

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN IN DIPLOMACY

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (MoFA of Ethiopia) hosted “International Day of Women in Diplomacy” on Friday, 24 June under the theme “Why Women in Diplomacy Matter”. President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde was the chief guest of honor, while high-level government officials, AU commissioner, Addis-based ambassadors, representatives of UN and other international organizations, young diplomats, and many embassy staff attended the event.

During the event, Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister of Women and Social Affairs stressed the need to bring women in front positions in diplomacy to create a socially balanced atmosphere.

A moderated panel discussion, chaired by Semerita Sewasew, State Minister for Economic Cooperation at Ministry of Finance of Ethiopia, deliberated on the significance of women in diplomacy.

The longest-serving former Ethiopian diplomat, Ambassador Kongit Sinegiorgis, also shared her experience and veteran knowledge. Besides, panelists Hanna Tetteh, Special Envoy of the UN-SG for the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, AU- Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, and Lula Nur, Acting Director General of Women and Social Affairs at MoFA of Ethiopia, imparted their experience in diplomacy and leadership to the participants.



The host of the occasion, Foreign Affairs State Minister, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, shared her experience serving as Ethiopian Ambassador to Canada as well as the chairperson of women diplomats in the country. Ambassador Birtukan used the opportunity to request the crowd to establish the Women Diplomats Association as soon as possible, emphasizing the need for practitioners of the profession to cooperate more than ever before.

In her keynote address, President H.E. Ms. Sahle-Work underlined that women should be represented at all ranks of diplomacy, including leadership positions. The President noted that profound interest and passion are key tools to ladder up in diplomacy. The president extended special gratitude to Japanese Ambassador ITO Takako, Austrian Ambassador Simon Knapp as well as other female ambassadors for making the event a success.



The United Nations General Assembly's 76th Session declared 24 June each year to be the International Day of Women in Diplomacy. According to a new UN report, out of the 193 Member States of the United Nations, only 34 women serve as elected Heads of State or Government and at the current pace of progress, equal representation in parliament will not be achieved until 2062.

According to UN Official website, whose related link is as follows, there are 31 countries where 34 women serve as Heads of State and/or Government as of January 2023:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/women-in-diplomacy-day>