



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

OFFICIAL REMARKS

WORKNEH GEBEYEHU, IGAD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

2nd ANNUAL IGAD/SWEDEN PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, 23rd MARCH 2022



- Your Excellency, **Ambassador Hans Henric Lundqvist**, Swedish Ambassador to Ethiopia, accredited to IGAD and Permanent Representative to the African Union and UNECA;
- Distinguished **Members of the Swedish Delegation**;
- **IGAD Directors, Programme Managers, and Coordinators** managing and administrating over programs and projects under the IGAD-Swedish cooperation;
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**,



Good morning and **welcome to the second IGAD-Sweden Annual Partnership Meeting.**

As you may recall, **we had planned have held this meeting in November of last year but unforeseen circumstances interfered with our intentions.**

I will begin my remarks by to taking this opportunity to **reaffirm our deep appreciation for the generous and long-standing support of the Government of Sweden over the last 36 years** for our member states and the IGAD Secretariat since our establishment in 1986.

I will **quote the late and great Sten Andersson**, Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, who said at the inception of IGAD in 1986, that;



"The Swedish Government sincerely wishes you the greatest success in the proceedings of IGADD to combat desertification and economic underdevelopment and hopes that this cooperation will strengthen in the future to bring peace and prosperity to the region."

I am certain that **Mr. Andersson, who was also a champion of liberty everywhere is encouraged by the progress we have made and will continue to make with Swedish support** in addressing the chronic challenges that affect our people in the Greater Horn of Africa.

Over the years, **Sweden's portfolio at IGAD Secretariat has steadily grown and expanded to other sectoral areas including Resilience, Migration, Land Governance and the Blue Economy.**



Allow me to elaborate on this briefly;

Overall, Sweden's support has been **instrumental for sustaining IDDRSI, as well as supporting of our efforts to improve the protection, social and economic conditions of refugees in the region.**

In the area of resilience, Swedish support to IDDRSI was indispensable in facilitating regional oversight of Country Programming Papers across 7 Member States, improved coordination of resilience projects through the IDDRSI Steering Committee, National Experts Panels and sub-national monitoring bodies.



Sweden is also the anchor partner for our work in Land Governance and entrenching gender equality in our region.

Considering that they constitute half of our regional population, women have a tremendous contribution to make to every facet of the life and development of our region.

Our partnership with Sweden has therefore seen **IGAD Member States commit to gender equality outcomes in land and many other sectors** which have now become a core component of our Member States Programming.

Your Excellency, Ladies, and Gentlemen,



In the area of migration, Swedish support has **significantly improved the availability of migration data at the regional level** and played a profound role in strengthening Member States capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate migration statistics for evidence-based policymaking.

Moreover, **Swedish support has enabled IGAD to go a step further and regularly share regional migration data with the African Union** for the implementation of the 2018 AU migration policy framework and plan of action.



IGAD has the **distinction of a Regional Economic Community that champions the innovative and inclusive management of refugees** through the Global Compact for Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

In this regard, IGAD is eternally grateful for the **support provided by the Government of Sweden for our comprehensive regional response to the covid-19 pandemic** which specifically targeted refugee hosting areas and migrant corridors.

We also welcome the support that Sweden has extended to response to the displacement arising from the political situations in Sudan and South Sudan.



Our partnership is delivering comprehensive durable solutions strategies including national refugee management frameworks and providing technical assistance to the refugee management agencies.

Perhaps most notably, **labour migration governance is a thematic area that is close to the hearts of both IGAD and Sweden.** In this area, please accept our deep appreciation for the foresight that the Government of Sweden exhibited in financing the regional project on harmonisation of remittances in the IGAD region.

This intervention is **making it easier to share and transfer prosperity within families** by addressing the key issues affecting the inflow of remittances particularly policy, legislative and operational restrictions.



At this juncture, I am also **happy to recall the 2021 Djibouti declaration on labour, employment and labour migration.**

In order to deliver on the commitments of this declaration, **IGAD invites the support of all like-minded partners including Sweden**, which is a pioneer in supporting labour, employment and labour migration initiatives across the continent.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My remarks will be incomplete without a brief word on our shared concern for global peace and security and the impact that the evolving situation in Ukraine is likely to have on developing parts of the world.



IGAD and the Nordic countries including Sweden, have an internationally recognised reputation for brokering peace in times of conflict. IGAD has benefited from Sweden’s support as **our reliable partner in peace and security through the support extended to our interventions through the Joint Financing agreement (JFA) and the IPPSHAR program.**

It is our hope that a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Europe can be quickly reached through negotiations and dialogue, **before the ripple-effects of food insecurity, inflated costs of living and even proxy engagements make themselves fully felt in our region,** further undermining our fragile peace, security and stability.



As I come to the conclusion of my remarks, **I sincerely thank you and this Swedish delegation for the honour of joining us physically in Djibouti in this annual partnership review meeting.** It is a tradition that we must strengthen and maintain in the post-pandemic era.

I am confident that the **political and technical dialogue in our annual planning meetings will help us to further cement our long-standing relationship and stimulate many more shared solutions** to the current challenges induced by COVID-19, instability and natural disasters as well as anything else that the future may bring.



On my behalf and that of the IGAD family, **I would like to give you my full assurance that IGAD will remain a friend in thought, word and deed to Sweden** through our partnership to building the resilience, and improve the capacity of our states and communities to realize a peaceful, prosperous and integrated region.

Thank you very much.