



January 2025

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

NEWSLETTER



January 2, 2025: The Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe, engaged in a comprehensive discussion with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Dr. Gedion Timotiws, regarding key issues that require collaboration. Both ministries are among the first institutions in our country, and they emphasized the critical importance of working closely together to protect Ethiopia's interests at regional, continental, and global levels.

H.E. Dr. Kasahun expressed his gratitude to Minister Dr. Gedion for his commitment to supporting efforts to foster meaningful economic ties with countries worldwide. The ministers agreed to establish a joint technical committee to facilitate the implementation of their initiatives. During their discussions on WTO accession negotiations, they reached a consensus on the importance of coordinating diplomatic efforts through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



January 13, 2025: Minister of Trade and Regional Integration H.E Dr. Kasahun Gofe held a press briefing regarding the revision of fuel prices. He stated that the primary benchmark for oil prices is the global price, which can be easily accessed by anyone to compare with prices in Ethiopia.

He emphasized that there is no compelling reason for the Ethiopian government to operate against this international market principle. The government spends over \$4 billion annually on fuel purchases. Dr. Kasahun noted that if the private sector, companies, and the business community do not share the burden of oil marketing pressures, it will be challenging for the government to carry out major projects. He stressed the importance of gradually moving away from fuel subsidies and focusing on projects that provide lasting benefits to the country and its people.

The government is under significant pressure to subsidize fuel, allocating several billion birr to ensure that low-income society are not disproportionately affected. He asserted that the government currently subsidizes 21 birr for petrol and 28 birr for diesel.

Dr. Kasahun also highlighted challenges related to smuggling, supply, and storage of imported fuel. He emphasized that the government will not tolerate illegal trading practices. Companies involved in such activities have been penalized with a six-month ban from oil trading and fines exceeding 100 million birr. Contrary to the primary purpose of the subsidy, some companies that prioritize their own profits disrupt the oil market. The government's actions against these practices will continue to be strengthened.

January 15, 2025: H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe welcomed a delegation from Azerbaijan led by H.E. Mr. Yalchin Rafiyev, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to strengthen trade ties and address key bilateral issues. This meeting marks a significant milestone in fostering economic cooperation between our two countries and highlights untapped opportunities for collaboration.



January 17, 2025: Minister of Trade and Regional Integration H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe welcomed a Chinese government delegation led by H.E. Lu Hao, President of the Development Research Centre of the State Council of China, to his office.

Their discussions focused on various bilateral matters related to trade cooperation between Ethiopia and China. They acknowledged the progress made and identified key areas for enhanced collaboration, including maximizing Ethiopia's exports to China. This meeting marks a pivotal step toward significant advancements that will benefit both economies and strengthen their ties. The delegation also visited the Quality Village and reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to quality assurance in all aspects.





January 20, 2025: The Minister of Trade and Regional Integration conducted a performance evaluation for the first six months of the fiscal year under the theme “Towards a Trading System Streamlined by Quality.” Minister H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe emphasized that the significant achievements made through reforms should encourage further results in the remaining months.

Ethiopia earned \$3.28 billion from the export market in the past six months, nearly equivalent to the total export revenue for the entire previous year. He noted that the completion of the Quality Village to global standards is another remarkable achievement from this period.

During the past six months, the ministry implemented effective reforms by facilitating online business registration and licensing. Administrative and legal action was taken against 18 employees involved in illegal activities. Business license registration services were provided to 2.5 million businesses, and 325,000 liters of illegally circulating fuel were seized in efforts to legalize the fuel trade.

Fines totaling 116 million birr were imposed on fuel distribution companies engaged in illegal activities. Effective negotiations for World Trade Organization (WTO) accession are ongoing, with preparations for the fifth round of negotiations set to take place in the near future. The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration is also working on the necessary preparations for implementing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).



January 21, 2025: At the Business Boosting Conference organized by Ethio-Logistics and Sectoral Association, H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, emphasized the importance of enhancing trade and investment relations with Djibouti. He affirmed the Ethiopian government's commitment to fostering business opportunities throughout the region and recognized that longstanding collaboration and ongoing infrastructure initiatives unlock new avenues for mutual growth. The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration is working to dismantle trade barriers in line with the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) to establish a framework for enhanced collaboration. As the focus shifts toward diversifying trade through manufacturing and agriculture, he acknowledged Djibouti's strategic maritime position as a key asset for export opportunities.



