolving-dry-conditions-in-eastern-africa-february-2026-update/>



rainfall shortages have contributed to the escalation of crop and pasture warning levels. Several regions are experiencing soil moisture deficits, vegetation stress, or both, disrupting agricultural and pastoral systems. As a result, alert levels have risen in the affected areas, reflecting increased vulnerability among communities reliant on rain-fed agriculture and livestock production. The advisory underscores the need for continued monitoring, anticipatory action, and timely interventions to mitigate the emerging risks to food security, livelihoods, and environmental stability across the region.



The 5th Sub-Regional Climate Outlook Forum (Sub-COF5) was held on 10–12 February 2026 in Moyale, Ethiopia, focusing on the Marsabit–Borana cross-border region (IGAD Cluster II).

The 5th Sub-Regional Climate Outlook Forum (Sub-COF5), held from February 10–12, 2026, in Moyale, Ethiopia, marked a pivotal moment for climate resilience in the Marsabit–Borana cross-border region (IGAD Cluster II).³⁰ Convened by ICPAC in partnership with meteorological agencies from both Ethiopia and Kenya, the forum focused on translating the March–May (MAM) 2026 seasonal forecast into actionable intelligence for local communities. By bringing together scientists, media representatives, and cross-border stakeholders, the event moved beyond raw data to co-produce sector-specific advisories that address the unique challenges of this climate-sensitive corridor.

Regarding the atmospheric outlook, the forecast for the MAM 2026 season indicates a trend of mostly normal to below-normal rainfall accompanied by warmer-than-average temperatures. While the general

outlook leans dry, experts warned of localized "pulses" where some areas may actually experience wetter-than-usual conditions. This dual threat of overall moisture deficits and potential flash events requires a sophisticated approach to resource management. To meet this challenge, the forum emphasized the integration of Indigenous Knowledge with modern meteorology, guiding pastoralists in the strategic management of water and pasture to ensure livestock health remains stable despite the heat.



The success of these climate strategies hinges on the strength of cross-border cooperation and clear communication. Ethiopia and Kenya have reinforced their commitment to shared climate action, recognizing that environmental shifts do not respect national boundaries. A major focus of the forum was the role of the media in delivering timely early warnings; by stripping away technical jargon and focusing on practical "what to do" messaging, the participants ensured that even the most remote communities can act before the season takes hold. Ultimately, Sub-COF5 transformed a seasonal outlook into a roadmap for stability, ensuring that decision-making is both locally relevant and scientifically grounded.



³⁰ March-May (MAM) 2026 Seasonal Forecast for IGAD Cluster II. <https://www.icpac.net/publications/march-may-mam-2026-seasonal-forecast-for-igad-cluster-ii/>



Djibouti Groundwater Resilience and Water Supply Project (P511492)

On February 20, the Republic of Djibouti has formally launched the **Djibouti Groundwater Resilience and Water Supply Project (P511492)**³¹, a major initiative designed to strengthen water security and climate resilience in the country.³² The project will be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Water, and Halieutic Resources (Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Eau, de la Pêche et de l'Élevage et des Ressources Halieutiques) with financing provided by the **International Development Association (IDA)**³³ under the terms of a recently signed Financing Agreement.

At the heart of the project is the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), which outlines the measures and actions required to ensure compliance with the **World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs)**.³⁴ The ESCP forms an integral part of the Agreement and commits Djibouti to carrying out the project in a manner acceptable to the Association. This includes preparing, consulting, disclosing, and implementing environmental and social documents, as well as establishing institutional, staffing, training, monitoring, reporting, and grievance management arrangements.

The ESCP emphasizes that sufficient funds must be allocated to cover the costs of implementation, and it allows for adaptive management in response to

project changes or unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, the ESCP will be updated through formal exchanges between the Association and the Recipient, with the revised plan promptly disclosed to stakeholders.

A specific subsection on “Indicators for Implementation Readiness” identifies actions and measures to be monitored to assess whether the project is prepared to begin execution in line with the ESCP. However, all commitments outlined in the plan must be implemented according to the agreed timeframes, regardless of whether they are listed under readiness indicators.

This initiative represents a significant step forward in Djibouti's efforts to secure sustainable water resources, enhance resilience to climate change, and improve access to safe water supply systems. By embedding environmental and social safeguards into the project framework, Djibouti and its partners aim to ensure that development outcomes are both sustainable and equitable.



Africa Diplomacy Week Opens with IGAD Groundwater Initiative

On February 10, IGAD has commenced its engagements in Addis Ababa at a high level side event organized in collaboration with the United Nations

³¹ Djibouti Groundwater Resilience and Water Supply Project (P511492) <https://igad.int/djibouti-groundwater-resilience-and-water-supply-project-p511492/>

³² Djibouti Groundwater Resilience and Water Supply Project (P511492) <https://igad.int/djibouti-groundwater-resilience-and-water-supply-project-p511492/>

³³ The International Development Association is a development finance institution which offers concessional loans and grants to the world's poorest developing countries. The IDA is a member of the World Bank Group and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. in the United States.

³⁴ The **ESSs** are part of its **Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)**, adopted in 2016 and applied to all Investment Project Financing (IPF) projects since October 2018. The ESSs set out mandatory requirements for borrowers to identify, assess, and manage environmental and social risks and impacts of projects. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/310111580773271712/pdf/Environmental-and-Social-Impact-Assessment-Western-Economic-Corridor-and-Regional-Enhancement-Program-P169880.pdf>



Development Programme Africa (UNDP Africa).³⁵ The session, titled “Unlocking Groundwater Investments Through Strategic Partnerships: Advancing Agenda 2063 Water and Sanitation Goals in the Horn of Africa”, placed water security at the center of regional diplomacy and development.



Delivering keynote remarks, IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu emphasized the critical role of groundwater in building resilience, stability, and peace across the Horn of Africa. He urged stronger political commitment, deeper regional cooperation, and a decisive shift toward African-led solutions to address water scarcity and its impact on communities.

Dr. Workneh described groundwater as a “strategic lever” for sustainable development, highlighting its importance not only for agriculture and livelihoods but also for fostering regional peace and prosperity. He stressed that water security is foundational to achieving the African Union’s Agenda 2063 goals, particularly in advancing sanitation and sustainable resource management.

The event brought together policymakers, development partners, and regional stakeholders to explore investment opportunities and collaborative frameworks for groundwater management. By aligning diplomatic efforts with practical solutions, IGAD and its partners aim to strengthen resilience to climate

change, reduce resource-related conflict, and promote long-term stability in the region.



IGAD Drives Regional Action on Resilient Seed Systems

On February 11, IGAD, through its Food Systems Resilience Programme (FSRP), convened a high-level *Regional Consultative Dialogue*, bringing together Member States, **AUDA-NEPAD**,³⁶ and technical partners to accelerate collaboration and transform resilient seed systems across the IGAD region.³⁷ Speaking on behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary, the Director of the Agriculture and Environment Division, Mr. Daher Elmi, underscored the central role of resilient seed systems in ensuring food security, driving agricultural growth, and strengthening climate resilience. He noted that reliable seed systems are particularly vital in the face of recurring droughts, conflict, and supply chain disruptions that continue to challenge communities across the Horn of Africa.



George N. McGoye, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Djibouti, reaffirmed Kenya’s commitment to regional harmonization and coordinated action. He stressed that inclusive and resilient seed systems are essential for sustainable agricultural development and long-term food systems resilience.

programs across the continent. It evolved from the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and was transformed into AUDA-NEPAD in 2018 to better align with the AU’s long-term strategy, Agenda 2063.

³⁷ IGAD Drives Regional Action on Resilient Seed Systems <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1ACdRuo13r/>

³⁵ Africa Diplomacy Week begins. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CJdWh57kq/>

³⁶ The African Union Development Agency – NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) is the technical body of the African Union responsible for driving and coordinating development



The dialogue aims to take stock of the regional seed landscape, elevate best practices, and address systemic gaps. Participants define priority policy and technical actions to expand seed access, strengthen quality supply chains, and enhance regional coordination. By doing so, IGAD and its partners seek to lay the foundation for lasting resilience in food systems across the region.

