

## The Abiy's Factors: The Implications of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Change towards the Horn of Africa since 2018

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### **Abstract**

*The aim of this research was to assess the role of 'Abiy factors' and the implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa. The research has attempted to analyze the implications of Medemer, Passion, and excuse' and Ethiopian reforms towards the Horn of Africa. Qualitative research has been employed and important data was collected through interview from key informants consisted of top officials from IGAD, MoFA and diplomats from (Djibouti, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Somalia and Eritrea). The research has also reviewed previous works on the area and other areas with similar concern. Therefore, the findings of the study revealed that the Abiy factors (Medemer, passion and excuse) have brought economic cooperation, rapprochement, political stability and security of the region relatively. Considerable efforts have been significantly addressed; and even continued to stabilize and cooperate the region with enormous economic cooperation and political stability until the thesis was done. Furthermore, the focus of Abiy's foreign policy towards the Horn is changed suspicion to friendship especially with Eritrea and throughout the region. Overall, the findings of the study revealed that Horn of Africa is exercising relatively integration, order and peace as the result of Ethiopian foreign policy reforms concerning its neighboring countries. But, it should also be noted that the efforts has greatly impeded by multitude of challenges such as; internal challenges (ethnic conflict, inter-regional conflict macro-economic imbalance and activism) and external challenges (Al-Shabab, crisis in South Sudan, opposition in the Republic of Sudan, the competition of super states in the region, and border conflict).*

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### **Introduction**

#### **1. Background of the Study**

Ethiopia is one of the oldest states in the international system; having a long history of foreign relations with many states across the globe (Greenfield, 1965:87). However, the modern diplomatic foreign relation of Ethiopia had begun during the reign of Emperor Menelik II (r.1889-11907) when Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministerial system introduced in Ethiopia in 1907 (Bahru, 2001:90). By the time Ethiopian foreign policy was geared towards in promoting the independent status of the country. Ethiopia has particular importance and concern to the horn of African region. This is because Ethiopia is the only African country to have successfully resisted European colonialism and most of the time Ethiopian national interest is focused

on the development of democracy and fast economic growth. Even currently the country's foreign and national security policies needs are geared towards promoting development and democracy (FANSPS, 2002: 99-105).

Most of the time, the foreign policy of a country can be characterized by change and continuity. This is also the case in Ethiopian foreign policy towards the surrounding neighboring countries; where their relation with Ethiopia was highly influenced by external threats. Ethiopian leaders have adjusted their foreign policy towards the Horn of Africa to overcome those external threats and to bring regional cooperation and integration. This was the case in the last four successive leaders of Ethiopia. Namely, Emperor Haile Selassie, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn periods. Among, the aforementioned leaders; the first two leaders were focused on outward looking. This mean that the regimes understood the major security threat of Ethiopia is an external threat since the foreign policy approach and orientation of the regime was an outside-in approach (Amare, 1989:23) whereas the last two were more of inward looking leaders which mean Ethiopia's national security threats identified as internal vulnerabilities and problems, such as political (democracy and good governance) and economic (economic backwardness and poverty) problems (Tewodros, 2015: 196).

During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, the diplomatic activities of the regime were mainly dominated by the emperor himself. The role of the ministry of foreign affairs was very limited to formulating and implementing the country's foreign policy. Based on the foreign policy that he made; the emperor traveled to many foreign countries. Of course the emperor had no the foreign policy document rather than the speeches he made. The emperor external diplomatic activities best mentioned by the contribution he made for the formation of OAU. The relation of the emperor with African states was relatively cooperative (Pankhurst, 2011: 2).

During the reign of Mengistu Hailemariam most of the problems were not internalized rather he was focused on the strengthening of military capability against the external threats of Ethiopia (Amare, 1989: 479-502).The Ethiopian foreign policy during Derg era (r.1974-1991) was in need of peaceful co-existence. However, Ethiopia was in serious contradiction with neighboring countries. Especially, the Somali Irredentism and Egyptian militarism as well as the declaration made by former Sudanese President Jaffar Nimeiri (r.1971-1985) to institute Islamic state in Sudan with Sharia law, the proliferation of local liberation movements and war with Eritrean Liberation movements for over thirty years was a total mismatch with the government's commitment to proletarian internationalism (Meles, 2012:51). While Derg followed peaceful coexistence and mutual respect without adhering to any of these principles; like that of Emperor Haile Sellassie, Derg had no compatible foreign policies with domestic policies (Pankhurst, 2011: 52).

On the other hand following the coming to power of Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in 1991; the major paradigm change of Ethiopia's foreign policy and diplomacy has been revealed. In 2002 the first compatible foreign policy document was disclosed. The document has named the Foreign and National Policy and Strategy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Ethiopian ministry of affairs, 2002). Unlike the previous leaders, the document clearly shows the foreign policy and diplomacy of Ethiopia. For example, on the introduction part of the document it gives emphasis on sustained economic development, prosperity, promotion of democracy and peace as the pillars of the nation's objectives of foreign policy and diplomacy.

This document also brought change on foreign policy of the country towards the neighboring countries. The previous a coalition-collusion syndrome shifted to cooperation, mutual respect, common economic benefits and maintenance of peace in the horn of Africa (Cliffe 1999: 89-111). To mention some the contradictory with the Republic of Sudan was resolved and the relation was shifted to mutual economic development, economic integration, collective security and maintenance of peace. Moreover, Ethiopia is aggressively working on the strengthening of economic diplomacy for mutual development. For instance the establishment of industrial

parks, programs of electric power sharing, infrastructure and air transport linkage and international and regional meetings are helping Ethiopia to have peaceful co-existence with the Horn of African countries. Ethiopia also deployed more than 8000 armed and police forces to maintain peace in Abiy between South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan. Ethiopian armed forces have also helped in bringing peace in Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and in Darfur, Sudan through various peacekeeping missions (Solomon Dibaba, 2017:5).

Following the coming to power of the current prime minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed (PhD), since April 2018, quick and everlasting policy changes are taking place both at domestic and foreign policies. Internally, in a nation where all parliament seats are held by the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, Abiy has urged the nation to follow multiparty democracy. Externally, Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has visited Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia and inspired the peace between Sudan and South Sudan (Ethiopian Foreign Ministry of Communication, 2018).

Accordingly, prior to his replacing Hailemariam Desalegn as Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has begun his first trip outside his country to Djibouti. Beyond Ethiopia's strategic interests with Djibouti, the two countries have shown great interest in fostering regional economic integration. They are highly interdependent. The Port of Djibouti is the main maritime facility for the landlocked country of Ethiopia for many years. Those interests have been boosted by the establishment of a Chinese-built, 756-kilometer electrified rail project, which officially started operations this year. The second tour of the Prime Minister was to Sudan. The talks between the two sides were concentrated on several topics including the joint bilateral relations, political, security, economical and borders issues, besides the regional concerns especially those related to Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. On the other hand, after Somalia's President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo hosted Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed for a meeting at the presidential palace in Mogadishu the two leaders issued a joint statement of pledges to cooperate on everything from the development of infrastructure including roads linking the two countries to expanding visa services to promote cultural exchanges (Nyabola, 2018: 1).

