



## Opening Remarks

**WORKNEH GEBEYEHU, IGAD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

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**IPPSHAR Project Steering Committee Meeting**

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023**

- Your Excellency and my Respected Co-Chair, **Simone Knapp**, Austrian Ambassador to Ethiopia and permanent representative to AU and IGAD;
- Your Excellency, **Birgitte Markusen**, Head of the European Union Delegation to the African Union;
- Your Excellency, **Henk Jan Bakker**, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Ethiopia, Permanent representative to the AU and IGAD
- Your Excellency, **Hans Henric Lundquist**, Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia and Djibouti, Permanent representative to the AU, IGAD, and UNECA.
- Distinguished Representatives of the **European External Action Service**;
- Our Partners from the **Austrian Development Agency** and Members of the **Fund Management**;
- **Distinguished Members** of the IPPSHAR Steering Committee;
- **Dear IGAD Colleagues**;

**Good morning,**

It my distinct **pleasure to join you virtually in our annual tradition of the IPPSHAR Project Steering Meeting.**



I wish to start by first of all by **sincerely thanking our partners from, Austria, Sweden and the Netherlands** for taking the time and making the effort to come to the IGAD Headquarters in the Republic of Djibouti 2 weeks ago on Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> of last month as part of **the Delegation of EU Ambassadors accredited to IGAD.**

Our deliberations in that consultation had the greatest bearing to this IPPSHAR project and in a manner of speaking, **set the stage for our meeting today.**

Allow me at this juncture to **express my thanks on behalf IGAD for your continued support for the implementation of the IGAD peace and security strategy.** This partnership demonstrates our shared commitment to promoting peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.

The **4 primary objectives of IPPSHAR are tailored for the complex dynamics in our region** and consequently, form the cornerstones of sustainable peace and security for the 270 million citizens who are looking to us for solutions.

It is therefore **noteworthy that the IGAD peace and security strategy 2021-2025 prioritizes similar strategic objectives.** This signifies that the priorities under IPPSHAR are **fully aligned with our regional strategy** and remain fully integrated into IGAD's regional peace and security agenda.



**Excellencies,**

Now **the IPPSHAR project is entering its 6<sup>th</sup> year of implementation** and like many other initiatives here and across the world, it was also affected the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors.

Even as we speak, **we are also contending with active situations** in the **Republic of South Sudan** and the **Republic of Sudan** in addition to the emerging situation that is under observation in the **Republic of Kenya.**

In addition, **the protracted drought** in the region escalated **food insecurity** and coupled with the **negative impact of the war in Ukraine on our regional economy,** threatens to trigger further conflict.

We are nevertheless **highly encouraged by the positive dividends in peace and security** accruing from the **Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia** and on-going **reconstruction efforts in the Federal Republic of Somalia.** The affirmed **intention of the State of Eritrea** to rejoin IGAD also represents a net gain the peace, security and stability of the region.

In light of these considerations Your Excellencies, I therefore **warmly welcome the practical decision** of this steering committee to grant a **9-month extension** for the implementation of IPPSHAR from **January to September 2023.**



This extension presents an opportunity for us to re-evaluate the efficacy of our interventions especially in the fluid security context of our region.

In this regard, I must **underscore that the remaining balance of 5.6 million Euros** in this project **must be spent in the most judicious manner** to ensure that we deliver on all planned objectives for the benefit of our region and citizens within the remaining implementation period.

### **In Conclusion Excellencies,**

**The IPPSHAR project is vital a cog in addressing the complex and formidable challenges** facing the IGAD region. We recognize that **the success of this project depends on the active participation and collaboration of all stakeholders**, including national and regional governments, civil society organizations, and other partners.

As IGAD, we **commit to continue to work closely with all stakeholders** to ensure that the project is implemented in a transparent, accountable, and effective manner.

I look forward to a most productive meeting and now **invite my Co-Chair to deliver her remarks. Thank You.**