



Nigerian Ex-President gets 20,000sqm of land in Oromia

Published 12/31/2009 - 12:02 a.m. GMT

Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo joined President of Djibouti and the Ethio-Saudi Sheik Mohamed Al Amoudi by acquiring large plots of Oromia land. The size of the area is 20,000sqm, according to *Capital Ethiopia* newspaper.

(AfricaNews) Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, is to invest in Hotel and tourism sector of Ethiopia and has since secured a 20,000 square meter of land near Bishoftu (Debre Zeit) town of Oromia Region called Ada . Obansanjo's intention to invest in Bishoftu has come following the footsteps of Djibouti's president, Ismael Omar Guelleh, who took 10,000 square meters of land last year to build holiday home in Bishoftu and also bought 3,000 square meters of land for agriculture in Bale, Oromia Region of the country.

After Bishoftu town's administration approved a new master plan last year, many investors are now investing in the town, which is known for its eight unique lakes

- "World leaders" taking notice of land in Oromia
- 300,000 hectares of more Ethiopian land handed out

300,000 hectares of Ethiopian land handed out for \$15 birr per hectare

Published 12/31/2009 - 12:21 a.m. GMT

Until last year, people in the Ethiopian settlement of Elliah earned a living by farming their land and fishing. Now, they are employees.

They work for Bangalore-based Karuturi Global Ltd., which is leasing 300,000 hectares (741,000 acres) of local land, an area larger than Luxembourg .

Under the agreement with Ethiopia 's government, Karuturi pays no rent for the land for the first six years. After that, it will pay 15 birr (U.S. \$1.18) per hectare per year for the next 84 years. Labor costs of less than \$50 a month per worker and duty-free treaties with China and India also attracted Karuturi Global, he said. The \$100 million projected annual profit will come from the export of food crops, including corn, rice and palm oil, he said. The company also is plowing land on a 10,900- hectare spread near the central Ethiopian town of Bako .

Ethiopia's ruling junta gives Egypt 20,000 hectares of land

December 30th, 2009

CAIRO ([apa](#)) — Egypt announced on Tuesday preparations to invest on 20,000 hectares of land in Ethiopia , with a multimillion-dollar investment.

The announcement was made by the visiting Egyptian Prime Minister, Dr. Ahmed Nazif who is on a working visit to Ethiopia starting on Tuesday.

The Egyptian delegation assured the Ethiopian officials that Egypt was keen to be involved in various investment opportunities in the country.

The Egyptian PM said that the National Bank of Egypt will initially develop 20,000 hectares of land of agricultural products as from 2010.

According to state media reports, Egypt will invest the undisclosed amount of agricultural investment in the Afar regional state of Ethiopia , known for its livestock resources.

The two countries prime ministers held talks late on Tuesday on how to boost their trade and investment cooperation, which in the past few years was poor.

The Egyptian delegation also showed interest to invest in other areas such as drug manufacturing.

It was also reported that Ethiopia , Egypt and Sudan are expected to reach an agreement on installation of electricity connectivity in the near future to link the three countries with hydroelectric power supply from Ethiopia , which is currently undertaking a multi-billion investment on hydroelectric projects.

Ethiopian tribal dictator Meles Zenawi and his Egyptian counterpart Dr. Ahmed Nazif also expressed their commitment to work together in the efforts to ensure benefits for the peoples of the two countries.

Djibouti first lady gets 20 hectares of land in Ethiopia

August 1st, 2008

By Groum Abate, Capital Ethiopia

Khadra Mohammed, First Lady of Djibouti, has received the 20 hectares of land in the Sebeta area for a flower farm, on Tuesday July 22, 2008, from Alemu Sime, Investment Bureau Head of the Oromia Regional State [another Woyanne donkey].

The First Lady received the plot on behalf of her son, Ayinashe Omar Guelleh, whom it was learnt, plans to engage in the booming flower sector.

Floriculture already earns Ethiopia over 150 million dollars annually. The Ethiopian government Meles regime is keen to encourage investors political allies, offering them a five-year tax holiday and duty-free import of machinery.

The area, 30 minutes south of Addis Ababa with green hills and lush valleys, is ideal for cultivating the country's fastest growing export – flowers.