This initiative reflects IGAD's broader commitment to advancing Agenda 2063 goals and ensuring that African-led solutions drive progress in agriculture, climate adaptation, and regional stability.



In Lodwar, Cluster One reaffirmed its commitment to coordinated action for Peaceful Resilient Borderlands

On February 13, IGAD, through the **IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI)**³⁸ platform and in collaboration with GIZ, convened the **Karamoja Cluster**³⁹ Project Technical

³⁸ The IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) is a regional framework launched in 2011 to address the root causes of vulnerability and end drought emergencies in the Horn of Africa. The devastating drought that hit the IGAD region in 2010-2011 affected more than 13 million people and exacerbated food insecurity to famine levels in many areas of the region. The severity of this crisis brought to the fore the catastrophic impact of recurrent droughts and their dire humanitarian, environmental and productivity consequences. Seeking to address the catastrophic phenomenon of recurrent droughts and worsening environmental concerns in a sustainable manner, the Heads of State and Government of countries in the Horn of Africa region convened a Summit in Nairobi in September and launched the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) to end drought emergencies. <https://resilience.igad.int/about-iddrsi/>

³⁹ The Karamoja cluster refers to an area of land that straddles the borders between South-Western Ethiopia, North-Western Kenya, South-Eastern South Sudan, and

Coordination Committee Meeting under the **Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands Project**.⁴⁰ Delegates from Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan, alongside IGAD Specialized Institutions, the IDDRSI Programme Coordination Unit, and development partners, reaffirmed their commitment to coordinated action for peaceful and resilient borderlands.



The meeting reviewed the cluster's coordination structure, clarified roles and responsibilities, and aligned interventions across critical areas including climate services, early warning systems, livestock development, and peace and security. Discussions also focused on strengthening linkages with IGAD's specialized institutions and enhancing collaboration with local and national authorities to address shared cross-border challenges. By reinforcing a practical,

North-Eastern Uganda. It is a cross-border area whose geographic location is shared between 4 countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda). It is occupied by at least 13 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities (including Bokora, Dessenech, Didinga, Dodoth, Jie, Matheniko, Nyangatom, Thur, Pian, Pokot, Tepeth, Topotha, and Turkana). The shared border of the cluster is approximately 8,382 km. <https://resilience.igad.int/clusters/igad-cluster-1-karamoja-cluster/>

⁴⁰ Launched on September 23, 2024, the Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands Programme (PRBP), an initiative aimed at enhancing the lives of people in the cross-border areas of the Horn of Africa. The PRBP tackles key challenge affecting border clusters in the IGAD region. It will do so by addressing the root causes of instability and promoting socio-economic development. By fostering coordination among local authorities, regional bodies, and community stakeholders, the programme aims to enhance information sharing and exchanges, mitigate conflicts, and support sustainable development in the targeted IGAD border clusters. <https://igad.int/official-launch-of-the-peaceful-and-resilient-borderlands-programme-prbp/>



whole-of-region approach, the engagement aims to reduce fragility and advance sustainable development across the Karamoja borderlands. This initiative reflects IGAD's broader mission of fostering resilience, stability, and prosperity in vulnerable border regions, ensuring that communities benefit from integrated and cooperative solutions.



Strengthening Regional Action on Fisheries Monitoring and Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in the IGAD Region

From 17th to 19th February, IGAD, through its Agriculture and Environment Division, in collaboration with the **African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)**,⁴¹ conducted a regional training workshop on Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation for IGAD Member States.⁴²

The three-day workshop brings together fisheries and environment experts from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. The training aims to strengthen regional capacity to combat, deter, and prevent illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, while also promoting the conservation of aquatic biodiversity.

This initiative forms part of IGAD's **Blue Economy program**,⁴³ implemented under the Sida-supported project "Enhancing Blue Economy in the IGAD Member States for Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Diversification." The program seeks to safeguard marine and freshwater resources, diversify livelihoods, and ensure sustainable use of aquatic ecosystems across the region.

Officials highlighted that effective fisheries monitoring and biodiversity conservation are critical to food security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability in the Horn of Africa. By equipping Member States with practical skills and tools, IGAD and AU-IBAR aim to foster stronger regional cooperation and more resilient aquatic ecosystems. The workshop underscores IGAD's commitment to advancing the Blue Economy agenda and supporting Member States in addressing shared challenges in fisheries governance and biodiversity protection.

⁴¹ The African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) is a specialized technical office of the African Union Commission (AUC), headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. Its mandate is to support and coordinate the sustainable development and utilization of Africa's animal resources including livestock, fisheries, and wildlife for improved food security, economic growth, and regional integration.

⁴² Strengthening Regional Action on Fisheries Monitoring and Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in the IGAD Region <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CE1XY225w/>

⁴³ The IGAD Blue Economy Program is an initiative of the IGAD that focuses on harnessing water-based resources, oceans, seas, lakes, and rivers—for sustainable development in the Horn of Africa. It emphasizes fisheries, aquaculture, maritime transport, renewable energy, and ecosystem conservation as drivers of food security, economic growth, and climate resilience. <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IGAD-Blue-Strategy-Draft.pdf>





3. SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Strengthening Regional Preparedness. Protecting Our Future.

On February 16, IGAD launched the Regional Pandemic Preparedness and Response (PREPARE) Project, in Kampala, reinforcing collective action to safeguard communities across the region.⁴⁴ With support from the World Health Organization and the Pandemic Fund, the initiative strengthens surveillance, laboratory systems, emergency coordination, and cross-border collaboration among Member States.



Strengthening Digital Health Systems Across the IGAD Region

On 1 February, IGAD emphasized that strong digital health systems are critical for resilience and regional health security.⁴⁵ Through its digital health and disease-surveillance initiatives, IGAD is supporting Member States in modernizing health information systems and enhancing cross-border collaboration.

⁴⁴ Strengthening Regional Preparedness. Protecting Our Future. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18HzdsudJQ/>

⁴⁵ Strengthening Digital Health Systems Across the IGAD Region. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1GdRew16Rb/>

⁴⁶ IGAD Hosts Second Regional Training on Business and Human Rights in Djibouti. <https://igad.int/igad-hosts-second-regional-training-on-business-and-human-rights-in-djibouti/>

This commitment is reflected in the handover of digital health equipment to the Member State Ministries of Health, translating regional strategies into national action.

IGAD is driving impact through:

- Digital disease surveillance and real-time data sharing
- Strengthened health information systems and decision-making
- Better preparedness and faster response to public health threats

By advancing interoperable digital health systems, IGAD is strengthening collective health security and protecting communities across the region.



IGAD Hosts Second Regional Training on Business and Human Rights in Djibouti

From February 8-12, IGAD, through its Health and Social Development Division and in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), convened the Second Regional Training on Business and Human Rights in Djibouti.⁴⁶ The training brought together representatives from IGAD institutions and the **Regional Network of National Human Rights Institutions**⁴⁷ to strengthen responsible business

⁴⁷ The IGAD National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) Network is a regional body fostering collaboration among NHRIs in IGAD member states to promote human rights, Good Governance, and the rule of law in line with the Paris Principles. Launched in 2023, it facilitates experience sharing, capacity building, and joint responses to human rights violations. <https://ehrc.org/launching-of-the-intergovernmental-authority-on-development-igad-national-human-rights-institutions-nhris-network/#:~:text=June%202023%2C%202023,-.The%20IGAD%20NHRIs%20Network%20aims%20to%20enhance%20the%20capacity%20of,region%20and%20sharing%20of%20experiences.%E2%80%9D>



conduct and human rights protection across the region.



The initiative supports IGAD's ongoing efforts to advance the **Protocols on Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance**,⁴⁸ which aim to enhance regional integration, labour mobility, and economic opportunity. As mobility expands, ensuring that businesses uphold human rights, covering labour conditions, environmental protection, land rights, and community relations, has become increasingly critical.

