

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 5 July 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey to you a letter from Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (see annex), addressing the letter dated 21 June 2021 communicated to the Security Council by the Permanent Mission of Qatar on behalf of the League of Arab States.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Taye Atskeselassie **Amde**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 5 July 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I would like to extend my best wishes for your presidency of the Security Council for the month of July 2021.

I am writing the present letter to communicate Ethiopia's position on the unacceptable interference by the League of Arab States that addressed the Security Council and the General Assembly on the matter of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. It is with great disappointment that Ethiopia received the identical letter, dated 21 June 2021, submitted by the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations concerning the trilateral negotiation on the dam.

The Nile is a transboundary river shared among 11 African countries. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is a hydroelectric dam project being built within Ethiopian territory. The ongoing trilateral negotiation on the dam is under way under the auspices of African Union, a common organization for Ethiopia, Egypt and the Sudan. The African Union-led negotiation is guided by the conviction of finding "African solutions to Africa's challenges".

The African Union-led process is offering Ethiopia, Egypt and the Sudan a platform to negotiate and reach a win-win outcome. Ethiopia is engaging in the trilateral negotiation in good faith and continuing its utmost commitment to making the African Union-led process a success.

The League of Arab States is reputed for its unfettered and unconditional support for any claim that Egypt has presented on the issue of the Nile. However, it is a cause of great disappointment for the League to take this approach and address the United Nations on a matter that does not fall within its purview. Ethiopia rejects the unwelcome meddling by the League of Arab States. It also risks undermining the friendly and cooperative relations between the African Union and the Arab League.

Ethiopia reiterates its request for the international community to encourage Egypt and the Sudan to abide by the accepted principles of international law on the utilization of transboundary water resources. The two lower-riparian countries of the Nile should also remain faithful to the ongoing African Union-led negotiation that could help to reach a mutually acceptable outcome.

To this end, Ethiopia has the honour to enclose herewith the communiqués of the African Union Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government held on 26 June 2020 and 21 July 2020 (see enclosures).

*(Signed)* Demeke **Mekonnen**  
Deputy Prime Minister  
and Minister for Foreign Affairs

## Enclosure I

### **Communiqué of the extraordinary African Union Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government video teleconference meeting on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), 26 June 2020**

President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa, and Chairperson of the African Union (AU) convened a video-teleconference Meeting of the African Union (AU) Extraordinary Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, on 26 June 2020, to discuss developments pertaining to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

All the Members of the Bureau participated in the video-teleconference Meeting as follows:

- His Excellency, President Felix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of Congo,
- His Excellency, President Abdel Fattah al Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt,
- His Excellency, President Uhuru Kenyatta of the Republic of Kenya,
- His Excellency, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of the Republic of Mali, His Excellency, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmad of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and His Excellency, Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok of the Republic of Sudan, were invited to participate in the meeting. His Excellency, Moussa Faki Mahamat the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) also participated in the Meeting.

The Meeting of the Bureau was held pursuant to consultations undertaken by His Excellency, President Ramaphosa, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Union with the three Negotiating Parties concerning the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), namely, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan.

The Bureau of the Assembly noted that the three Negotiating Parties are Founding Members of the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and the African Union (AU), and have significantly contributed to the unity, integration and the development of the continent. They further noted the potential the GERD project possesses for Africa.

The Bureau of the Assembly received with appreciation a report from the Chairperson of the AUC, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, which, inter alia noted that more than 90% of the issues in the Tripartite Negotiations between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan have already been resolved.

The Bureau of the Assembly was addressed by His Excellency, President Abdel Fattah al Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt; His Excellency, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmad of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; and His Excellency, Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok of the Republic of Sudan, with regards to their respective positions pertaining to the GERD matter.

The Bureau of the Assembly expressed its deep appreciation for the positive and constructive approach displayed by the three Parties in finding a peaceful, negotiated settlement on all outstanding matters, and further emphasized the importance of a win-win outcome, in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

In this regard, the Bureau of the Assembly decided to lend renewed impetus to the Tripartite Negotiations and urged the three Parties to expeditiously work towards

finding a mutually acceptable and amicable solution on the outstanding technical and legal issues in the negotiations process.

The Bureau of the Assembly welcomed the undertaking by the three Parties to refrain from making any statements, or taking any action that may jeopardize or complicate the AU-led process aimed at finding an acceptable solution on all outstanding matters.

