



A Positive Start for ADFIII

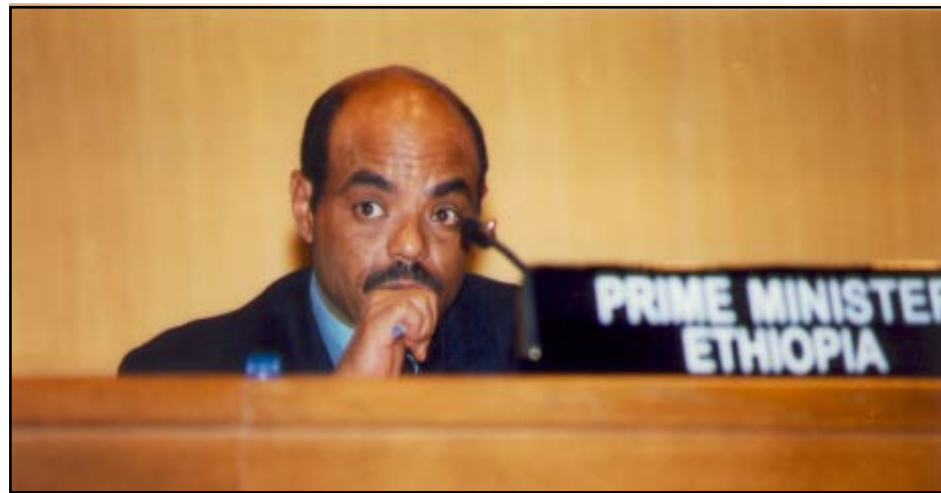
By Bernard Otabil and Olga Manda

The Third African Development Forum (ADF III) opened Monday in Addis Ababa with a strong call to African States to streamline and consolidate efforts aimed at achieving maximum economic and political integration on the continent.

The Forum theme this year is "Defining Priorities for Regional Integration." More than 1,000 delegates from civil society, government, United Nations agencies and development partnerships, are attending the weeklong conference. Several African Heads of State and Government are attending and will address the Forum.

Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi delivered the opening session keynote address. He acknowledged that regional integration is the key political and economic challenge facing Africa today and that Africa's aim to achieve regional integration required commitment, realistically designed priorities and a clear and informed vision. Africa, he noted, was currently at a critical phase in the process of integration and transition.

"We need to avoid pitfalls and take advantage of available opportunities," said Zenawi. He pointed out that Africa



Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi

was short of the critical human and infrastructural capital required to form the foundation for effective integration. He further stated that political will and practical commitment on the part of governments and political leaders have underpinned all successful efforts at regional integration.

Also addressing the ADF III opening session was ECA Executive Secretary, K.Y. Amoako, who said the stakes were high and required key decisions to be taken in the next few months.

"Clearly choices will have to be

made and they should be choices which sequence actions," he said, adding that the issues involved were among the most complex that African leaders faced and would require outstanding thinking, and political courage. Until recently, he said, regional integration had moved in an *ad hoc* manner at a deliberately slow pace.

Also addressing the opening session was OAU Secretary-General, Amara Essy, who endorsed the transition from OAU to AU, as a move of capital importance to the entire continent. He

called for a multi-disciplinary approach to economic development. He also reassured participants with the news that all measures for launching the African Union this coming July are in place.

"The setting has been established by Heads of State; now we have to pool our resources and ensure that the African Union becomes a true economic reality." He further pointed out that regional integration was the answer to the on-going conflicts and that the time had come for Africa to achieve this.

A number of delegates attending the forum expressed confidence in the on-going discussions. A delegate, Japheth Magat said:

"I am really encouraged by the attendance, which is very high. I think the suffering, which has come to Africa now is teaching us a lesson to unite and build our lives better than before".

Dr Tebogo Matome, Chief Executive Officer of the Botswana Stock Exchange in turn hoped that the Forum would chart the way forward.

The integration initiative is also attracting support from a variety of sectors. For example, the African Development Bank (ADB) pledged continued support to initiatives aimed at enhancing regional integration. ADB Vice-President, Cyril Enweze, said,

"We will continue to make resources available for integration."

ADF in Retrospective: Mixed Results

By Marie-Noelle Guichi and Francine Nzibarega

The current ADF was preceded by that of 1999 on "The Challenges to Africa of Globalization and the Information Age", and that of 2000 on "AIDS: The Greatest Leadership Challenge."

The first ADF (ADF I) was held in Addis Ababa from 24 to 28 October, 1999, and gathered together 600 experts from government, the private sector, civil society, and bilateral and multilateral organizations from inside and outside of Africa. It was rich in discussion and gave participants the opportunity to raise a variety of issues on the need to strengthen information infrastructure in Africa, the partnership required between government and private sector, and the need to introduce information and communication technologies (ITCs) in school and university programmes.

Some participants felt that young people's access to and use of ITCs would be facilitated by provision of computers. They were of the view that this would prevent the youth from turning to crime and other social ills. The implications of globalization for women were also underlined.

Participants also felt that access to information at an affordable price should be considered a fundamental human right and should form the basis for the design of all national ITC policies. Among the recommendations adopted during ADF I, the most repeated was that it is government's duty to design clear, integrated strategies for promoting local access to ITCs.

The second ADF (ADF II) which took place 3-8 December 2000, passed a number of resolutions. For example, it was decided that AIDS orphans

should be the responsibility of their family and their community, with enough support from public authorities for ensuring their well being and their education. With regard to the youth, it was clearly acknowledged that they should be the primary targets in design and implementation of action plans against HIV/AIDS.

National leaders received the mandate to create the conditions for mobilizing communities at the national level, "on a magnitude comparable to mobilizing for war," urged Kenneth Kaunda, the former President of Zambia.