Furthermore, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed made the historical visit to Eritrea to amend relationship between the two countries and reconcile the two nations after more than 20 years of war and desolation. He further announces that the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the opening of embassies, resumption of direct flights between the two countries. He also said the two countries "we will solve the other little issues as we go along and I will serve as Eritrean foreign minister if the president allow". Abiy (PhD) also added that the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea is an artificial and it is the second issue for us (Nyabola, 2018). This could be the beginning of a major shift in the discourse around peace and security in Horn of Africa. Prime Minister Abiy (PhD) also visited Kenya geared towards bolstering the existing strong relations and trade between Kenya and Ethiopia. Ethiopia and Kenya agreed to strengthen strong bilateral relations, to continue the key partnership in preserving security and peace in the region, and to be more committed to invest time and resources in the fight against terrorism as well as the fight to bring Somalia to sustainable peace, and the initiatives to find a lasting solution to the challenges in South Sudan (Ethiopian Foreign Ministry of Communication, 2018)

On the other hand, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has great role on the peace agreement between Sudan and South Sudan. According to Ambassador James, the war in South Sudan lasted for almost five years, and now finally has come to an end. The government of South Sudan lauded the role that the IGAD Chair Person and the Ethiopian New Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed who has come and bring peace to the Horn of Africa. Ambassador James also said: "What we have achieved is also accredited to Dr. Abiy. When he came to power in April this year (2018), he was coming with the vision of unity, not only for Ethiopia but also for the horn of Africa." He added that, "Abiy Ahmed (PhD) came to ensure peace, development, and connectivity of the Horn of African countries by road, highways, and railways. This has changed our region." Therefore, as the attitude

of the people in this region has changed for peace and development, South Sudan also wanted to be part of the change brought in the Horn of Africa (Zelalem, 2018:1).

The Horn of Africa (in this case: Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan and Kenya) is one of the most politically dynamic regions in the world. Several issues are affected the horn of Africa like that of terrorism, migration, human trafficking, borders disputes. This is due to the geographical and strategic importance of the region.

The Horn of African countries are highly interdependent to each others. This can be manifested through their cultural, social, economic and border sharing. From Horn of African states Ethiopia is the country that shares the most international borders with other Horn of Africa countries and followed by Kenya and South Sudan. This implies that, in this region, the events that take place in Ethiopia have great influences on the Horn of Africa. This is because of Ethiopia's sheer size, large number of population, as well Ethiopia became the main actor and an active participant for the peace and stability of the region (Clapham, 1998:19-35). Thus, the major objective of the study is to assess the implication of the new Ethiopian foreign policy towards the Horn of Africa followed by the current Ethiopian government since the coming of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) in April, 2018.

## 2. Statement of the problem

The major principle of Ethiopian foreign policy had its own direct impact on the horn of Africa (Brouk, 2012: 87-113). Some of the common features (proxy wars) of such foreign policy (indirect or unchecked) in the region as well as the policy of "supporting the enemy of my enemy" had been the main foreign policy strategy that countries followed in the Horn of Africa (Woodward, 1996:89). Indeed, Ethiopia had supported Sudanese rebels, in return Sudan supported Ethiopian and Eritrean opposition groups and Eritrea supported Somali insurgent. Here, Ethiopian foreign policy had great impact on the security complex of the Horn of Africa (Ana Elisa, 201:53).

However, following the coming to power of Abiy Ahmed (PhD) in April 2018, Ethiopia's foreign policy has been changing. The change in foreign policy can be defined on how it will best conduct its relations with Horn of African state in particular and international states at large (Yohannes, 2018:3). The current sweeping and everlasting foreign policy change through Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) have inspired by his moral and inclusive principles i.e. love forgiveness, and *Medemer* or addition. By the inspiration of these factors a dramatic foreign policy change could lead to more stability in the Horn of Africa. The Dr. Abiy's foreign policy change shows Ethiopia's keenness and higher commitment to ensure the region's peace and economic integration, even by prioritizing peace than border issues (Davison, 2018:3).

This can be best revealed in the Ethiopia and Eritrean new era of cooperation; the Sudan and South Sudan agreement (by the lion share of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed); the Integration Agreement among Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea. These could be the beginning of a major change in Ethiopian foreign policy (Nyabola, 2018:2).

Here it is logical to explain existing literature on the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the horn of Africa. As per the researcher's knowledge, no study was conducted regarding the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa specifically after the coming to power of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

ArkaAbota (2002) in his study entitled "Ethiopia's Foreign Policy under Emperor Haile Selassie I: an Appraisal;" confirmed that the Emperor dominated the making of foreign policy in Ethiopia for more than half a century. Haile Selassie wielded unquestioned supreme power assisted by his personal advisors for policy making and implementation. This was constitutionally established. Both the 1931 and 1955 revised

constitutions gave the Emperor a legal power in foreign policy decision-making. Foreign policy making is a team result. It needs professional skill, tact, and experience in international relations. But in the Emperor's foreign policy we find not only the prevalence of personalized decision-making, the absence of accountability and criticism but also the emasculation of institutions of foreign policy decision-making

Muhyadin Ahmed Roble (2016), in his work entitled "a study on the impact of Ethiopia's foreign policy towards Somalia from 1991- 2001." The research studied that Ethiopia's Foreign Policy is preventing the emergence of a coherent and united Somalia, the conflict in Somalia will linger for some, but that will be a threat to the long term stability of Ethiopia. Thus, with the help of international community, Somalia should find a way in convincing Ethiopia that a stable Somalia is in the best interests of the region and the world.

Negera Gudeta Adula (2018), on his work named "the determinants of Ethiopian foreign policy under consecutive Regimes: Appraisal of Military and EPRDF Government determinants of Ethiopian foreign policy." The study revealed that the demise of the military regime brought not merely change in terms of determinants of foreign policy making and execution. But also brought a shift in foreign policy approach and orientation of the country and the establishment of a federal democratic system in Ethiopia in 1991 ushered a major paradigm shift in the making and execution of the country's foreign policy and diplomacy.

Even though, the aforementioned studies have conducted concerning the Ethiopian Foreign Policy under Emperor Haile Selassie I: an Appraisal, the impact of Ethiopia's foreign policy towards Somalia from 1991-2001, and the determinants of Ethiopian foreign policy; there is no a study that conducted on the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the horn of Africa. Thus, the aim of this study is to fill this gap by assessing the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa. The researcher believes that Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa will bring political stability, economical development (cooperation) and security environment in a new chapter of the Horn of Africa.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study was; to assess the role of Abiy Ahmed and his government's action taken in Ethiopian foreign relation and the implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa. The specific objectives were: to explore the domestic factors that influence Ethiopia to change its foreign policy; to examine the political and economic implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the horn of Africa; to examine the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change for the Horn of African security complex and to identify whether there are major constraints that have prevented the attainment of more desirable out comes in the multilateral relation.

### **4. Research Questions of the study**

The research questions of the study include; what are the implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa? What are the domestic factors that influence Ethiopia to revise its foreign policy? What are the political and economic implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change for the Horn of Africa? How Ethiopian foreign policy change can be solution for the Horn of Africa security complex? And what are the major constraints that will prevent the attainment of more desirable out comes in the multilateral relations?

### **5. Scope of the Study**

The study was limited to the study of the foreign policy change of Ethiopia towards the Horn of African states since 2018. The study was within the bounds of the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of African states. More specifically it limited to the political and economic implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa, and the major constraints that were prevent the attainment

of more desirable out comes in the multilateral relations. Thus, the study was focused on assessing the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa.

#### **6. Significance of the study**

At the end of the study the research had some basic significances including; it will help as a reference for others researchers who will have interests to conduct research on the related topic; it will uses as a source for the horn of African states (especially the governments) to understand the economic, and political influence of Ethiopia`s reforms towards the horn of Africa; it will be advantageous for administration of Ethiopia to improve foreign policy by overcoming obstacles that hinder the protection of peaceful relation and it will bring to pay due attention and concern to the act of the influence of Ethiopian foreign policy change especially the use of soft power among the Horn of African states.