During the opening session, Amb. Moussa Meigague, Director of Health and Social Development, emphasized the importance of aligning economic growth with international human rights standards. Senior officials, including Djibril Osman Houffaneh, Secretary General of Djibouti's National Human Rights Commission, underscored the role of regional cooperation in promoting inclusive and rights-respecting economic development.

JICA's Chief Representative in Djibouti, Ms. Kotohi Inoue, highlighted the strengthened partnership between JICA and IGAD, noting that this second training builds on growing collaboration following the IGAD Executive Secretary's visit to Japan during

TICAD9. She reaffirmed JICA's support for enhancing understanding of global frameworks such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

The five-day programme included expert presentations, case studies, group discussions, and practical exercises. Participants examined regional challenges and developed actionable strategies to improve accountability, monitoring mechanisms, and policy implementation related to business and human rights.

Building on the first regional training held in February 2025, this session further contributes to IGAD's broader agenda to improve labour migration governance, strengthen protection systems for migrants and workers, and promote safe mobility and decent work across the region.

At the conclusion of the programme, participants committed to strengthening their regional network, advancing national implementation of business and human rights frameworks, and supporting more responsible, sustainable, and inclusive development across the IGAD region.



The 2nd PREPARE Project Bulletin

On February 9, the second bulletin of the **IGAD Preparedness for Pandemic Response (PREPARE) Project**⁴⁹ reports that Ethiopia's Federal Ministry of

⁴⁸ IGAD Protocol on Transhumance. See full: <https://icpald.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/IGAD-PROTOCOL-ON-TRANSHUMANCE-Final-Endorsed-Version.pdf>

The IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons. See full: <https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11411/files/event/file/Final%20IGAD%20PROTOCOL%20ENDORSED%20BY%20IGAD%20Ambassadors%20and%20Ministers%20of%20Interior%20and%20Labour%20Khartoum%2026%20Feb%202020.pdf>

⁴⁹ The IGAD Regional Preparedness for Pandemic Response (PREPARE) Project is a multi-year, \$31.9 million flagship initiative aimed at strengthening health security and resilience across East Africa. Launched in August 2025 in Kampala, Uganda, the project enhances cross-border preparedness and multisectoral coordination using a "One Health" framework. [https://igad.int/igad-launches-the-prepare-project-to-safeguard-regional-health-security/#:~:text=Preparedness%20for%20Pandemic%20Response%20\(PREPARE\)%20Project%20to,response%2C](https://igad.int/igad-launches-the-prepare-project-to-safeguard-regional-health-security/#:~:text=Preparedness%20for%20Pandemic%20Response%20(PREPARE)%20Project%20to,response%2C)



Health has officially declared the end of the country's first Marburg virus disease outbreak, acknowledging the critical support provided by IGAD's PREPARE initiative. In another encouraging development, weekly Mpox cases in Uganda and Kenya have continued to decline steadily since their initial outbreaks.⁵⁰



This downward trajectory marks significant progress for both the IGAD region and the PREPARE project's interventions. Building on this momentum, the project is transitioning from its targeted Mpox response into a broader, multisectoral strategy. This new phase will be guided by the **One Health framework**,⁵¹ designed to strengthen preparedness against a wider range of public health threats.

Jointly implemented by the World Health Organization (WHO), IGAD, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the PREPARE Project seeks to reinforce regional health security by enhancing early warning systems, risk assessment capacities, and rapid response mechanisms for transboundary infectious diseases.

[%20and%20resilience%20across%20the%20IGAD%20region.](#)

⁵⁰ The 2nd PREPARE Project Bulletin <https://igad.int/the-2nd-prepare-project-bulletin/>

⁵¹ The One Health framework is an integrated, collaborative approach that recognizes the interconnection between human health, animal health, and environmental health. It emphasizes that the well-being of people,



Strengthening the Capacities of Legislators for Improved Protection of Displaced Persons

The Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Djibouti, in collaboration with IGAD and the National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims (ONARS), has launched a national capacity-building workshop to strengthen legislative and institutional responses to forced displacement.⁵² The initiative brings together legislators, policymakers, and representatives from ministries, departments, and agencies to address the challenges of hosting approximately 32,000 refugees and asylum seekers representing more than 3% of Djibouti's population.

Opening the workshop, Mr. Souleiman Moumin Robleh, Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior, underscored the pressures facing the Horn of Africa due to conflict, climate change, and food insecurity, which continue to drive large-scale population movements. He emphasized the need for robust national frameworks to support hosting communities and protect displaced populations.



domestic and wild animals, plants, and ecosystems are closely linked, and that effective health solutions require cross-sectoral cooperation. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/8c8341e0-8879-443b-88da-626ae9cf067c/content>

⁵² Strengthening the Capacities of Legislators for Improved Protection of Displaced Persons <https://igad.int/strengthening-the-capacities-of-legislators-for-improved-protection-of-displaced-persons/>



The workshop builds on the **IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection**,⁵³ endorsed in 2023, which encourages member states to adapt regional recommendations into national legislation and programming. A key objective of the training is to equip parliamentarians and policymakers with the tools to align national laws with regional and international standards, while strengthening oversight and fostering dialogue between legislative and executive branches, civil society, and humanitarian actors.

Speaking on behalf of IGAD, Mr. Josephat Onyari, Director of Finance and Administration, highlighted the critical role of legislators in establishing legal frameworks that address root causes of displacement and promote durable solutions. Mr. Mohamed Ali Kamil, Executive Secretary of ONARS, recalled the institution’s central role since its establishment in 1978 and stressed the importance of ongoing legal and institutional reforms to enhance coordination with partners.

Supported by funding from the Government of Sweden through the **Protection and Solutions for Displaced Persons Project (PSDP)**,⁵⁴ the workshop is expected to strengthen participants’ understanding of international, continental, and regional legal instruments. By the conclusion of the sessions, parliamentarians and policymakers are anticipated to assume stronger roles in protecting displaced persons’ rights, advancing legislative reforms, and ensuring inclusive collaboration for sustainable solutions.

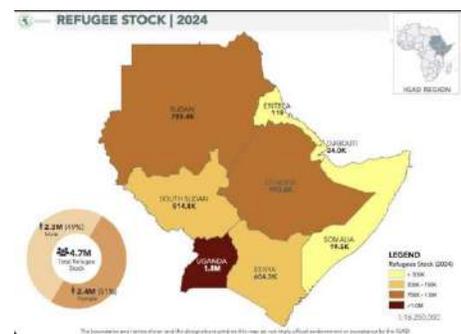
⁵³ The IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection is a regional instrument adopted by the IGAD to guide member states in providing protection, assistance, and durable solutions for refugees in the Horn of Africa. https://igadsupportplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/IGAD-Policy-Framework-on-Refugee-Protection_ENGLISH.pdf

This initiative reflects Djibouti’s enduring commitment to solidarity and hospitality, while reinforcing regional cooperation under IGAD’s broader agenda for resilience, protection, and integration.



Refugees & Asylum Seekers: Solidarity in Action

On February 5, IGAD has reaffirmed its role as a cornerstone of global responsibility-sharing for displaced populations, with the region hosting more than 5.4 million refugees and asylum seekers as of December 2024.⁵⁵ This figure reflects both the protracted nature of crises across the Horn of Africa and IGAD’s enduring commitment to protection and inclusion.



According to IGAD’s regional snapshot:

- **Uganda** continues to host the largest refugee population, with approximately 1.8 million people.

⁵⁴ The Protection and Solutions for Displaced Persons Project (PSDP) is an initiative of the IGAD, supported by the Government of Sweden. It was launched to address the challenges of forced displacement in the IGAD region, which hosts millions of refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons.

⁵⁵ Refugees & Asylum Seekers: Solidarity in Action <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1KCB0zZhvb/>



- **Kenya** records the highest number of asylum seekers in the region.
- **Women and girls** make up 51% of the registered refugee population, underscoring the urgent need for gender-responsive protection and services.

Through its Migration and Displacement Department, IGAD is working closely with Member States and international partners to strengthen protection systems, expand access to essential services, and advance durable solutions that uphold the dignity and opportunities of all displaced persons.

