

## UK, Ethiopia enhance ties

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Ethiopia and the United Kingdom (UK) discussed on strengthening their partnership at all levels.

The former has currently taken over the Presidency of the African Union (AU) and the latter has assumed the mantle of the G 8.

Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) of the UK, was accompanied by a business delegation from his country as he paid an official visit to Ethiopia. During nightfall on Friday, February 15 2013, the DPM met with Tedros Adhanom (PhD), Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, and held discussions on mutual issues involving both countries and the Horn of Africa.

The DPM, after the brief meeting with Tedros, informed journalists that he had a frank and in fact respectful discussion with the FM. "It was a positive meeting. We covered a number of issues," Nick said. "We had a frank and respectful discussion about human rights and issues related to political reform." They also discussed issues related to the environment and anti-terrorism. According to him, Ethiopia and UK have a lot in common as they jointly work together to counter some of the security challenges in the Horn region.

The two leaders talked about the importance of working together to enhance commercial opportunities which creates growth and enhances job opportunities in Ethiopia. "I am here with a significant British business delegation and we covered some of the issues which will help unlock further commercial opportunities,"

Tedros, who said the UK is one of the best allies of the Ethiopian government with strong trade ties and investment and development co-operation, hopes the two countries partnership would rise to an even higher level. Britain has been offering developmental assistance annually since 2010, starting from £ 240 million, which would increase to £ 390 million by 2015, according to Nebiyu Tedla, Minister Councilor at the Spokesperson's office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

On the same day, the DPM also spoke to Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, and visited Kokebe Tsibah Preparatory School with Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, while launching a Women Support Program that would encourage female students in the Afar Regional state and Borena Zone of the Oromia Regional state. The program is financed by the Department for International Development (DfID).

While discussing the region, discussions on South Sudan and Sudan and the emerging government of Somalia took center stage, according to Nebiyu, who attended the meeting. He apprised journalists of the fact that the situation in Eritrea had not been part of the discussions, where it seems to have encountered political upheaval in the form of an attempted coup d'état a few weeks earlier.