#### **7. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical practices in research require respect for individual participants and institutions (Plano-Clark & Creswell 2010:191). To make sure secrecy, respondents were not obliged to tell their identity in the interview. According to Polit and Beck (2012:152) confirmed ethical principles and rules in research includes: the right to self-determination (researchers need to treat prospective subjects as autonomous agents by informing them about a proposed study and allowing them to voluntarily choose to participate or not), the right to protection from discomfort and harm, the right to confidentiality, and the right to fair treatment or justice. Therefore, the researcher made efforts to comply with the ethical principles and rules.

#### **8. Limitations of the Study**

It is important to state the main limitations that faced the researcher while conducting a study. By doing so, the primary data obtain for the study was limited to Ethiopia. Due to financial problems making visit to all Horn of African states was impossible. Given this the least expensive means of obtaining data was expected from the all Embassy of horn of African states in Addis Ababa and through internet sources. However, the researcher has encountered unwillingness and not functionality from embassy of Sudan and Eritrea respectively. On the other hand, because of the preliminary type of the study; most of the sources especially was use official releases, articles, scant on-line sources and printed documentation. However, with limited availability of data maximum efforts were made to analyze obtain data without much affecting the efforts to realize the overall objectives of the study.

#### **9. Research Approach**

The researcher was made use of only qualitative approach. This is due to the following reasons; qualitative approach is the most appropriate means of exploring human views of their experiences and realities; it benefit the researcher by gaining an insider's view of the topic under study; it allows the researcher to find issues that are often missed (such as in depth information and complexities) by the quantitative approach; and it has also vital advantage in signifying possible relationships, causes, effects and dynamic processes of the issues (Hughes,1999:413)

Furthermore, the researcher was employed qualitative approach that benefits through examining the forms of knowledge that might otherwise be unavailable, thereby gaining new insight. Generally, the researcher was employed qualitative research approach because of the aforesaid reasons.

#### **10. Data Source**

The study made use of both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources would be those in depth interviews (the researcher would facilitate with key resource persons from different sectors such as the officials from IGAD, MoFA, and diplomats those are living in Ethiopia by representing their home country

particularly from the Horn of African states. The interview guide will have unstructured and semi-structured format design to cover a wide range of topic in depth and questionnaire. Secondary sources that will be necessary for the study include books, journals, news, articles, government releases, scant on-line sources, printed documentation and other similar forms of media.

### **11. Study Participants**

In this study, the researcher employed a purposive sampling technique to select the subjects of the study; for in-depth interview. Accordingly, the researcher used key informants to explore and better understand the problem and the issue in-depth.

Accordingly, for the purpose of this study the researcher made use of the following key informants; These includes; the Ethiopian government makers, diplomats those are living in Ethiopia by representing their home country particularly from the Horn of African states, academicians i.e. political scientists from Addis Ababa and Hawassa university, well known researchers on the Horn of Africa, from IGAD members, the individuals who are living in Ethiopia from the Horn of African states or Diasporas and opposition or competitive parties in Ethiopia.

### **12. Research Design**

Research design is a blue print that researchers follow during the research process (Grove 2013:43; Plano-Clark & Creswell 2010:9, 70,166). The study utilized a qualitative research design. In doing so, the study look into how horns of African states distinguished the foreign policy change of Ethiopia. In such a way, the study found the necessary focal point of analysis, specifically; on what economic, security and political implications would Ethiopian foreign policy change has towards the Horn of Africa.

Qualitative design is the best way to explore emerging knowledge like states foreign policy (Flick, 2006: 19). Similarly, the current Ethiopian foreign policy change is another fact that can be assessed in various ways. Thus, qualitative design proper was approached to explore the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa.

### **13. Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection is the process of gathering data from selected study subjects (Grove, 2013:523). During collecting data, researcher was strived to determine how best to capture each variable's conceptual and theoretical definition and this determined the ways data collection instruments was developed and used. Qualitative data was collected using an in-depth face-to-face interview. The participants of the study were purposefully selected. The participants include experts in the government official, diplomats from Horn of African states in Ethiopia, politicians especially in the horn politics, and nongovernmental organizations.

In so doing, in interview, the interviewees or key informants from target groups and list of questions for the interview was identified and prepared in advance. After having the interview questions was approved by the advisors, the study was processed with the interview. During the interview informants were selected pursuant to their ahead give consent and information can proffer. We, together with the interviewees chose comfortable environment and conduct the interview taking short notes besides taping the whole interview. Response of the respondents were checked and cross checked by techniques of cross examination in disciple. In case of data from different documents, the pertinent documents were identified in advance and permission was secured from its owner. At the end, the study has properly acknowledged all sources and materials.

### **14. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Qualitative data analysis is non-numerical examination and interpretation of qualitative data for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings (De Vos, 2011:399). Qualitative data was contains a big, rich description

of the research setting and participants besides the explanation of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell 2013:182-183; De Vos 2011:398, 399; Grove 2013:281; Maree 2010:260).

Accordingly, the researcher was analyzed the data from the best effort to find the most meaningful way to describe the results. This study was used only qualitative approach. Thus, qualitative data was analyzed by coding and thematizing the answers.

Indeed, the researcher was categorized data that was collected, as primary and secondary data. Then was coded them in their respective category according to resemblance of pattern they was manifest. Data exhibiting similar pattern was categorized under the same class. Relationship between categorize of data was expounded. Then after, the researcher was analyzed his data to identify any grown pattern or themed out of the data collected. Connection, interplays, fusion, and diffusion of each situation against others were illuminated. Secondly, data on the measures taken by the government to adjust and reform the foreign policy and the influence of Abiy factors and the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the horn of Africa were qualitatively analyzed.

### **15. Data Analysis and interpretation**

In the third chapter the thesis tries to deal with the research approach, data source, study participant, research design, data collection procedure, data analysis and interpretation. However, in the following chapter (chapter four) the researcher tries to analyze and interpret issues concerning domestic factors influencing Ethiopia towards foreign policy, assessment of guiding principles and its implications towards the HoA and Ethiopian Foreign Policy principles towards the HoA.

## **16. Findings and Discussions**

### **16.1. The Influence of Domestic factors on Ethiopian foreign policy towards the Horn of Africa**

The changes in the domestic politics have had direct impact on Ethiopian foreign policy in various ways. The system has posed different degrees of influences on each guiding principles and specific behavior of the policy. Reactions from the government in reforming the policy also vary depending on understanding of the influence and preexisting principles.

Thus, the following parts dwells on discussion of how and which factors affect the foreign policy towards the horn of Africa. It unravels impacts of major factors on the policy direction for the country changes and modification to guiding principles or other parts of the policy due to reforms in the domestic system.

#### **i. Modes of Impacts**

Ethiopia's foreign affairs and national security and strategy is an offspring of the country's domestic development policies as indicated by an informant from MoFA. The source of the policy, domestic development policy, has speedy economic development, democratization, and peace as its ultimate objectives. These objectives in turn emanates from innate needs and demands. However, following the coming of Abiy Ahmed Ethiopian foreign policy, especially, towards the horn of Africa has changed at least in its approach. The general understanding of the policy that was failure to realize the core objectives is changed dramatically.