This commitment reflects IGAD's broader mission of fostering regional solidarity and resilience in the face of displacement challenges, while ensuring that affected populations are not only protected but also included in social and economic development initiatives.



Empowering Teachers, Transforming Education, Building Peace

On February 10, IGAD underscored the central role of teachers in building resilient, inclusive, and peaceful

⁵⁶ Empowering Teachers. Transforming Education. Building Peace.

<https://web.facebook.com/igadsecretariat/posts/pfbid0xU57uzNiNsVMPFfb9zmC3UFE3ErZbtgdbuKnKjfxzDM1QrpA4fR3CXPJamK2eFI?rdid=Dj2w62qkTGU1Nik9#>

⁵⁷ The ESTI Program deals with all levels Education (from Pre-primary, to primary and tertiary education as well! Skills building throu TVET and other pathway. The ESTI emanated from the Djibouti Declaration (DD) and implements a number of imitatives or sub programs, such as the IGAD Qualifications Framework (IGADQF), the IGAD Teacher Training Initiative (ITTI), IGAD Scholarship Prgam, IGAD Universities Forum/ IGAD Council of Higher Education (ICHE), and others. <https://igad.int/education/>

⁵⁸ The Djibouti Declaration of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Refugee Education is a non-binding legal

societies across the region.⁵⁶ Through the **IGAD Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI) Programme**,⁵⁷ and anchored in the **Djibouti Declaration on Education for Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities**,⁵⁸ IGAD is advancing a regional Teacher Training Initiative to strengthen learning outcomes and foster peace.

Teachers from Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda have been equipped with skills in pedagogy, psychosocial support, life skills, and ICT to thrive in complex settings. National dialogues in Ethiopia, Uganda, and South Sudan are aligning stakeholders for sustained professional development, supported by partners including UNHCR and GIZ.



Celebrating Somalia's Tourism Promise

On February 4, IGAD highlighted Somalia's growing tourism potential, noting its importance within a rapidly expanding regional sector.⁵⁹ Across the IGAD region, tourism is emerging as a key driver of economic diversification, job creation, and people-to-people exchange. Through strengthened regional cooperation, IGAD is working to ensure that tourism

instrument produced by the IGAD in 2017, it has eight member states: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and Eritrea. The declaration states the commitments of member states to implement and develop quality educational standards and inclusion in their national legal framework and educational system, it is accompanied by an Action Plan, which outlines the actions to be carried out in the delivery of quality education and learning outcomes for refugees, returnees and host communities in the region. <https://www.right-to-education.org/resource/djibouti-declaration-refugee-education#:~:text=The%20Djibouti%20Declaration%20of%20the.host%20communities%20in%20the%20region.> See the full Declaration: [https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/Djibouti Declaration Refugee Education 2017 En.pdf](https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/Djibouti%20Declaration%20Refugee%20Education%2017%20En.pdf)

⁵⁹ Celebrating Somalia's Tourism Promise. <https://web.facebook.com/reel/1244609174248407>



contributes to sustainable development and deeper regional integration.



Somalia stands out as a country of remarkable promise. Its breathtaking coastline, historic port cities, rich cultural heritage, and ancient trade corridors position it as an essential contributor to the region's shared narrative of resilience, renewal, and opportunity.

Guided by the **IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan 2024–2034**,⁶⁰ IGAD is partnering with Member States to enhance tourism infrastructure, improve destination management, and unlock the sector's full contribution to economic growth and livelihoods.

By advancing sustainable and cross-border tourism, IGAD is helping safeguard cultural and environmental heritage, empower local communities, and position the Horn of Africa as a compelling and competitive global destination.



Tourism Spotlight: Uganda

On February 4, IGAD highlighted Uganda's growing tourism potential as a key driver of sustainable economic development across the region.⁶¹ Tourism continues to create jobs, strengthen livelihoods, and

⁶⁰ See the full Master Plan: https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/IGAD-STMP-2024-2024_v1C.pdf

⁶¹ IGAD@40—Tourism Spotlight: Uganda. <https://web.facebook.com/profile/100069036135635/search/?q=Tourism%20Spotlight>

deepen cultural exchange throughout the IGAD region. Uganda stands at the center of this opportunity, offering world-renowned attractions—from mountain gorillas and expansive national parks to vibrant cultural traditions and the iconic Source of the Nile.



Through sustained investments in sustainable tourism, Uganda is expanding community incomes, protecting natural heritage, and increasing the sector's contribution to national development. Guided by regional cooperation and shared strategies, IGAD remains committed to supporting Member States in unlocking tourism's full potential as a catalyst for inclusive and resilient growth.



Industry Driving Regional Transformation

On February 15, IGAD highlighted the growing role of industry in driving regional transformation across the Horn of Africa.⁶² Across the IGAD region, industry and trade are steadily shaping a more integrated and competitive regional economy. Intra-regional exports among Member States have risen from 12.8% in 2015 to over 15% in 2023, underscoring the expanding importance of regional markets in supporting industrial growth and economic diversification.

⁶² Industry Driving Regional Transformation. <https://web.facebook.com/igadsecretariat/posts/pfbidOBBEwKDjcJZtnH1NMZQcPqgu2mJrCqjz3LXXUCt31wWdvYZ3qKDjzbXYMRozN3Arl?rdid=hm94N7gAp2KGFwA>





Through coordinated programmes, IGAD is working with Member States to strengthen productive capacity, build regional production networks, improve trade facilitation, and advance investments in transport, ICT, and energy infrastructure. These efforts are creating new opportunities for industries to scale, connect to wider markets, and contribute to sustainable economic development.



Investing in People. Strengthening Regional Capacity.

On February 19, IGAD and the African Development Bank convened consultations to advance a Human Capacity Strategy aimed at accelerating skills development and institutional strengthening across the region.⁶³

The engagement focused on aligning regional priorities with strategic investment in education, technical expertise, and workforce development to drive integration, resilience, and inclusive economic growth among Member States.



⁶³ Investing in People. Strengthening Regional Capacity. <https://web.facebook.com/igadsecretariat/posts/pfbid0afC>

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bgCJMxUpQLT19vl?rdid=wAUJSNsVwUjqKsPO#](https://www.linkedin.com/company/igad/posts/?feedView=all)





4. REGIONAL INTEGRATION

ICPAC Launches Regional Cross-Border Consultation Workshop on Disaster Displacement

On February 10, the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) launched the **Regional Cross-Border Consultation Workshop on Solutions for Disaster Displacement**, bringing together representatives from Moyale, Karamoja, Mandera, Mbale, Nimule, and Ali Addeh.⁶⁴ These border regions share strong socio-economic and cultural ties but continue to experience intense climate shocks, prolonged displacement, and recurring insecurity.

⁶⁴ ICPAC Kicks Off Regional Cross-Border Consultation Workshop on Disaster Displacement.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18SUAw7KSA/>

⁶⁵ The IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, endorsed in February 2020, aims to establish a regional framework for the free movement of goods, services, and people across the 8 IGAD member states. It facilitates visa-free entry for up to 90 days, the right of residence, and the right of establishment, while also addressing disaster-related displacement. See full document here:

<https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1411/files/event/file/Final%20IGAD%20PROTOCOL%20ENDORSED%20BY%20IGAD%20Ambassadors%20and%20Ministers%20of%20Interior%20and%20Labour%20Khartoum%2026%20Feb%202020.pdf>

⁶⁶ IGAD Regional Strategy For Disaster Risk Management (2019-2030), IGAD has developed a regional strategy for DRM, aligned to the Sendai Framework for DRR and the continental Programme of Action (PoA) for implementation of DRR in Africa through a consultative process. The regional strategy, was technically validated in February 2019, seeks to achieve the global outcome as outlined in the Sendai Framework.

The three-day workshop, supported by GIZ and Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is grounded in the **IGAD Free Movement Protocol (2020)**⁶⁵ and the **IGAD Disaster Risk Management Strategy (2020–2030)**.⁶⁶ Both instruments emphasize the need to shift from reactive crisis response to proactive and anticipatory action across the region.



