



Prof. Sachs Urges Donor Countries to Double Assistance to Ethiopia

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Special Advisor of UN's Secretary-General and Millennium Development Programme Director, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, said donor countries should double their assistance to Ethiopia.

While conferring with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi here yesterday, Prof. Sachs said the assistance being provided to Ethiopia by donor countries is by half less than from that of other African countries.

Prof. Sachs also indicated that he had told donor countries to expand their assistance to Ethiopia.

Various development projects designed towards achieving the MDGs are being carried out in 10 selected African countries by UN MDGs Programme, the director said, adding a pilot project is being carried out in Koraro Kebele in Hawzein Woreda of the Tigray State.

Prof. Sachs also said the project has been jointly working with the Ethiopian government in a bid to achieve the MDGs.

The director said encouraging results have so far been registered through the project launched four months ago which included education, infrastructure development, food security as well as expansion of health service facilities for mothers and children.

Prof. Sachs also said discussions were held on ways of achieving the MDGs in Africa and the priorities to be considered.

Concerning Africa, Professor Sachs said positive progress has been made in the recently held G8 Summit, the Report of the Commission for Africa and the UN Millennium Project.

Prof. Sachs described European Union's decision to double its assistance for Africa as "encouraging".

Prime Minister Meles on his part said the pilot project being carried out in selected woredas indicated the possibility of achieving the MDGs with the availability of assistance.

Prime Minister Meles also expressed his belief that positive results would be achieved by replicating the project in other places, according to a senior government official who attended the discussion.

Prime Minister Meles also said the government will pay due attention to rural irrigation development, education, health, rural road development as well as electrification and telephone service expansion, the official added.

Meles also said his government would provide the necessary assistance to the Malaysian corporation of PETRONAS in its petroleum exploration and development activities in Ethiopia.

The Prime Minister made the remark during an audience at his office with President and Chief Executive of PETRONAS Corporation, Tan Sri Dato Sri Mohammad Hassen Marican yesterday.

According to Minister of Mines Ambassador Mohamoud Dirir who attended the discussions, PETRO- NAS had signed an agreement to engage in petroleum exploration and development in Ethiopia in 2003.

A joint study conducted by the ministry and the corporation over the past two years has led the latter to enter into the next phase of exploration, according to Ambassador Mohamoud.

According to Ambassador Mohamoud, the corporation would begin drilling of oil wells in Gambella State next year.

President and Chief Executive of PETRONAS, Sri Mohammad Hassen Marican, told Prime Minister Meles that the survey conducted by the corporation over the past two years were successful.

Sri Mohammad Hassen has commended the cooperation of the Ministry of Mines as well as the state governments, which he said, has helped the corporation to successfully undertake its projects.

Established in August 1974, PETRONAS is Malaysia's national petroleum corporation wholly-owned by the government.

Since its incorporation, PETRONAS has grown to be an integrated international oil and gas company with business interests in 35 countries, according to information obtained from its official website.

As at the end of March 2004, the PETRONAS Group comprised 93 wholly-owned subsidiaries, 19 partly-owned outfits and 55 associated companies.

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