#### **A. Internal Politics**

There is apolitical change in the horn of Africa following the coming to power of Abiy Ahmed. Informants from ministry of foreign affairs, the diplomats from Djibouti, Kenya, South Sudan, and Somalia agrees on internal political change as one of the major influential factor of rapprochement of Ethiopian foreign policy towards the horn of Africa. As it is the recent phenomena Ethiopia was in political disorder. But, relatively, after the coming of Abiy Ahmed there is political order. Indeed, the peaceful discussion with Eritrea was one

of the objectives of the former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. However, because of internal political disorder and Eritrean suspicion to the internal politics of Ethiopia the mission was not succeeding. Even though, the previous leaders were willing full to negotiate the Eritrea chase in a peace way, Eritrea responded negatively. This was because of Ethiopian leaders' political approach and internal politics of Ethiopian government. To make peace full diplomatic communicate, having willingness is not enough rather the government should free up human rights, freedom of press, and freedom of expression. Beside the government was not ready to accept Algiers agreement. But, upon taking office as Ethiopian prime minister on the first speeches to parliament Abiy Ahmed announced that Ethiopia has deep commitment to negotiate with Eritrea. In the following days the prime minister within his cabinets announced that Ethiopian is highly committed to accept the Algiers agreement as it is.

Accordingly, after witnessing the deep commitment of Ethiopia; Eritrea through her president Isaias Afworki confirmed that Eritrea was also ready accepting the peace initiatives. In doing so, on 26 June 2018, Eritrean Foreign Minister Osman Saleh Mohammed visited Addis Ababa in the first Eritrean high-level delegation to Ethiopia in over two decades.

## **B. Economic Issues**

For the populous state like Ethiopia it is hardly possible to survive without having accessto the sea. Access to the sea is important for economic growth through import and export. However, Ethiopia is landlocked though its neighbors except South Sudan all have ports. Indeed, the prime minister assumed the premiership in April 2018 was to acquire stakes in ports in neighboring countries (Shaban, 2019: 15).

Informants from MoFA confirm that the prime minister trips to see the Kenya port Lamu, Port of Sudan, Eritrea port, and Somalia. His Trips show that the prime minister is looking for alternative and expanding its ports to overcome the country's economic crisis (debt) since 2015. The new diplomatic relation with the neighboring countries also brought to the fore the economic impact of the recent rapprochement peace deal which gives Ethiopia access to alternatives ports. At the time it questioned how long Djibouti's ports will be to Ethiopia when especially others route becomes active.

Furthermore, informant from Somalia embassy revealed that the lack of access to the sea has left a strong impact on Ethiopia's economic, political, strategic interest and access to trade. Without a doubt, access to the sea has been a critical issue in Ethiopian politics. In the ancient times, Ethiopia emperors have pursued two main foreign policy goals that explain their position on Somalia: The protection of their Christian island in a sea of pagans, and the demand for a sea corridor (Elmi, 2015, p. 5). It has been the major single reason why Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia through the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations 1952.

He added that with Eritrea secession from Ethiopia in 1993 and subsequent border with Ethiopia, Ethiopia search on reliable ports is still ongoing despite currently relying ports in Djibouti for importing and exporting. The informant also mentioned that the highly dependency to only Djibouti port has become a big concern to Ethiopia as the volume of its fast growing import-export trade keeps booming with time. Currently, Ethiopia is seeking alternative, cheaper routes through which it can export and import goods in Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and Kenya. A friendly Somalia that has second largest coast in Africa can give Ethiopia all the access and entry it needs to sea and ports with cheap cost or might be zero expenses. The new rapprochement of Ethio- Eritrea also has great advantage in bringing best alternatives for Ethiopia.

### C. Security

As the result of lack of good governance and mal-administration, Ethiopian government faced security challenges within the country. To this end, security challenges Ethiopian government reforms and elected Abiy Ahmed as the new Ethiopian prime minister. Consequently, there were renewed calls both within Ethiopia and from international human rights groups, namely to dissolve highly controversial regional militias. Prior to his election the prime minister speaking to senior commanders of the Ethiopia national defense force declared his intention to carry out reforms of the military to strengthen its effectiveness and professionalism, with the view of limiting its role in politics. However, this move is considered likely to face resistance from TPLF hardliners, who occupy much of the military high command (Mumbere, 2018).

Furthermore, Ethiopian navy which was dissolved in 1996 following the secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia is to be re-established. The prime minister makes clear notably that Ethiopia should establish strong naval force for the near future to avoid the internal and external pressure. This action may implies different perceptions towards Ethiopia's neighbors. Because as it is well known Ethiopia has no ports; but she is on the way to launch navy force. So, it cause the question of why, how Ethiopia aims at building navy force after the country's loss of its coastline 25 years ago. The informant said that Ethiopia is currently working more than ever before to cooperate with its neighboring countries. Establishing navy force is also the best example for Ethiopia's commitment and trust on its neighboring.

The informant added that the government reforming security officials as the result of insecurity Ethiopia faced for at least three years. Indeed, the government carried out a extensive rearrange of top security officials, replacing Chief of Staff General Samora Yenus with Lieutenant General Se`are Mekonnen, national intelligence and security service (NISS) director Getachew Assefa with Lieutenant General Adem Mohammed, National Security Advisor and former army chief Abadula Gameda and Sebhat Nega one of the founders of the TPLF and director-general of the Foreign Relations Strategic Research Institute.

### D. Refugee

Informant from Somalia embassy agrees that refugee is also the influential factor for Ethiopia towards the horn of African countries. Especially, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia have common culture, ethnicity and religion. So, in one way or another people have the sense of oneness. Here, the best example is our relation with Ethiopia. Somalia not only regards Ethiopia as a neighboring country, but also as a brotherly African country. She added that Ethiopia admits tens of thousands of Somalia refugees annually.

On the other hand, informant from MoFA revealed that in the horn of Africa Ethiopia is relatively not a very conflicting country. Because of its relative stability large number of refugees is came/coming to Ethiopia. He added that funding to support refugees in Ethiopia remains a challenge with confirmed contribution so far. One of the challenges in relation to the large number refugees is providing sustainable assistance to the refugee. The government should provide all necessary human needs which difficult for developing countries like Ethiopia. So, early to his Premiership, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, trip to the horn of Africa countries at least to decrease the number of refugees to Ethiopia.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the current Ethiopian government is motivated by the large number immigrants or refugees. While overcoming this large number of refugees Ethiopian government has made different negotiation with most horn of Africa governments. Ethiopia is playing a major role in the establishment of the HoA. However, it needs the high commitment of all neighboring states in bringing stability the Horn of Africa.

### **E. Preserving Its Regional Hegemony**

According to Mearsheimer (2001:40) hegemony defined as a state that is so powerful that it dominates all the other states in the system. Mearsheimer elaborated that there is no state which does not want to be hegemony whether it is a global or regional level. Either the regional or international: but all states have hegemony ultimate goal. At a regional hegemony, the state should be the sole great power and have the capability, in terms of military and economic strength, by overpowering its neighboring independent countries. The absence of such a single power means that there is no hegemony state in that region. The anarchic nature of the international system, the desire for survival, and the uncertainty about other states' intentions ultimately leads states to pursue regional hegemony as their final goal. The United States, United Kingdom and India are examples of traditional hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001:40).

