

**Remark**

**By**

**H.E. Taye Atske Selassie,**

**President of the Federal Democratic Republic**

**of Ethiopia,**

**At**

**the 8th PIDA Week**

**“Fostering Resilient and Inclusive infrastructure  
for Africa’s Sustainable Growth”**

**26 November, 2024  
Skylight Hotel  
Addis Ababa**

***Your Excellency, Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,***

***Your Excellency, Dr. Alemu Sime Feyisa, Minister of Transport and Logistics of Ethiopia,***

***Your Excellency, Claver Gatete, Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa,***

***Your Excellency, Amani Abou Zeid (Ph.D.), Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission***

***Your Excellency, Nardos Bekele-Thomas (Ph.D.), Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency,***

***Excellencies Ministers and Heads of Delegations,***

***Distinguished Guests,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the 8th Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) Week, and extend a warm greeting to you all here in Addis Ababa, to your home city. The theme of this year's PIDA Week: "**Fostering Resilient and Inclusive Infrastructure for Africa's Sustainable Growth,**" accentuates the pivotal role of infrastructure in propelling the socioeconomic transformation of our continent. It has become evident that investing in infrastructure holds the key to unlocking immense potential for growth and development, enhancing connectivity, and elevating the quality of life through increased trade and investment.

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

PIDA represents the bedrock of our collective pursuit to realize the ambitious goals outlined in Agenda 2063. It aims not only to forge stronger ties between African countries but also to stimulate intra-African trade and establish the essential infrastructure necessary for long-term prosperity.

Let me seize this opportunity to recognize the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and AUDA-NEPAD, all of which serve as crucial catalysts for Africa's infrastructure development and economic integration through PIDA.

The progress we have achieved thus far is evident in the many transformative projects underway, from transnational highways to energy corridors. Notable successes include the North-South Corridor, which connects Tanzania's Dar es Salaam port with Zambia and the DRC, and, the Central Corridor linking Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda; as well as the recently inked agreement to connect Ethiopia and South Sudan. These corridors will significantly enhance mobility, bolster trade, and create new avenues for regional cooperation.

However, we must acknowledge that the road ahead is not without its challenges. Financing remains a formidable challenge in scaling infrastructure across our continent. To address this, we must embrace innovative financing models, such as public-private partnerships, regional investment funds, and particularly strengthening African financial multilateral institutions would help in best implementing PIDA action plans.

### **Excellencies,**

As we reflect on the significant infrastructure development taking place as part of PIDA Phase I and II, Ethiopia's investments in road networks, railways, and renewable energy are transforming the country's infrastructure.

The Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, the first cross-border electrified railway in Africa, has improved regional connectivity, reduced transportation costs, and promoted import and export of strategic commodities.

Ethiopia plays a pivotal role in the East African Power Pool (EAPP), contributing significantly to regional energy security by facilitating the exchange of electricity with other East African Power Pool member countries. We are also exploring opportunities for joint power projects with neighboring nations, such as cross-border transmission lines. Along these lines, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and the Koisha Hydropower Dam stand as symbols of our commitment to harnessing Africa's resources for sustainable energy.

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

As we embark on this journey, I call upon all stakeholders to renew their commitment to the PIDA agenda, particularly concerning the following four critical issues:

**First, we must enhance infrastructure connectivity through innovative solutions.** Let me share Ethiopia's experience. By leveraging strategic assets such as Ethiopian Airlines, we have launched the Sea-Air Cargo project, connecting our airline with the Djibouti Ports and Freezone Authority. This innovative solution offers twice as cheap as the air-only and twice as fast as the sea-freight: unprecedented speed and cost-effective. This is just one instance exemplifying Africa's potential to revolutionize trade and drive economic prosperity.

**Second, fostering political will and regional integration is essential.** To fully realize the potential of PIDA Phase II and achieve multi-sectoral intra-African infrastructure connectivity, we need strong political commitment and regional cooperation. It is important that airlines in Africa should not encounter to accessing African skies in view of our collective commitment to the vision of Open African Skies, one of the ten transformative outcomes of Agenda 2063.

**Third, we must harmonize policies and regulations.** While infrastructure connectivity is crucial, it must be complemented by a

unified regulatory framework to streamline cross-border trade and investment, facilitating the seamless movement of goods and services.

**Finally, we need to harness the power of digital technology.**

Investing in digital infrastructure and e-commerce is critical to boosting intra-African trade and enhancing our competitiveness in the global supply chain. As Ethiopia prioritizes the transport and logistics sector as a driving force for prosperity, we are quickly improving e-commerce and financial technology to optimizing trade, investment and logistics efficiency and unlocking new trade opportunities.

**Excellencies,**

I am confident that through our collective efforts, we will realize our infrastructure goals and create a brighter future for Africa. Let us seize this opportunity to build upon the achievements of PIDA and envision a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable future for all.

Before I conclude, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the African Union Commission, AUDA-NEPAD, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, and all our partners for their unwavering support of the PIDA initiative.

As we also gather in Addis Ababa, I invite you to explore its remarkable development corridors, which exemplify the progress we seek to achieve across the continent.

I wish you a productive and inspiring PIDA Week. With that, I hereby declare the 8th PIDA Week officially open!

**Thank you!**