On the same day, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration Dr. Kasahun Gofe visited the Ethiopian Trading Businesses Corporation. He outlined a direction for implementing operational reforms that will enable the institution to effectively fulfill its mission of providing and distributing basic food and various products. He emphasized the importance of continuously evaluating the implementation process and the results of the reform efforts.





January 22, 2025: Minister of Trade and Regional Integration Dr. Kasahun Gofe delivered a keynote address at the Ethiopia and Japan Trade and Investment Symposium. He highlighted that Ethiopia's economy is one of the fastest-growing in the world, offering numerous opportunities for trade and investment. As a gateway to Africa, Ethiopia is at a critical juncture in its economic development, having registered significant growth in export trade. He noted that Ethiopia achieved an impressive export income of 3.28 billion USD in the last six months of this fiscal year, marking more than a twofold increase compared to the previous year.

The minister emphasized the long-standing partnership between Ethiopia and Japan, characterized by strong diplomatic and economic ties, which has created numerous collaboration opportunities. In 2023, Ethiopia exported approximately 114 million USD worth of goods to Japan, with coffee accounting for 79% of these exports, followed by sesame seeds and cut flowers. During the same year, imports from Japan reached about 375 million USD, primarily consisting of vehicles. There is significant potential to enhance trade between the two nations, particularly in agriculture, manufacturing, energy, and technology.



On the same date, Participants of the Ethiopia-Japan Trade and Investment Symposium visited the Ethiopian Export Trade Exhibition Center at the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration. Minister of Trade and Regional Integration H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe stressed Ethiopia's diverse topography and wide range of products, which offer significant export potential. He noted that in the last six months, Ethiopia earned \$1.36 billion from gold exports alone.

The Minister emphasized his office's commitment to optimizing capabilities and achieving meaningful results through ongoing promotion. The delegation learned about the high quality of Ethiopian products, which are competitive in the Japanese market. He proudly stated that, with premium coffee, grains, oilseeds, spices, vegetables, and minerals, Ethiopia will continue to work diligently to increase its share in the global export market.





January 23, 2025: Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, Dr. Kasahun Gofe, announced a significant trade reform aimed at establishing a modern trading system in Ethiopia. He launched an online trading platform developed by the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange, which is set to transform the country's trading landscape. This new system will empower the business sector to play a more substantial role in the economy.

Dr. Kasahun Gofe emphasized that the online trading system promotes fairness and serves as a valuable tool for diversifying export trade. It enables direct connections between producers and traders from any location.



He reiterated that modernizing the marketing system will provide manufacturers with access to an inclusive financial framework and contribute to a fast and inclusive economy.

During the same event, the minister unveiled the new logo of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange, designed to reflect the concept of digital marketing. Additionally, he laid the foundation stone for a new 24-story Ethiopian Commodity Exchange building, to be constructed in the Mexico area of Addis Ababa. This project is part of a broader transformation initiative aimed at creating a conducive working environment and enhancing the resources available for the digital trading system.

January 24, 2025: H.E. Dr. Kasahun Gofe, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, hosted a Pakistani delegation led by H.E. Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan, Additional Foreign Secretary of Pakistan and head of African Affairs. During the meeting, both parties engaged in discussions regarding bilateral trade relations between the two countries.

The minister emphasized the longstanding diplomatic and trade relationship between Pakistan and Ethiopia, highlighting a shared understanding that collaboration leveraging both nations' population and production potential can yield better mutual outcomes.

In response, Ambassador Hamid congratulated Ethiopia on its impressive performance in export trade and expressed his commitment to facilitating access to the vast market opportunities in Pakistan for Ethiopian products.

The minister also affirmed that his office would support the expo organized by Pakistan in Addis Ababa next May.





January 25, 2025: His Excellency Dr. Kassahun Gofe, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, attended the handover ceremony for seven companies selected to operate in the Dire Dawa Special Economic Zone. In his address at the event, the minister highlighted that the free trade zone, officially inaugurated in August 2014 by His Excellency Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, has completed all necessary preparatory work in coordination with various institutions and is now in the process of becoming operational. The minister congratulated the members of the business community who have taken possession of the space and commenced their operations within the Special Economic Zone.