Ethiopia exports more than 80 million stems a month to 40 countries. 70% percent is to the Netherlands , from where they are sent around the world. It also exports to Germany , Britain , Russia and, in smaller amounts, to the United States and the Middle East .

Five years ago, Ethiopia made just \$159,000 from exports of cut flowers, cuttings and summer flowers. Last year that had grown to \$63.5 million and this year it is expected to hit \$166 million. Last week, President Ismael Omar Guelleh of Djibouti obtained 10,000 hectares of land around Bale, Oromia Regional State for investing in the agriculture sector. The multi-million dollar investment is expected to commence in the coming few weeks. The plot is mainly slated for growing wheat.

The president also visited the 10,000 meter square plot on Babogaya Lake in Bishoftu (Debre Zeit) town 45 kilometers south east of Addis Ababa and received a title deed for the plot to construct his vacation home.

Khadra, during the ceremony on Tuesday July 22, 2008 also visited the plot, which her son is going to invest. The title deed for a 20 hectare flower farm was also presented to the first lady last week on Friday July 18, 2008 during the ceremony that also presented President Guelleh with his title deed for both sites in Bishoftu and Bale. Warda A. Graham, owner of Wajag Gas and Alemayehu Ketema a businessman prominent in the construction sector facilitated the investment opportunity.

Indian company acquires 765,000 hectares of land in Ethiopia

November 23rd, 2009

Ethiopia's autocratic leader Meles Zenawi has embarked on a controversial policy of leasing huge amount of land to foreign private investors in an attempt to boost agricultural production for the local market and for export. However, environmentalists and agricultural policy planners fear the leasing of huge tracts of land to private developers in some countries could harm the environment. They are concerned that land which is already under strain from years of

degradation will suffer more. They say the loss of trees in particular has caused an imbalance in the eco-system, resulting in regular drought and famine.

By Billie O'Kadameri

(RFI) — Indian businessman Ramakrishna Karuturi, [managing Director](#) of Karuturi Global Ltd, one of the world's top agribusiness transnational corporations, has acquired nearly 765,000 hectares of land in Ethiopia. His company is involved in flower and [food production](#).

Karuturi told [Radio France International \(RFI\)](#) that the world should applaud instead of vilifying efforts by people like him. "When you look at the last ten years of world food production vis-à-vis consumption, I think over six of those ten years, we in the world have eaten more than we produced, and world food stocks are at a debilitatingly low 67-day stock. 67 days of food is disastrous and I don't think in the history of mankind, the world has ever come this close." With very low per capita electricity coverage, nearly 85 percent of Ethiopia 's rural population relies on [wood fuel](#) for domestic energy for cooking, according to Dr Gemedo Dalle, Head of Forest Genetic Resources Department at the Ethiopian Institute for Biodiversity and Conservation in Addis Ababa .

This already constitutes an emerging crisis for the government and policy planners. Yet more land tree cover will be under pressure as large-scale land investors flock to Ethiopia taking advantage of the country's land policy that makes it easy to acquire huge land areas. Professor Kwadwo Asenso-Okyere, Director of the Addis Ababa-based Knowledge, Capacity and Innovation Division of the International Food Policy Research Institute opposes the leasing of huge tracts of land to foreign investors:

If you are acquiring say hundreds of thousands of hectares of land and you clear all of this land, the impact on the environment is very severe, because you are going to cut all the trees. [...] Sometimes they don't grow food, sometimes it is for bio-fuel plants and other things so it is not going to improve the food security of the people. Sometimes they even cultivate food but the food is shipped completely out.

But 43-year old Karuturi rejects the claims that his [investment](#) will not address food security problems in Africa . " Africa is the world's largest market for food. Africa imports 16 billion dollars worth of food every year. Out of 25 million tonnes of rice that is traded globally per year, 10 million tonnes is imported by Africa . Of course I will sell my food in Africa because Africa is the best place to sell food [...] people are acutely short of food here."

The Ethiopian government insists that its policy will seek to balance investment in agriculture, with a strict regime for protecting the environment.