Similar to the above concept, the informant from IGAD has explained that Ethiopia has been a traditionally and historically a hegemony in the Horn of Africa region. Other than being Africa's oldest state that never been colonized has been hegemony: there are two factors that can trace as reasons for Ethiopian hegemony in HoA i.e. its sheer size and its large population. Its hegemony historically predates colonialism, and unlike others neighboring countries. He further explains that Ethiopia has been a rather strong, independent, even imperial power well into the twentieth century (Dehéz, 2008). On the other hand, the informant elaborated Ethiopia's relative military power and its role in regional peace and security, including an excellent track record in peacekeeping, counter-terrorism and mediation, provide the impetus for actions through multilateral platforms, long-term partnerships and alliances in the region and beyond. Therefore, having the hegemony goal; Abiy Ahmed is highly influenced to continue Ethiopia's hegemony in the HoA.

### **F. Border and Proxy War**

According to the informant from MoFA, since Eritrea's secession from Ethiopia in 1993, Eritrea's hostility towards its neighbor had been a constant threat, especially to Ethiopia until the coming of Abiy Ahmed in 2018. The hostility was expressed through proxy war. One of the common features, proxy wars, of such foreign policy in the region as well as the policy of supporting the enemy of my enemy had been the main foreign policy strategy that countries followed in the Horn of Africa. Indeed, Ethiopia had supported Sudanese rebels, in return Sudan supported Ethiopian and Eritrean opposition groups and Eritrea supported Somali insurgent. (Ana Elisa, 201:53). Here, according to the informant, Ethiopia is repeatedly visiting and revisiting neighboring countries so that these countries solve their problem through soft power i.e. diplomatic and in the sense of Medemer.

### **16.2. Economic Implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa**

Regional integration and openness to the world, which is the third pillars of Medemer next to building a vibrant democracy and Economic vitality, is the concept that beliefs economic interdependency can reduces the likelihood of conflicts in HoA. The more we cooperate the less we face conflict in the world in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular. Similar to the above concept Dr. Abiy uses the following phrase to illustrate his thought: "if you want to go fast go alone, but if you want to go far go together." This implies that Ethiopia is running with a multicultural approach in its relation in the HoA (Sara Mokaddem, 2019:4).

Indeed, Ethiopia is keen in participating regional organizations (Continental Free Trade Agreement (CFTA), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Common Market for Easter and Southern Africa (COMESA) and in the African Union (AU) and different world organizations. On his speech to world economic forum (2019), Dr. Abiy explains that Ethiopia is actively vowing in various regional and continental institutions. The prime minister further explained our Medemer or synergy brings interdependence whereas

interdependence creates peace in the HoA. In return the HoA peace is also bringing a less favorable environment for criminal activities that threaten the security of states and their citizens (Ibid).

Informant from MoFA lauded the above concepts and admitted that Medemer is very important factor for the HoA diplomatic relation. Medemer brings unity, unity brings integration and integration brings mutual benefits for the all in the horn. Economic cooperation and unity of the Ethiopia towards the HoA is attracting the member states to have new hope in economic integration and others. The informant elaborated that Medemer creates hope of free trade, custom union, free market and common currency.

Besides, the informant added that Ethiopia's cooperation with its neighbors can optimize their chances of openness to the world by finding ways of creating synergies and saving resources. The prime minister should goes on through supporting for a single diplomatic post that may possibly represent all IGAD countries, which could extremely save resources and allow for a better regional coordination on development matters and securing the instabilities in the HoA.

Furthermore, the practical new approaches to foreign policy shifts are now set to create a conducive moment for economic cooperation in the region. Ethiopia having over 100 million people with landlocked-ness is one of the world's fast growing economies. Consequently, Djibouti, Somalia and Eritrea which are located at a critical corridor for international shipping and Red Sea coast untapped oil gas respectively; will benefit from Ethiopia. In turn, the informant says Ethiopia is guarantying peace and economic integration success in few months run through its diplomacy. So, it is possible to conclude that there is a clear strategy behind the pursuit of economic integration which should reduce the prospect of political competition and increase economic integration in the Horn.

### **16.3. Political Implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the Horn of Africa**

For the informant from MoFA, the currently sweeping reforms of Ethiopia have political implications for the relationship between Ethiopia and its neighbors. Even though Ethiopia is considered as defacto hegemony in the HoA; she was in state of contradiction with its neighbors. However, after the rise of Abiy Ahmed there are deepest hopes and sign of peace breathing in the region. Due to its large border share the events these taking places in Ethiopia have direct impact in the region. Here is worth mentioning that the two recent announcements: the normalization of relations with the northern neighbor Eritrea and the signing of a peace deal with the Ogaden National Liberation Front, a separatist movement that has sought self-determination for the Somali region of Ethiopia. According to the informant these events are crucial in Ethiopia relation with the region. This is because of Othese tensions between Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Ogaden National Liberation Front has each contributed to instability in the region, before Abiy. For instance, the new rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is not only affecting the domestic instability in Ethiopia. At the same time, the region is also breathing new political air.

On the other hand, as explained by the informant from Somalia embassy to Ethiopia, the peace accord with the Ogaden National Liberation Front has great contribution through reducing a long-standing conflict and suspicion with the Ethiopian state. She added that the conflict within Ethiopia and ONLF has impacted the relationship between Ethiopia, Somali and Somalia republic negatively. Ethiopian Somali region and Somalia Republic people almost have the common culture, religion and psychological makeup. Not only this but also the foreign policy objectives of the new Somali Republic were influenced by the level of influence it enjoyed in the Somali-inhabited regions of its neighbors. In the long run, the drive and drag between the republic and its Diaspora added to the increase of a separatist story within the Somali-inhabited regions. Tensions both within Ethiopia and between Ethiopia and its neighbors were rooted in history. But, thanks to the new prime minister now things are changed to solving their difference through peaceful means. So, the informant concludes the new approach that is using soft power than hard power is an important lesson for Somalia Republic and others.

#### **16.4. Security implications of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the horn of Africa**

The recent Ethiopia's promising security offers hope for its people and externally draws stability, integration and peace. Recently Ethiopia added a new area of focus on regional security through Medemer, passion and excuse to neighboring countries. This approach may constitute a major improvement in addressing the shortcomings of Ethiopia's regional diplomatic practices, regardless of its current policy orientation. In his most recent remarks during a meeting with President Isaias Afworki of Eritrea, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed neatly pointed out the border issues is the second issues for us and I will serve as the foreign ministry of Eritrea if the president is willing full. Here, in his saying so he neglected the triggering events of the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Which implies that border are not the crucial issues in the bilateral relation between two and more states especially in the HoA, which in turn gives lesson for neighboring countries in which most of the countries get in to conflict because of borders.

Furthermore, according to the informant from South Sudan referring to the various outlooks on Ethiopia's relative stability as one of the fastest running peace in the region, he called Ethiopia as exemplary of the bright spots and progress in Africa. Recent promising mega trends in political and relative stability in the region, coupled with unexpected reforms and fuelled by fast growing rapprochement has created a surge of interest in economic integration and opportunity of cooperation for the region. The informant added that unreservedly Ethiopian speedy reform is adopting that a country that is not peaceful domestically cannot enjoy peace with its neighbors.

On the other hand, the informant from MoFA elaborates Ethiopia focusing on its peace and security challenges so that it can also have peaceful relations with other countries ever before. For the establishment of a peaceful, integrated and prosperous region, Ethiopia believes it is also equally necessary for its neighbors to enjoy domestic peace and stability. Ethiopia has signed comprehensive economic integration and other cooperation agreements with Somalia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, and Sudan. To this end, extraordinary and far reaching in many ways, Ethiopia and Eritrea have signed bilateral agreement that includes rapprochement and peaceful co-existence. It can be mentioned as the first in the history of Ethiopia and Eritrea after the decisive war between them. The agreement may close the hostile chapters in the relations of the two countries. This new rapprochement extends to distance Horn of African countries. Moreover, the informant concludes, Ethiopia is enjoying strong security collaboration with Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, and Sudan, especially after the rise of Prime Minister Abiy.