This consultation provides a platform for IGAD Secretariat, Member States, and cross-border communities to co-develop solutions aligned with regional frameworks and the **MoDiaC Project (Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change in the IGAD Region)**.⁶⁷

<https://www.icpac.net/publications/igad-regional-strategy-for-disaster-risk-management/>

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) is a 15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement adopted by UN member states to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks. It aims to significantly reduce mortality, affected people, economic losses, and damage to infrastructure caused by natural and man-made hazards

⁶⁷ The MoDiaC Project (Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change in the IGAD Region), launched in September 2025 by IGAD and GIZ, enhances regional, national, and local capacities to manage climate-induced displacement. It aims to strengthen policy frameworks, improve data-driven, early warning systems (via ICPAC), and support sustainable solutions for populations affected by environmental degradation across the IGAD region. <https://igad.int/igad-with-support-from-the-government-of-germany-launch-regional-project-to-address-human-mobility-in-the-context-of-disasters-and-climate-change/#:~:text=Regional%20Project%20to%20Address%20Human%20Mobility%20in%20the%20Context%20of%20Disasters%20and%20Climate%20Change>



Key focus areas include:

- Strengthening cross-border cooperation
- Harmonizing mobility data collection
- Enhancing early warning systems
- Developing climate resilience solutions

Through coordinated efforts and shared commitment, the IGAD region is taking concrete steps to protect affected communities, reduce vulnerability, and build resilience in the face of climate- and disaster-induced displacement.

At Moyale, collaboration across borders moved from commitment to action.

On February 11, IGAD convened county leaders, technical institutions, and partners for the Moyale Cluster Technical Coordination Meeting under the Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands Project. The engagement focused on strengthening coordination mechanisms, clarifying roles, and advancing joint interventions in peace and security, climate resilience, livelihoods, and early warning.



By aligning efforts at local, national, and regional levels, the meeting reinforced a shared approach to managing cross-border risks and opportunities. Moyale's strategic position along the Kenya–Ethiopia border highlighted how sustained cooperation can

strengthen resilience, reduce fragility, and deliver inclusive benefits for border communities.

Strengthening Regional Infrastructure Planning in the Nile Basin

IGAD has concluded its participation in the AUDA-NEPAD African Infrastructure Database (AID) Task Team Training and Working Session on the Nile River Basin Investment Program (NRBIP),⁶⁸ led by the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat and held from 24–27 February 2026.⁶⁹ The engagement strengthened regional collaboration, enhanced infrastructure data management, and improved the visibility of transformative investment projects aimed at advancing climate-resilient socio-economic development across the Nile Basin.



By promoting digital integration and project coordination, IGAD continues to champion evidence-based planning and sustainable infrastructure development in the region. The initiative underscores IGAD's commitment to supporting Member States in harnessing shared resources, building resilience, and driving inclusive growth through coordinated infrastructure investments.

[bip#:~:text=The%20Nile%20River%20Basin%20Investment.to%20develop%20the%20Nile%20Basin.](#)

⁶⁹ IGAD Strengthens Regional Infrastructure Data Management through AUDA-NEPAD AID Training. <https://igad.int/igad-strengthens-regional-infrastructure-data-management-through-auda-nepad-aid-training/>



This milestone reflects IGAD's broader vision of fostering regional integration and sustainable development, ensuring that infrastructure planning in the Nile Basin contributes to long-term prosperity and stability.





5. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFAIRS

Statement by the Secretariat of IGAD On the Return of the Republic of the Sudan to IGAD

On February 9, IGAD has officially welcomed the Republic of the Sudan back into full participation in the regional organization.⁷⁰ The announcement marks a significant milestone in regional diplomacy, reinforcing IGAD's commitment to collective peace, stability, and cooperation across the Horn of Africa.

which played a pivotal role in facilitating Sudan's reintegration.

The IGAD Secretariat reaffirmed its readiness to work closely with Sudan to address current challenges and support a peaceful and prosperous future for the Sudanese people and the wider region. Sudan's return is widely seen as a positive step toward strengthening regional cooperation and advancing IGAD's mission of peace, resilience, and development.



IGAD's Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, described Sudan's return as a reaffirmation of regional solidarity and a strengthening of IGAD's unity. He emphasized that, as a founding Member State, Sudan's renewed engagement enhances the organization's capacity to address shared priorities and advance regional integration.

Dr. Workneh expressed deep appreciation to Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti and Chairperson of IGAD, for his leadership in guiding the process. He commended the Chairperson's commitment to dialogue and consensus building,

[intergovernmental-authority-on-development-igad-on-the-return-of-the-republic-of-the-sudan-to-igad/](https://igad.int/statement-by-the-secretariat-of-the-intergovernmental-authority-on-development-igad-on-the-return-of-the-republic-of-the-sudan-to-igad/)

⁷⁰ Statement by the Secretariat of IGAD On the Return of the Republic of the Sudan to IGAD <https://igad.int/statement-by-the-secretariat-of-the->





6. IGAD AT THE AFRICAN UNION

IGAD at the 39th African Union Summit Meetings

IGAD actively participated in the African Union Summit meetings, which bring together the continent's leaders for the 48th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and the 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.⁷¹ The IGAD delegation, led by Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, is engaging in high-level discussions to align regional priorities with continental frameworks under Agenda 2063.

This year's Summit comes at a pivotal moment for Africa, as leaders seek to advance collective action on peace and security, climate resilience, economic integration, and sustainable development. IGAD's participation underscores its role as a pillar of regional

stability and integration within the African Union architecture.

On February 10, IGAD joined a high-level engagement on Unlocking Groundwater Investments through Strategic Partnerships: Advancing **Agenda 2063 Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa**.⁷²

The delegation is also contributing to the **48th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council**⁷³ from February 11–12. During the African Union Inter-REC Coordination and Cooperation platform, on February 13, IGAD formally hand over the Chairmanship to the Southern African Development Community (SADC), reaffirming its commitment to strengthened inter-REC collaboration and continental coherence.

On February 14–15, Dr. Workneh join Heads of State and Government at the **39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly**,⁷⁴ where strategic continental priorities deliberated. On the margins of the Summit, the IGAD delegation is holding consultations with AU officials, Member States, partner institutions, and development partners to advance coordinated responses to peace and security challenges, climate-related risks, and economic transformation efforts.

Through its engagements at the AU Summit, IGAD is projecting the Horn of Africa's priorities onto the

⁷¹IGAD at the 39th African Union Summit Meetings
<https://igad.int/igad-at-the-39th-african-union-summit-meetings/>

⁷² The African Union's "Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy Framework" outlines a continental roadmap for water security and sustainable development. It emphasizes universal access to safe water and sanitation, integrated water resource management, climate resilience, and regional cooperation. The policy is aligned with Agenda 2063, the AU's 50-year strategic plan, and provides guidance for member states to harmonize national water policies with regional priorities.
<https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/46011-doc-EN-Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy.pdf>

⁷³ The 48th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union was held in Addis Ababa from February 11–12, 2026. The Executive Council, composed of foreign ministers and other designated representatives of AU

member states, convened to prepare the agenda and decisions for the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The session focused on reviewing reports from AU organs, adopting draft decisions for consideration by the Assembly, and discussing thematic priorities including peace and security, continental integration, health security, and climate resilience.

⁷⁴ The 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa in February 2026, focused on five thematic areas: leadership transition, adoption of the Africa Health Security and Sovereignty Agenda, peace and security deliberations on conflicts in Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, and the Sahel, reaffirmation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and climate resilience and sustainable development. These themes reflect the Assembly's dual priorities of addressing immediate crises while advancing long-term continental integration and self-reliance.



continental stage, reinforcing partnerships, and demonstrating its indispensable role in Africa's collective pursuit of peace, resilience, and integration.



IGAD at AU Summit - Setting the Pace

IGAD launched its week of continental engagements this morning with a high-level kick-off meeting chaired by Mohamed Abdi Ware, Deputy Executive Secretary of IGAD.⁷⁵ The meeting brought together senior members of the IGAD delegation to align priorities ahead of key engagements at the African Union Executive Council and Assembly sessions. Discussions sharpened IGAD's mission on peace and security, climate resilience, and regional integration, ensuring a unified and strategic approach to advancing the Horn of Africa's agenda on the continental stage.