The Bureau of the Assembly welcomed the commitment of the three Parties to an AU-led process. In this regard, the Bureau of the Assembly agreed to augment the Tripartite Committee dealing with the GERD issue consisting of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan with the participation of observers, namely South Africa in its capacity as Chairperson of the AU, Members of the Bureau of the AU, and experts from the Commission, with a view to addressing outstanding technical and legal issues. The augmented Committee will present its report to the Chairperson of the AU, H.E. President Ramaphosa within a week from the issuance of this Communique.

Accordingly the Bureau of the Assembly and participating Heads of State and Government request the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to take note of the fact that the AU is seized of this matter.

The Bureau of the Assembly and participating Heads of State and Government welcomed the intervention of H.E. President Ramaphosa and expressed their deep gratitude for his initiative to bring together the three Parties to the GERD in order to find a negotiated solution on outstanding matters.

The Bureau of the Assembly and the participating Heads of State and Government agreed to reconvene in two weeks from the date of issuance of this Communique to consider a report on the outcome of negotiations of the outstanding issues concerning the GERD matter.

## Enclosure II

### **Communiqué of the second extraordinary African Union Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government video teleconference meeting on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), 21 July 2020**

24 July 2020

His Excellency President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the African Union (AU), convened an Extraordinary Meeting of the African Union (AU) Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, on 21 July 2020, to review progress pertaining to the Trilateral Negotiations on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This was a follow-up to the 1st Extraordinary Meeting of the AU Bureau on the GERD held on 26 June 2020.

All the Members of the AU Bureau participated in the video-teleconference (VTC) Meeting as follows:

- His Excellency, President Felix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- His Excellency, President Abdel Fattah al Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt;
- His Excellency, President Uhuru Kenyatta of the Republic of Kenya;
- His Excellency, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of the Republic of Mali;

His Excellency, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and His Excellency, Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok of the Republic of Sudan, participated in the Meeting.

His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) also participated in the Meeting.

The Meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government was held in a fraternal spirit guided by the principle of Pan-African solidarity and cooperation and the attendant desire to find an African solution to an African problem.

The Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government welcomed the report of AU Experts on the resumed Trilateral Negotiations on the GERD, which reflected notable progress in the negotiations and presented options for resolving outstanding legal and technical issues.

The Parties to the GERD expressed their confidence in the AU-led process and reaffirmed their utmost commitment to finding a mutually beneficial and negotiated agreement pertaining to the GERD matter. They underscored the importance of cooperation as a basis for integration, sustainable development and prosperity for the three countries.

The Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government commended the Heads of State and Government of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan for displaying statesmanship and for their commitment to finding a durable solution through diplomacy, negotiations and compromise.

The Meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government held extensive discussion on the matter of the first filling and annual

operation of the GERD, and future development projects on the Blue Nile River upstream of the GERD.

Consequently, the Meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government agreed on the process of finalising negotiations on the text of a binding Agreement on the Filling and Operation of the GERD, which should include a Comprehensive Agreement on future developments on the Blue Nile River.

The Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government urged the Parties, with the support of the AU experts and observers, to work expeditiously to finalise the text of a binding Agreement on the Filling and Operation of the GERD.

The Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government welcomed the agreement amongst the Parties to the GERD to work on a Comprehensive Agreement on the Blue Nile River as soon as possible.

The Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government also expressed its deep appreciation for the support, the AU-led process has received from the United Nations through the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, and welcomed the willingness of the international community to mobilise financial and technical resources to support the Parties on transboundary water management and related issues as soon as an Agreement is concluded.

The Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government commended the three Parties for their commitment to resolve their differences through dialogue and agreed to maintain regular, dynamic contact with all the Parties at this critical stage of the negotiation process. Furthermore, the Bureau renewed its call to the Parties to refrain from making statements or taking any action that may undermine the AU-led process.

The Republic of South Africa in its capacity as the Chairperson of the AU will communicate with the Parties regarding the next Trilateral Negotiations session to address outstanding legal and technical issues on the GERD.

In conclusion, the Bureau of the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government and the GERD Parties expressed their sincere appreciation to His Excellency, President Ramaphosa for his persistent efforts and commitment to helping the Parties find a sustainable and permanent solution on the GERD matter.

The Bureau of the Assembly agreed to remain seized of the GERD matter.

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