Similarly, the informant from South Sudan embassy confirmed that the HoA swift and crucial diplomatic turnaround. He added that even though HoA was in hostility and rivalry, a recent thaw in relations between nations in the region has shocked observers and bring is hope for long term peace. Surprisingly, Ethiopia and Eritrea starts the new chapter of relation by ending decades of hostilities. The two states have agreed to reopen borders and embassies and resumed flights between their capitals.

The informant further elaborates the prime minister diplomatic movement has regional security effect. Here the best example to be mentioned is following the Ethio-Eritrea rapprochement or peace the others, probably the year hostility i.e. Mogadishu accusing of Asmara of funneling money to insurgents has ceased. On the other hand, as it was the recent history there was border conflict between Eritrea and Djibouti which caused over the Dumeira Mountain and Dumeira Island around red sea; this border dispute ended following the lesson Ethiopia's peace initiation or Medemer approach. The informant said that taking the Abiy's` factor as good lesson our young country warring leaders also have gathered in Addis Ababa and signed a deal to the brutal five year civil war.

Even though, it is implausible to conclude the whole security implications in this piece of sections; it is worth to conclude as the informant lauded. Internal security that achieved through Abiy factor has extended to the

horn of Africa in sunlight fast. This security brings peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea unexpectedly. No more proxy war between them and in turn this can be a great lesson for the rest of HoA states. Ethiopia reforms its freedom of human being, press, most of opposition parties come to Ethiopia as the result of excuse and Medemer. Generally, Ethiopia is using soft power (Medemer, passion and excuse) to implement internal and external missions thanks to the new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. So, neighboring states should take this soft power as the best alternative to implement their goals.

## **16.5. Challenges to the current Ethiopian foreign policy towards the HoA**

### **16.5.1. Internal challenges**

There are internal factors that challenging Ethiopia while bringing peace, stability, economic integration and security. These challenges includes; ethnic conflict, border conflict, macroeconomic imbalance

#### **a. Ethnic Conflict**

Scholars believe that difficulty of getting a clear definition for ethnicity due to the lack of clarity of the objective and subjective criteria involved in the determination of member of the group. Usually, ethnicity shows grouping based on primordial ties like origin, language culture history territory etc which are based on objectively determined factors.

In Ethiopia, the recent inter-ethnic relations are based on the policy of rectifying the unjust historical relations that existed among the different ethnic groups. Informant from MoFA believes that the Ethiopian ethnic federalism gives birth to ethnic conflict. He added that Ethnic conflict describes the conflict based on ethnic difference because the parties in conflict claim that their ethnic group has distinct power over their region. But, other ethnic groups do not have the same right as of them. He also believed that the major factor which makes the current ethnic conflicts of Ethiopia appear as inter-ethnic conflicts resulting from pure ethnic variation is the previously created inter-ethnic distance. The informant concluded that unless Ethiopia avoided this ethnic tension, it creates difficulty for Ethiopia and the horn of Africa. It may hinder the peaceful integration and political stability started by the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

#### **b. Macroeconomic imbalance**

As the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said the first challenge he face while coming to power is macro-economic imbalance. Confirming the challenge of macro-economic imbalance in Ethiopia MoFA mentioned different factors which are contributing for macro-economic imbalance. These factors include; systemic corruption, nepotism, and patrimonial governance lie at the heart of many of the socioeconomic and political drivers. He added that Ethiopia is in extreme economic crisis which is causing violence in the country. The macro-economic imbalance is undermining national economic development via the substantial diversion of public revenues. The macro-economic imbalance is also representing the violence, discrimination, and injustice experiencing by millions of people across the country on a daily basis. This is challenging Ethiopian foreign policy towards neighboring to be implementing in the best manner.

Ethiopia is in searching solution to these economic imbalances through aid extension with china, aid bringing from different states like USA, integration with neighboring countries, searching new access to the sea. However, informant from Djibouti embassy explains that the asymmetric economic distribution in the state and corruption with previous political elite, and individuals are aggravating the economic imbalance. There is also a fear that the problems expand to the horn which makes difficulty on the current economic integration and political stability in the region. He reveals that in some perspective, widespread corruptions go hand in hand with both de jure and de facto restrict the economic, civil and political rights of the people. Finally, he

concluded that economic imbalance problem leads to limited or inaccessible societies' tension which can be find expression in other form, resulting in violent consequences.

### **C. Activism**

Activism is the new concept which is finding on lips of many Ethiopians. It is defined as individuals or groups of people which are stand for purpose of Self-organized action motivated by enthusiasm to make the common living environment, services, community or society better, or protect them from harmful change. The activists are not government funded rather it is self sponsored and work for the common good, not for profit.

According to informant from MoFA, in Ethiopia activism is linked to the people's ethnic group and prescribe as voice to their problem. Yet, throughout Ethiopia's political reform there are examples of activists who have roles that extend beyond the ethnic and region into public, political life. This is because of the current Ethiopian government has opened new democratic political spaces for activists. However, more recent political moves in Ethiopia have bringing difficulties for civil society, government, public, leaving the future of the government role in question.

After the coming of Abiy Ahmed government in many ways gave special attention to the question of activists and taking practical steps to involve them, the informant added. Under the previous government there was no a need to provide a channel for mass participation of activists. However, in the countryside the people are in serious challenge because of the activities of activists. Government official couple with the public should work based units for solving the problems coming following the activists.

#### **16.5.2. External challenges**

The other challenging factors are external factors that includes; Al-shabab, crisis in South Sudan, opposition in republic of Sudan and conflict between Somalia and Kenya.

##### **A. Al Shabab**

As of the information gained from Somalia diplomat to Ethiopia, horn of Africa is highly challenging by terrorist violence experienced in the region. As of the informant different forms of social and political factors are aggravating it. These factors include; violence, sociopolitical marginalization and limited economic mobility and relative deprivation, systemic institutional corruption, and restricted avenues of political or institutional redress are insufficient to produce violent extremism at the individual level.

On the other hand, according to the informant from MoFA, terrorism and religious radicalism happens because of violent behavior is a combination of individual circumstances, interpersonal relationships, attitudes, and inclinations. Moreover, it relates with proximate to social, political, and economic factors and the crucial presence of, exposure to, and affinity with violent extremism and violent extremist groups mentioned as the leading factors. Some may be drawn to the appeal of extremist narratives that espouse violence as a viable method to achieve social and political goals. He further added that Ethiopia is facing and experiencing the same political violence and attacks by domestic violent extremist groups. But what makes Ethiopian chase different is that the problem is mainly causes by ethnic-federalism and unemployment. Ethiopia is challenging by ethnic conflict more than ever before. These ethnic tensions may protect Ethiopia's Medemer, excuse and passion in the horn of Africa, unless the government tries to stop it.

##### **B. Crisis in South Sudan**

Prior to its dependence in 2011 from Sudan, South Sudan is in civil war. Ethiopia, regional and international organizations are trying to stop the disagreement. The two conflicting parties also signed peaceful agreement the stop war and establish a joint government. However, the process is still unpractical. The South Sudan

crisis is using as source of insecurity in the region. Different of the horn are in proxy war in south Sudan which aggravates the instability of the region. It also left a leadership vacuum in the region that combined with more recent domestic unrest and political instability in the region.