Ware emphasized the importance of presenting a cohesive vision that reflects IGAD's commitment to stability, resilience, and prosperity in the region. The delegation reaffirmed its determination to remain results-driven, leveraging Africa Diplomacy Week as a

platform to strengthen partnerships and elevate regional priorities within the AU framework.

As the week unfolds, IGAD's united stance signals a strong commitment to African-led solutions, positioning the Horn of Africa as a key voice in shaping continental policies on peace, climate, and integration.



Driving Regional Priorities at the Continental Table.

IGAD is driving regional priorities at the continental level as its Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, leads the delegation to the 48th African Union Executive Council Meetings in Addis Ababa.⁷⁶ The delegation is engaging partners and participating in key side events to advance IGAD's agenda on peace, resilience, and regional integration.

Highlighting IGAD's measurable impact, Dr. Workneh noted that through the **IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI)**,⁷⁷ the organization has mobilized over USD 1.7 billion to strengthen resilience across the Horn of Africa. Meanwhile, the **IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC)**⁷⁸ now provides climate services to more than 300 million people, enhancing preparedness and adaptation in the face of climate variability.

Heads of State and Government in Nairobi to end drought emergencies and build long-term resilience.

⁷⁵ IGADatAUSummit Day 2 - Setting the Pace
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1B6dTpQPog/>

⁷⁶ Driving regional priorities at the continental table
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CCCSZdTgG/>

⁷⁷ The IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) is a regional program launched in 2011 by the IGAD following the devastating drought of 2010–2011, which affected over 13 million people in the Horn of Africa. The initiative was endorsed at a Summit of IGAD

⁷⁸ The IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) is a specialized institution of IGAD, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. It is accredited as a Regional Climate Centre by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).





designed to deepen financial integration, coordinate African financial institutions, and mobilize sustainable resources for continent-wide development in line with the African Union’s Agenda 2063.



In partnership with UNDP, IGAD has also mapped over 64 groundwater projects and is drilling boreholes to expand safe water access for vulnerable communities, underscoring the link between water security, stability, and sustainable development.

IGAD welcomed the initiative, noting its strong alignment with the IGAD Strategy 2026–2030. Dr. Workneh reaffirmed IGAD’s commitment to advancing African-led financing solutions that strengthen regional integration and long-term development across the Horn of Africa. The meeting underscored the importance of building a unified financial framework to support Africa’s growth ambitions, while ensuring that regional priorities are effectively represented in continental and global financial dialogues.

“From continental dialogue to measurable impact,” Dr. Workneh emphasized, IGAD’s work demonstrates how regional cooperation translates into tangible benefits for millions of people.

The delegation’s active participation at the AU sessions reflects IGAD’s commitment to ensuring that the Horn of Africa’s priorities are firmly represented at the continental table, reinforcing African-led solutions for peace, resilience, and integration.



IGAD Backs New African Financial Architecture at AU Summit Consultations

On February 15, on the sidelines of the 39th African Union Summit, the IGAD delegation, led by Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, participated in a high-level meeting with the President of the African Development Bank Group, Dr. Sidi Ould Tah.⁷⁹

During the engagement, Dr. Tah presented his vision for a New African Financial Architecture (NAFA),

IGAD Delegation Concludes Successful Participation in the 39th African Union Summit

IGAD concluded a highly productive week in Addis Ababa during the 39th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the 48th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council. Led by Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, the delegation advanced the Horn of Africa’s priorities in peace and security, climate resilience, sustainable water resources, and economic integration, while reinforcing alignment with Agenda 2063 and the AU’s 2026 Theme of the Year: “Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe

⁷⁹ IGAD Backs New African Financial Architecture at AU Summit Consultations
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1J5odDSGR3/>



Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063.”⁸⁰



On February 10, IGAD partnered with UNDP hosted a **Groundwater Investments** side event, spotlighting groundwater development as a cornerstone of climate resilience and water security. Dr. Workneh emphasized the untapped potential beneath drought-scarred landscapes, calling groundwater a strategic asset for climate resilience, economic stability, and human dignity.

On February 13, IGAD successfully concluded its one-year chairmanship of the **Inter-REC Coordination and Cooperation Platform**⁸¹, formally handing over leadership to the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The tenure strengthened AU–REC

relations and deepened collaboration across the continent.

IGAD also engaged in a series of high-level bilateral and multilateral meetings. The delegation welcomed Sudan's return to IGAD membership and held constructive discussions with Mohi El Din Salem, Sudan's Foreign Minister, on peace, security, and regional cooperation.

Talks with Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Dr. Gedion Timothewos advanced shared priorities on regional peace and security. IGAD reaffirmed its commitment to lasting peace in South Sudan through participation in the AU Ad Hoc High-Level Committee (C5).⁸²

In addition, IGAD joined other Regional Economic Communities in dialogue with African Development Bank President Dr. Sidi Ould Tah on the proposed **New African Financial Architecture (NAFA)**,⁸³ pledging full support⁸⁴ and noting its alignment with the **IGAD Strategy 2026–2030**.⁸⁵

Through these engagements, IGAD projected the Horn of Africa's priorities onto the continental stage, reinforced partnerships with the AU Commission, Member States, and development partners, and

⁸⁰ IGAD Delegation Concludes Successful Participation in the 39th African Union Summit <https://igad.int/igad-delegation-concludes-successful-participation-in-the-39th-african-union-summit/>

⁸¹ The Inter-REC Coordination and Cooperation Platform is a strategic mechanism established to enhance collaboration, coordination, and synergy among Africa's key Regional Economic Communities (RECs). It brings together organizations such as IGAD, ECOWAS, COMESA, and the East African Community, working closely with the African Union Commission to advance regional integration and collective action. The platform focuses on aligning priorities, strengthening institutional cooperation, and promoting joint initiatives in areas like digital innovation, economic growth, and resilience.

⁸² The IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh, participated in the AU Ad Hoc High Level Committee on South Sudan C5 <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1H6gWwTyqc/>

⁸³ The New African Financial Architecture (NAFA) is a home-grown framework spearheaded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) to transform Africa's development financing model. It is designed to mobilize large-scale domestic capital, strengthen Africa's financial sovereignty, and close the continent's persistent financing gap. NAFA emphasizes regional coordination among Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and aims to reduce reliance on external financing by building sustainable, continent-driven financial systems.

⁸⁴ IGAD Backs New African Financial Architecture at AU Summit Consultations <https://web.facebook.com/igadsecretariat/posts/pfbidOYA4SXLzWCTwLiSoHcKkFCHXc7v8eELcGTuJQMnVgttd3rDi3srXxENTFqF2Qaj5jl?rldid=iKyQuSrMOV5uuDOD#>

⁸⁵ The IGAD Strategy 2026–2030 is the organization's five-year roadmap, prioritizing peace and security, regional integration, resilience, and sustainable development across the Horn of Africa.



demonstrated the region's indispensable role in Africa's peace, resilience, and integration agenda. Dr. Workneh reflected that the summit once again showed the power of collective African action, affirming IGAD's determination to translate commitments into tangible results for the people of the region. The delegation expressed gratitude to the African Union, host nation Ethiopia, fellow RECs, and partners for their collaboration, and looks forward to continued close cooperation in implementing the outcomes of the 39th AU Summit.

organization highlighted its commitment to peace, resilience, and integration, ensuring that regional priorities remain central to Africa's development agenda. As IGAD concludes its mission in Addis Ababa, Dr. Workneh reaffirmed the organization's focus on one clear priority: turning partnerships into tangible impact for the people of the region, driving stability, prosperity, and sustainable development.



IGAD Concludes AU Summit Mission with Renewed Commitment to Impactful Partnerships

IGAD has wrapped up its participation in the 39th African Union Summit, marking the end of a week of strategic engagements that advanced the region's peace and development agenda.⁸⁶ On the sidelines of the Summit, IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu met with Ndiame Diop, Regional Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa at the World Bank. The meeting reinforced the IGAD–World Bank partnership and explored ways to accelerate results for communities across the Horn of Africa.