Abera Deressa is Ethiopia 's Minister of State for Agriculture and Rural Development. "They cannot harm the environment. We are very clear on this. We in the Ministry of Agriculture are developing an environmental code of practice for the private sector. [...] We are also advising them not to cut trees, they have to manage soil erosion."

"As you know very well the global climate change crisis is because of poor management of the environment in developing countries; the other is by emission of carbon dioxide into the air by developed countries through industrialisation process."

"But but here in Africa , in our country pollution of the environment is by poor management of agricultural practices; deforestation, degradation, improper land management; these are the factors that we have to control".

Saudi Arabia joins in the Ethiopian land grab

August 7th, 2008

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is reported as is by WIC, Woyanne's own news web site. By proudly reporting about this latest land give away, Woyannes are saying to the people of Ethiopia , 'go suck your thumb, we'll do what we want with your land.'

(Walta Information Service) ADDIS ABABA — Saudi Arabia, which is making efforts to provide food security for its nationals, can look up to Ethiopia where huge tracts of unutilized agricultural land are available for growing cereals, according to Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. A Saudi ministerial delegation, which visited Ethiopia to explore the prospects of investing in agriculture, is impressed by the country's huge potential and as a follow up sending a team of experts to conduct specialized studies, said Zenawi who spoke in this exclusive interview with Arab News on a variety of economic issues ranging from rising oil prices and inflation to his country's bilateral trade relations with Saudi Arabia.

Following are excerpts:

Saudi Arabia is engaged in providing food security. A Saudi ministerial delegation has visited your country in this connection. Could you throw light on this?

Saudi Arabia has evinced interest in investing in agriculture, particularly in production of cereals, and has been looking at various options. One of the countries they are looking at is Ethiopia, which has a lot of unutilized land, particularly in the lowland areas of the country where all sorts of agricultural products can be grown. The Saudi delegation studied the prospects of investing in agriculture in this country.. We told them we would be very eager to provide hundreds of thousands of hectares of agricultural land for investment, particularly for cereal production. There is a broad agreement and understanding and this will be followed by visits by Saudi experts to conduct specific studies for investment.

What are the existing Saudi investments in Ethiopia ?

Most of the Saudi investments have been in manufacturing and hospitality sectors. This has been the focus so far, but we expect a sizeable increase in the Kingdom's investment in agriculture as a result of its decision to invest in cereals.

What are the other potential areas available for Saudi investment?

The manufacturing sector is promising, especially textiles, leather, leather products and iron bars. In fact, all sectors of manufacturing are open. Investment in infrastructure is also something we are looking for. Real estate development and particularly the hospitality sector including hotels and tourist places, as well as agriculture and agro processing industries are among the other potential areas.

What is the existing level of trade and investment between the two countries?

Saudi Arabia is one of our top three trading partners. Our trade volume is \$1 billion, although much of the trade balance is in favor of the Kingdom. The trade gap is about half a billion dollars. We mostly import oil and petroleum products and export coffee, meat and other agricultural products. About 240 Saudi companies have been given the investment license. These companies including those who are operational are expected to invest \$2.5 billion. Saudi Arabia is our very important investment partner. Economically, we have solid and fast growing relations.

What has been the impact of rising oil prices?

The dramatic increase in oil prices has hit Ethiopia very hard. Our oil import bill over the past three years has increased by over a billion dollars. This amounts to 3 percent of our GDP. That has upset our balance of payment very significantly. It has created a huge pressure on our balance of payment and complicated the inflationary issue. We are trying to tackle this problem by increasing our exports so that we can pay for our increased import bill, and improving agricultural production so that we can dampen our food prices. We are importing some food from abroad to check the rising trend of our agricultural prices. We are importing wheat. We are no doubt growing wheat but due to an inflationary pressure we are bringing more wheat from abroad to flood the market so that the rising trend of prices in the country can be checked.

How high-level exchange of business visits has benefited your country?

We have had frequent exchanges by leaders at high levels. My assessment is that these high level visits have contributed a lot to the fast growing economic partnership and contributed a lot to the political understanding that we currently enjoy. I expect such exchanges to continue. We are expecting a high level ministerial delegation to visit us in October. I would expect a similar high-level visit from Ethiopia to Saudi Arabia .