Sharing the above idea informant from South Sudan embassy confirmed that though it is too soon to predict the extent of Abiy's energetic diplomacy his factors (Medemer, and excuse) gives us the hope to peace and integration for the region. He added that as he thinks that because of Abiy's Medemer the region will be more integrated. On the other hand, informant from MoFA though there is good progress the issues South Sudan very difficult because it's continues delay of the peace process signed between them. Insecurity of South Sudan may hinder ambitions of Abiy's factor to integrate the region. The informant concluded that unless it solved soon Ethiopian government may challenged not just in the deployment of the regional integration but also by diplomatic initiatives to obstruct or act outside of the Ethiopian led IGAD mediation process.

### **C. Opposition in Republic of Sudan**

Relatively, Ethiopia has an increasingly close political and security partnership rooted in a shared position on the GERD and the use of the Nile, among other issues with Sudan. Both countries have positive sharing a watershed in their improving bilateral relationship. By contrast, the current opposition in Sudan and the removal of Omar Al-Bashir over the power may cause challenge to Ethiopia through a sensitive border dispute as well as the political future of Ethiopia ([www.sudantribune.com](http://www.sudantribune.com)).

To make the issue more worst and escalate different countries and organizations with different interests are coming to Sudan. Here, Ethiopian government has to play and follow the process attentively so that they will be government of Sudan continues the diplomatic relation of the two states. If the situation not handled and follow up wisely, it may create proxy war as usual. So, Ethiopian government through a series of discussions with the collaboration of the AU, IGAD, and subsequent diplomatic efforts will help Sudanese-Ethiopian relationship remains a pivotal axis in the region, said the informant from MoFA.

### **D. The Competition of Supper states in the Region**

The strategic importance of Ethiopia makes it to be one of the countries strong states are competing for. The current reforms of Ethiopia concerning its neighbors get due attention by supper states. These reforms are important for USA because Ethiopia and USA are good partners towards fighting Al-Shabab and al Qaeda. A new era of hopes rising in the region as the result of Abiy Ahmed towards respecting for human rights in Ethiopia and horn is the persisting in the competition.

America, China, France, Turkey, Belgium, Saud Arabia, Qatar and others are highly competing in the Red Sea Region. These competitions may open the door for al Shabab. Instability in the region will undermine Ethiopia's efforts to decline and avoid if possible al Shabab from Somaliland from the region as well. The competition of these supper states will also aggravate proxy war to weaken the opponents. Besides Ethiopian can be challenging by ethnic violence which draw Ethiopia's focus inward; away from regional peacekeeping commitments. By doing so, the competition in the Red Sea Region coup up with internal challenge from anti-Abiy elements in the security establishment would have a serious hindrance to Ethiopian foreign policy.

### **E. Border conflict**

According to informant from MoFA, in the horn of Africa the border is one of the main causes of instability. Different reason can be mentioned for this to happen. One of the reasons is the incorrect demarcated borders among neighboring countries. The 1998-2000 Ethio-Eritrean destructive war was unforgettable evil between the two states (Jacquin-Berdal, 2002). This border conflict brought famine and displaces the people. The horn of Africa is taking as the example of insecurity and disorder as the result of the border conflict among them. Even though, currently Abiy is bring the air of peace and stability; there is also suspicion that these border

conflict obstacle the reforms. Therefore, the informant said though Eritrea and Ethiopia are in rapprochement they should clearly solve the border issues as soon as possible.

## **17. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter provides conclusion and recommendation for the study. Both conclusion and recommendation of the study should, however, be understood only on the context of the study.

### **17.1. Conclusions**

Since the arrival of the current Prime Minister both Ethiopia and its neighbors Horn of Africa have undergone important political, economic and security transformations. The transformations in the domestic systems have their influence on foreign relation of the country. The influences in some cases extend to shifting policy concentration from the underlying foundations. Thus, in principle the policy has not been compromised the policy change but one can notice changing behaviors of the policy in many regard.

The current Ethiopian foreign policy towards the Horn of African countries has economic implications through integration and interdependency. The active participation of Ethiopian government with its neighboring countries creates mutual development. However, it is not free from challenges especially for long period of time Djibouti was the main and almost the only outlet to Ethiopian import and export process. Now the government turned its face to other alternatives like Eritrea and Somaliland to get relatively less cost outlet. So, unless the government handled the situation wisely it may cause suspicion for Djibouti because of its losing astonishing economic advantages from Ethiopia.

As the possible solution to the above suspicion Ethiopian government Abiy Ahmed on his speech to world economic forum, clearly elaborated as Ethiopia is aggressively shows potential in various regional and continental institutions. He added that Synergy or 'Medemer' is the best mechanism that proposed to bring strong economic interdependency. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the current Ethiopian foreign policy has remarkable economic implication to the horn of Africa.

It is also not difficult to conclude that the currently sweeping reforms of Ethiopia have political implications for the relationship with its neighbors. Prior to its coming to power Abiy Ahmed, the horn of Africa has earned deepest hopes and sign of peace breathing in the region. Horn of Africa is exercising relatively order and peace as the result of Ethiopian reforms concerning its neighboring countries. Especially, the rapprochement between Ethio-Eritrea and the signing of a peace deal with the Ogaden National Liberation Front, a separatist movement that has sought self-determination for the Somali region of Ethiopia are among the main peace and order in the horn. Therefore, Ethiopia's peaceful relation with Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Ogaden National Liberation Front has each contributed to political stability in the region.

The newly emerging Abiy factors (Medemer, excuse and passion) are bringing relatively stability, integration and peace in the country and in the region. The previously difficulties and obstacles are decreasing as the result of the new Abiy's Medemer which aims at integrating the whole neighboring countries for the mutual benefits. These approaches are improving in addressing the inadequacy of Ethiopia's regional diplomatic practices. By and large, Ethiopia is not using hard power as the previous one rather the main and dominating means are Medemer, passion and excuse. While using these soft powers to implement internal and external missions the neighboring countries are taking the good lessons gratitude to the new Ethiopian Prime Minister.

On the other hand, macroeconomic imbalance as emerging the main factor has significantly influenced Ethiopian foreign policy. However, the policy has also considered it as its main focus so that the issues of economy have to be deal with integration and mutual gain. It is an inescapable phenomenon that Ethiopia has to pay necessary costs to attain it. Mainly via 'take and give' motto, the policy approached economic issues. Even under such reserved approach, macroeconomic imbalance has managed to influence the foreign policy's

by imposing economic burden and socially unbearable on the country. Similarly, the current Ethiopia's economic problem has influenced the country to start the new diplomatic relation with the neighboring countries. It also has brought to the fore the recent rapprochement peace deal which gives Ethiopia access to alternative ports.

On the other hand, macroeconomic imbalance forced Ethiopia to restructure the power constellation in the domestic system that enables the country to get options to conventional strong countries on which the country relied for FDI, loan, aid and technical assistance. The emerging economies became equally important to Ethiopia's foreign policy. It gave the country a space to be able to give due attention to the previously neglected values like democracy and human rights that west mostly attach to their relationships with the country. Therefore, the policy has to do more on democratization and human rights protection as its core objective as well as it should tend to favor speedy development that hindered its relation with the horn and the rest of the world. In response to this challenge the country is adopting multiple techniques to restructure its negative impacts. The policy is properly using alternatively emerging powers; it drives the country to engage into good relation with horn of Africa states and economically strong states.