Throughout the Summit, IGAD's delegation engaged with continental and international partners, emphasizing the importance of building impactful collaborations that deliver measurable benefits. The

⁸⁶ IGAD Concludes AU Summit Mission with Renewed Commitment to Impactful Partnerships
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Gc6osPaxn/>





7. IGAD BILATERAL ENGAGEMENTS

IGAD Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware met the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

On February 16, On the sidelines of the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, the IGAD Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware met the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.⁸⁷



The Deputy Executive Secretary commended the President's leadership in advancing the ratification of the IGAD Treaty by the Government of Somalia, a strong demonstration of Somalia's commitment to regional integration and collective action in addressing shared challenges across the IGAD region.



⁸⁷ IGAD Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware met the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. https://web.facebook.com/igadsecretariat/posts/pfbidOU_n2aPZF3mimESyAr5XWpfvQfawoYTRepkqkBpfEAHSGvYpg8bWWzEMfpKq7P2gVsl?rdid=SrfqPSSodflBUby#

⁸⁸ HISPASAT is a Spanish telecommunications satellite operator, headquartered in Madrid, Spain. It operates a fleet of communications satellites that provide coverage across the Americas, Europe, and North Africa, offering

IGAD and HISPASAT Signed an MOU

On February 1, IGAD and HISPASAT⁸⁸ formalized their partnership by signing a Memorandum of Understanding under the Scaling Up African Connectivity Initiative during the InvestEast Africa Forum in Frankfurt, Germany.⁸⁹ The signing ceremony was graced by Karin Müller, State Secretary for Federal and European Affairs, and Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel, Chair of GIZ's Management Board. Representing IGAD, Mr. Liban Daher reaffirmed the organization's dedication to advancing digital connectivity and fostering regional integration across the IGAD region.



IGAD-ITALY: 40 Years of Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity

On February 4, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary, met with Sem Fabrizi, Italy's Ambassador to Ethiopia, accredited to Djibouti, South Sudan, and IGAD, for discussions on the current regional peace and security landscape.⁹⁰

services such as internet connectivity, television broadcasting, radio, mobile communications, and corporate networks.

⁸⁹ IGAD and HISPASAT marked the signing of their Memorandum of Understanding. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DPj9HeXf/>

⁹⁰ IGAD-ITALY: 40 Years of Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Wv3JbZHy8/>





The meeting highlighted Italy's role as Chair of the IGAD Partners Forum and explored opportunities for enhanced cooperation. Discussions also touched on the upcoming Italy–Africa Summit in Addis Ababa, where IGAD participated to advance regional cooperation and development priorities.

Italy, a long-standing partner of IGAD since 1986, reaffirmed its continued support for the organization's efforts to promote stability, inclusive peace, and sustainable development across the region. The engagement underscored the importance of collective action and international collaboration in addressing the challenges facing the Horn of Africa.



IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Letters of Credence from Canada's Ambassador

On February 4, IGAD welcomed a new chapter in its partnership with Canada, as Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary, received letters of credence from Nicolas Simard, Canada's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti, officially accrediting him to IGAD.⁹¹



The ceremony provided an opportunity to exchange views on the current regional peace and security landscape and to reaffirm the strong cooperation between IGAD and Canada. Discussions placed particular emphasis on the Women, Peace & Security (WPS) agenda, highlighting Canada's commitment to advancing inclusive governance and supporting IGAD's efforts to promote stability and resilience across the Horn of Africa.

Canada has been a longstanding partner in IGAD's development initiatives, and this accreditation further strengthens collaboration in addressing shared priorities, including peace-building, humanitarian access, and sustainable development.



IGAD Chairperson Receives Special Envoy for the Republic of South Sudan

On February 4, Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti and Chairperson of IGAD, received Ambassador Moussa Djama Ali, IGAD Special Envoy for the Republic of South Sudan.⁹²

During the meeting, President Guelleh extended a warm welcome to the Special Envoy and conveyed his best wishes for the Special Envoy's success in carrying out his mandate. He emphasized the importance of Djama's role in advancing peace, stability, and inclusive dialogue in South Sudan, a country that continues to face challenges in its transition toward lasting peace.

⁹¹ IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Letters of Credence from Canada's Ambassador
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Wv3JbZHy8/>

⁹² IGAD Chairperson Receives Special Envoy for the Republic of South Sudan
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/14UnYasfzAj/>





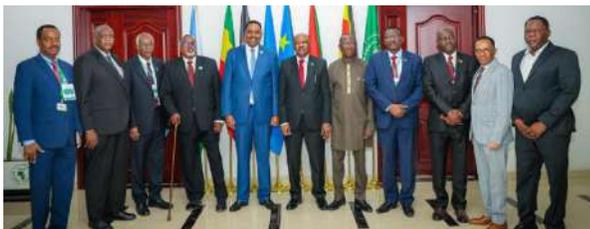
The engagement highlighted IGAD's ongoing commitment to fostering regional cooperation and supporting sustained peace efforts across the Horn of Africa. Both leaders underscored the need for dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure that South Sudan's peace process remains on track.

This meeting reflects IGAD's broader mission of promoting stability and development in the region, reinforcing the organization's role as a key mediator in regional peacebuilding initiatives.



IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Sudan

On February 12, on the margins of the African Union Summit, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, received Mohi El Din Salem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan, following Sudan's resumption of its membership in the regional bloc.⁹³



The meeting focused on the peace and security situation in Sudan and underscored the importance of

⁹³ IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Sudan <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CNRGA3q6E/>

sustained regional cooperation. Dr. Workneh warmly welcomed Minister Salem to the IGAD Council of Ministers, reaffirming IGAD's commitment to supporting lasting peace and stability for the Sudanese people and the wider Horn of Africa region.

Sudan's return to IGAD marks a significant step in strengthening regional unity and collaboration at a time when peacebuilding and resilience remain critical priorities. The engagement reflects IGAD's broader mission of advancing African-led solutions to promote stability, integration, and prosperity across the continent.



IGAD Executive Secretary Meets Ethiopia's Foreign Minister

On February 13, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, met with Dr. Gedion Timotheos Hessebon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, to discuss shared priorities on regional peace, security, and institutional cooperation.⁹⁴

The meeting, held on the sidelines of the African Union Summit, underscored Ethiopia's central role within IGAD and the importance of coordinated action to address pressing challenges in the Horn of Africa. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration on peacebuilding, resilience, and integration, ensuring that IGAD's institutional priorities remain aligned with the broader continental agenda.

⁹⁴ IGAD Executive Secretary Meets Ethiopia's Foreign Minister <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17s423iTDW/>





The engagement reflects IGAD's ongoing efforts to deepen partnerships with its Member States, advancing African-led solutions to promote stability and prosperity across the region.



Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Greater Impact

On February 16, delegations from IGAD and the European Union (EU) convened to advance the IGAD Institutional Capacity Building Programme, a joint initiative aimed at reinforcing the organization's ability to deliver on its regional mandate.⁹⁵

The engagement centered on Technical Assistance measures designed to:

- Reinforce existing institutional capacities.
- Support system upgrades across IGAD structures.
- Enhance coordination between IGAD, its Member States, and development partners.



Officials emphasized that the programme is intended to strengthen IGAD's institutional performance, ensuring the organization can respond more

⁹⁵ Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Greater Impact <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1AQxQJ2n3A/>

effectively to regional challenges such as peace and security, economic integration, and sustainable development. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to supporting IGAD's modernization efforts, highlighting the importance of strong regional institutions in fostering stability and cooperation across the Horn of Africa. IGAD representatives welcomed the collaboration, noting that improved systems and coordination mechanisms will enable the organization to better serve its Member States and partners.



Investing in People. Strengthening Regional Capacity

On February 19, IGAD and the African Development Bank (AfDB) have convened high-level consultations to advance a Human Capacity Strategy designed to accelerate skills development and institutional strengthening across the region.⁹⁶

The discussions focused on aligning regional priorities with strategic investment in education, technical expertise, and workforce development, with the goal of driving integration, resilience, and inclusive economic growth among IGAD Member States.