Furthermore, activists are also impacted the policy behavior in its interaction with the actors. Initially the policy expected only positive influences from the actors. However, as they became more dangerous to the country, the policy began to exhibit extreme reservation in inviting and allowing them into the country.

In the Similar fashion, terrorism and radicalism have also impacted the policy substantially by occupying increasingly greater in the policy direction. The external engagement of the country is fighting terrorism is expanding from time to time as the issues become central to international system.

### **17.2. Recommendations**

The interestingly extensive interaction between the country and its neighboring has to be more feasible through at least reducing the challenges. In order to make this happen, Ethiopian foreign policy has to properly understand and adjust itself with changes in the horn. In fact it is impossible to be successful in obeying the interests of all states as it is; the policy has to do more in fulfilling the interests of the people. The country should be able to do whatever at its disposal to improve its gain in the horn. Therefore, in addition to what it does so far, the following measures should be considered to enhance capacity to overcome challenges and yield the country every available gain.

First, the FANSPS should give equal attention to all neighboring countries as given to priority for some friendly neighboring. We have seen how the Abiy factors changing the atmosphere in the horn, particularly emergence of Medemer, excuse and passion diverted the neighboring countries attention from suspicion to integration. However, the government should clearly put them as foundational so that the neighboring countries and whole world easily understand those Abiy factors. As far as the only interest at stake should be people's interest the government must adhere to foundation of the policy practically working for realization of democratization and speedy economic development within its neighboring. Otherwise, the fears about survival of the nation in absence of the foundations are likely to happen to the country.

Secondly, there is no doubt about importance of the activists and other NGOs for the country in supporting provision of basic social services and economic progresses. However, they may play especially destructive role in the country by exposing government's weakness to the international society as well. Therefore, the country needs detail policy for the engagement has two critical importances. The first is to screen those with evil intention from good ones. Second, it holds the government accountable and responsible for why it allows into or prohibits from the country those organization. The government will be bound by the provisions that are publically known and difficult to slip in interests other than national interests.

Thirdly, Ethiopian government should adopt strict policy against countries promoting religious radicalism in the region. Ethiopian government has success story by with standing pressures from the outside countries to

secure internal peace. But, if the government doesn't follow attentively and formulate proper policy; it would be not be any more easy to halt infiltration of religious radicalism into the country. To this end, the foreign policy has to support the job being done domestically to reduce vulnerability of the region. Unless the government responds, it would not have lesser consequence than insecurity and disorder.

Fourthly, the strong competition among super states in the Red Sea Region will sustain potentially creating a new opportunity for al Shabab to recruit or even expand its attacks into Ethiopia. The Abiy government should clearly put to practice its main interests concerning the red sea. Unless the current isolation types of relation in red sea may risk the country through proxy war by the competing states. Ethiopia should show its support for one of the competing group in the way that Ethiopia's interests are successfully accomplished. If not Ethiopia will likely to lose support from her own base if she fails to select her best friends.

Fifthly, experiences elsewhere have shown that in the horn of Africa proxy war is common. The recent rapprochement with neighboring countries, Medemer, passion and excuse may not be guarantee security. In supporting Abiy factors role, the government should recognize that the redress of legitimate border demarcation and defined interests. Furthermore, the Ethiopian government should weigh the value of outsourcing foreign policy objectives to partners against the potential adverse effects of those partners' involvement. The government should begin to shape its approach to neighboring countries by:

a) Using all available tools to help Abiy factors to demilitarize his response to regional security complex, resolve regional disputes, and conduct necessary structural reforms peacefully and acceptably to all sides; and

b) Ensuring that the Ethiopian government remains the sole guarantor of its interests in the region by not relying on the neighboring or any other outside power to manage these interests.

Even though Ethiopia is a critical country in an increasingly important region; the foreign minister should recognize the dangers of rapidly changing domestic and regional dynamics in the Horn of Africa to prepare for worst-case scenarios, even as we regard new developments with optimism.

Finally, in a few months to come Abiy factors are reordering the region's political landscape, including the nascent but historic rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. However, the issues of South Sudan and Sudan should be solved as soon as possible through multilateral discussion with IGAD, AU and UN. On the other hand, the Ethiopian foreign minister should also front and center in the contest between Ethiopia and Egypt over the Nile basin, especially concerning down fall of Omar al-Bashir. Ethiopia could begin filling the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) at any time. By doing so Ethiopian government should exploit Egypt's weakness to secure the consent of other states to the GERD project, isolate Egypt, and violate long-standing agreements on the use of the Nile's waters that date to British colonial rule.

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## Appendices

### Interview questions

#### **Background Information**

**Research topic:** The Abiy factors: the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy change towards the horn of Africa.

**Date:** ....

**Place:** .....

**Time:** .....

**Interviewer:** Mersha Zenebe Felek

**Interviewee:** .....

**Age:** .....

**Nationality:** .....

#### **Regarding questions**

1. About to explore the domestic factors that influence Ethiopia to change its foreign policy.
  - 1.1. What do you think about the domestic factors that influence Ethiopia to its foreign policy after the coming of Dr. Abiy Ahmed as a prime minister?
  - 1.2. What are the implications of the domestic factors that influenced the Ethiopian foreign policy towards the horn of Africa after the coming of Abiy Ahmed?
  - 1.3. What are the implications of the commitment that Dr Abiy and his foreign policy as well as political decisions?
2. Examining the political and economic implications of Ethiopian foreign policy towards the horn of Africa after March 2018.
  - 2.1. In your opinion, how do you see the Abiy factors (medemer, passion, and excuse) and their implications for a better regional economic cooperation and integration towards the horn of Africa?
  - 2.2. Do you think the current foreign policy of Ethiopia is adequate to respond to HoA political instability?
  - 2.3. What role, if any, Abiy factors (Medemer, passion, and excuse) are playing in regional economic integration or cooperation?
  - 2.4. What political implication, if any, should other neighboring states learn from the current Ethiopian foreign policy?
  - 2.5. Does Medemer, passion and excuse are effective towards bringing political and economical cooperation among neighboring states? If your answer is yes, how?
  - 2.6. Considering that Ethiopia is relatively stable, what lessons, if any, can neighboring countries learn and apply in respect of Medemer, passion, and excuse in the HoA?
3. Towards examine the implication of Ethiopian foreign policy for the Horn of African security complex.

- 3.1. Although, Conflict and insecurity threats have persisted for around two decades: relative stability has arrived after the coming of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. In your view, what is the role of Abiy factors in overcoming/reducing these security challenges to HoA?
- 3.2. In your opinion, how could the current Ethiopian foreign policy formulated to respond better to regional security challenges?
- 3.3. What role, if any, should Ethiopia foreign policy is playing in regional conflict management?
- 3.4. What do you consider to be the most important function of Ethiopian foreign policy towards the peace process in the HoA?
- 3.5. In your opinion, do Medemer, passion and excuse address the challenges posed by the regional conflict? If your answer is yes, how?
- 3.6. What would be the likely security implication of Ethiopian foreign policy towards the Horn of Africa?
4. In identifying whether there are major constraints that have prevented the attainment of more desirable out comes in the multilateral relation.
  - 4.1. Based on your view, what do you think that the most challenges Abiy factors are facing while binging peace, security and economic integration in the HoA?
  - 4.2. In view of the existing challenges, what do you think are the possible solutions?
5. State the implications of Abiy factor towards
  1. Eritrea 2. Sudan 3. South-Sudan 4. Djibouti Somalia 5. Kenya
  2. What do you propose for the future peace and stability as well as regional integration of the HoA?
  3. If there is/are any other comment (s).