Officials emphasized that the initiative will:

- Support institutional reforms and capacity building within IGAD structures.
- Enhance technical skills and workforce readiness to meet regional development needs.
- Foster stronger collaboration between Member States and development partners.

The Human Capacity Strategy is expected to play a pivotal role in equipping the region with the knowledge and expertise required to address pressing

⁹⁶ Investing in People. Strengthening Regional Capacity <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DKYjnVMB8/>



challenges, from economic transformation to peace and security. Both IGAD and AfDB reaffirmed their commitment to working together to ensure that investments in human capital translate into sustainable growth and regional integration.



IGAD Strengthens Cooperation with the Russian Federation

On February 23, IGAD's Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu received Ms. Tatyana Dovgalenko, Director of the Department for Partnership with Africa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation⁹⁷.

The engagement culminated in the signing of an Action Plan on cooperation covering policy and security, technology and innovation, and science and education. The agreement reflects a shared commitment to practical collaboration on matters of mutual concern and marks a significant step in strengthening ties between IGAD and the Russian Federation.



Both sides emphasized the importance of building partnerships that advance regional stability, innovation, and knowledge exchange. The Action Plan is expected to foster stronger institutional linkages, enhance capacity development, and contribute to IGAD's broader mandate of promoting peace, security,

and sustainable development across the Horn of Africa.

This milestone underscores IGAD's growing international partnerships and highlights the role of dialogue and cooperation in addressing shared challenges and opportunities in the region.



IGAD and GIZ Strengthen Stability in Borderlands

On February 24, IGAD highlighted its efforts to reinforce stability and strengthen livelihoods in fragile border areas through the Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands Programme (PRBP), implemented in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).⁹⁸

Aligned with the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI), the PRBC focuses on climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable natural resource management, and community-led peacebuilding. The programme places particular emphasis on empowering women and youth, recognizing their central role in building resilient and peaceful communities.

Through this initiative, IGAD and GIZ are helping border communities transition from short-term crisis response to long-term resilience and peaceful coexistence. By combining livelihood support with conflict prevention and environmental sustainability, the programme aims to reduce vulnerabilities and foster inclusive development across border regions.

The PRBC reflects IGAD's broader commitment to advancing resilience, peace, and prosperity in the Horn of Africa, while strengthening partnerships that

⁹⁷ IGAD Strengthens Cooperation with the Russian Federation
<https://web.facebook.com/share/v/1EyQzoM35C/>

⁹⁸ IGAD and GIZ Strengthen Stability in Borderlands
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1G1HcJngsk/>



deliver tangible benefits to communities most affected by fragility and instability.



IGAD Advances Regional Digital Trade Solutions to Boost Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

On February 26, 2026, IGAD concluded a four-day Regional Consultative Dialogue in Nairobi focused on advancing digital trade solutions for cross-border agricultural trade.⁹⁹ Held under the **Food Systems Resilience Programme (FSRP)**,¹⁰⁰ the meeting brought together Member States, regional bodies, private sector representatives, development partners, and technical experts to accelerate interoperable digital systems aligned with the **AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol**.¹⁰¹



Opening the Dialogue on behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Mohyeldeen Eltohami emphasized the importance of inclusive digital transformation that

supports small-scale traders, women cross-border traders, youth agribusinesses, and customs officials.

Participants examined persistent challenges in cross-border trade, including limited digitalisation of documentation, weak interoperability among customs and regulatory systems, SPS compliance gaps, and fragmented trade information platforms. Technical sessions focused on market coordination tools, digital SPS certification, border interoperability, customs automation, and financing mechanisms for scaling digital solutions.

Key outcomes included the identification of priority trade corridors and value chains, notably grains and livestock, for piloting digital trade and SPS systems. Member States agreed to strengthen interoperability across platforms, harmonize digital certification systems, expand MSME-focused digital market tools, and promote coordinated regional investment in digital infrastructure.

The Dialogue concluded with the validation of priority pilot initiatives and a phased regional roadmap for implementation, financing, and technical coordination. Participants reaffirmed that cross-border challenges require cross-border solutions, highlighting harmonization, mutual recognition frameworks, and strengthened public-private collaboration as essential.

⁹⁹ IGAD Advances Regional Digital Trade Solutions to Boost Cross-Border Agricultural Trade. https://igad.int/igad-advances-regional-digital-trade-solutions-to-boost-cross-border-agricultural-trade/?fbclid=IwY2xjawQaXY1leHRuA2FlbQlxMABzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjlwMzcxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeaBg-NiBkyLS_i5gQIIvslR7lfhtcJbS1yHgAS5jjzyHQD8tc6nrssjWp hPg_aem_u03JGZ00_S2jHJjhRAXJOA

¹⁰⁰ The IGAD Food Systems Resilience Programme (FSRP) is a seven-year, World Bank-funded initiative launched in 2024 to enhance food security and climate resilience across Eastern and Southern Africa. With a total envelope of US\$2.3 billion for the region, it focuses on strengthening agricultural production, managing natural

resources, enhancing market access, and policy reforms to combat food insecurity and drought. <https://igad.int/igad-convenes-steering-committee-meeting-of-the-food-systems-resilience-programme-fsrp/#:~:text=About%20the%20Food%20Systems%20Resilience,livelihoods%20across%20the%20IGAD%20region.>

¹⁰¹ The AfCFTA Protocol on Digital Trade (DTP) is the first continental treaty designed to regulate and facilitate digital trade across African Union member states. Formally adopted in February 2024, it serves as a legally binding framework to harmonize rules and create a single digital market for Africa's 1.3 billion consumers. <https://www.iisd.org/articles/policy-analysis/afcfta-digital-protocol#:~:text=The%20AfCFTA%20DTP%20contains%20data,public%20policy%20and%20national%20security>



Under FSRP Component 3 (“Getting to Market”), IGAD will continue supporting Member States to pilot and scale digital tools that reduce transaction costs, improve compliance, and enhance transparency, advancing the region’s progress toward a more efficient, inclusive, and integrated agricultural trade system under the AfCFTA.

IGAD Executive Secretary Engages Türkiye Ambassador on Strengthening Partnership

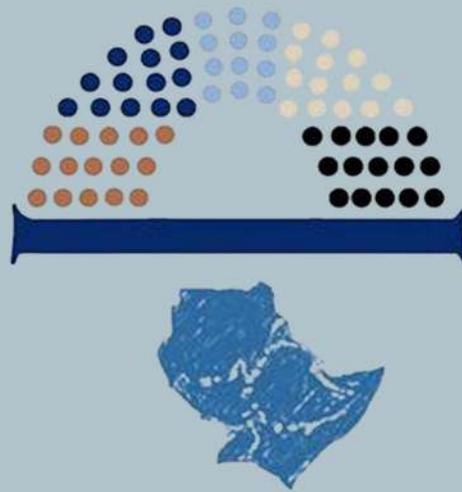
On February 25, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, received Sabri Ergen, Ambassador of Türkiye to the Republic of Djibouti and accredited to IGAD, for discussions on matters of shared interest.¹⁰² The meeting highlighted the continued strengthening of IGAD–Türkiye cooperation, with both sides emphasizing the importance of sustained partnership in advancing regional development, resilience, and economic cooperation across the IGAD region.



Dr. Workneh underscored IGAD’s commitment to building strategic alliances that support peace, stability, and prosperity in the Horn of Africa, while Ambassador Ergen reaffirmed Türkiye’s readiness to deepen collaboration with IGAD in areas of mutual concern. The engagement reflects the growing ties between IGAD and Türkiye, reinforcing the role of international partnerships in supporting inclusive growth and resilience across Member States.

¹⁰² IGAD Executive Secretary Engages Türkiye Ambassador on Strengthening Partnership
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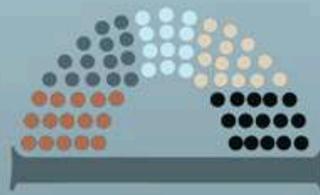




IGAD MONTHLY DIGEST

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