The Heads of State and Government were given the task of negotiating lower prices for anti-retroviral drugs with the pharmaceutical companies. However, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa emerged as the man who has chosen to follow a different path at a time

when Africa is caught up in the explosion of the pandemic - when it is even more necessary to have the low-cost drugs for prolonging the life of the youth who are dying in waves every day.

President Mbeki suggested that anti-retroviral drugs were worse for the body than was believed because of the secondary effects that are intolerable to most people living with HIV/AIDS. This was claimed, even though South African associations of people living with AIDS were constantly struggling to get access to the anti-retroviral drugs.

Peter da Costa, Senior Communications Advisor at ECA, pointed out that close to 15 countries, including Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Nigeria, had been able to reduce the prices of anti-retroviral drugs, to the joy of their people, after negotiations with pharmaceutical companies.

Furthermore, civil society organizations, particularly persons living with

INTERVIEW**Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem:
African Unity Is An Idea
Whose Time Has Come”**

by Jeggan Grey-Johnson

ADF III opened yesterday in Addis Ababa at the ECA headquarters. Issues of integration were discussed and below is an interview given by Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, Secretary-General of the Pan-African Movement.

ADF III News: Is African Integration attainable given the current challenges that African nations face- civil strife, instability, economic dependence, etc.

Dr. Abdul Raheem: African integration is necessary in order to finally solve all these problems. Because at the bottom of these challenges is the bottom line cause - poverty. The resources within individual nations may not be sufficient to satisfy the needs of the people, but pooling resources will actually help us solve the problems our people are currently facing.

Integration has been the buzzword everywhere. Besides, let's face it, the countries that divided us into Anglophones, Lusophones, Francophones and whatever other "phone" are busy integrating in Europe in order to maximize their advantage, that they already have compared to the rest of the world. Look at the United States under NAFTA, look at the Asian-Pacific countries.

So Africa needs to develop its own internal capacity for production and industrialization and take advantage of the new technology that is available. How does Gambia develop independently from Senegal? Likewise, how can Senegal develop independently from Côte d'Ivoire? Pan Africanism has to be a precondition for integration. Today, African unity is an idea whose time has come.

ADF III News: What other core issues need to be addressed as prerequisites for regional integration?

Dr. A Raheem: These will involve states being willing to surrender some of their political sovereignty. They must be willing to plan together with other states in order to harmonize and rationalize their economies - as Africans. The other important issue has to deal with freedom of movement. Even though the emphasis has been on the goods and services (trade), there must first and foremost be freedom of movement. It is ridiculous that African people are strangers on the African continent!

ADF III News: At the AU symposium on Sunday, there seemed to have been a trend in the works, like a consensus, that the ambition of African integration was unrealistic. Please comment.

Dr. A-Raheem: I do not recollect that, and I was in all the sessions. I do not recall any consensus being formed. There was a debate - yes! And that is healthy, but it isn't new. There are two camps as far as integration is concerned. On the one side (the side that I am on) some believe that political union is absolutely essential for successful regional integration to occur on this continent. We need a common parliament, defense, citizenship, security arrangement and a government. On the other hand, there are those who believe that this is too fast. And they opt for better coordination, using the subregional bodies as building blocks towards regional integration. To me, that approach is timid.

ADF III NEWS: Talking about approaches, there was a speaker yesterday (Sunday) who said that the AU needed standards. He said that without prerequisites for entry into the AU, it might become just another OAU- an organization where member states do exactly as they like, when they like, and with what they like.

Dr. A-Raheem: I disagree. It is all semantics. Any African country must be free to join the Union. Just as any independent State in the world can join the UN. However, unlike the OAU, where there was no provision for expelling member states, there is a provision for this in the AU Charter. Being Africans makes us like brothers and sisters. I cannot change the fact that you are my brother, although I may not necessarily like you; we don't have to be friends, but we have to live together. So the qualification must be granted automatically. However, we have instances, as in 1980 when Doe killed Tolbert, who was then chairman of OAU, when action should be taken. Doe afterwards appeared at the OAU Summit and no one said a word. Liberia was not expelled, and the incident was passed off as an internal affair. But the AU has



Dr. A-Raheem, Secretary-General, Pan African Congress

Photo: UNECA/Antonio Florentino

set standards and guards against such behaviour.

ADF III News: The speakers at the AU Symposium talked about being inclusive. Two words kept on popping up-civil society. Who is civil society?

Dr. A-Raheem: There is a lot of confusion about this. NGOs have been placed in this bracket, but quite frankly, a lot of them are dubious. Many do not have a base in African civil society, because they are foreign controlled, foreign funded, and are not, as a result, accountable to Africans, but rather to their donors. So, civil society is mass organizations: the youth groups, the women, trade unions, religious groups, these are civil society. NGOs are at best, a mid-way thing,

between governments and civil society. Thus, they cannot assume the role of civil society; they may be part of it, but they are not all of it. So care has to be taken. If the African Union is to make sense to African people, then talking to NGOs will not work. It requires dialogue with the average African woman who is crossing the border from Lagos to Conakry so she knows that she is protected. And the same goes for the student, the youth, the workers, etc.

ADF III News: If ADF III fails, what then?

Dr. A-Raheem: It cannot fail, because there are too many of us here committed. We've planned, we discussed, and everyone is here contributing.

President Thabo Mbeki confirms his participation at ADF III

By Norbert N. Ouendji

South African Head of State, Thabo Mbeki, has confirmed that he will attend ADF III. The Forum opened on Monday in Addis Ababa, co-organized by ECA and OAU. Sources at ECA have hinted that he will arrive in the Ethiopian capital on 6th March and return to Pretoria two days later, on 8th March. H.E. Laurent Bagbo, President of Côte d'Ivoire, is also expected at ADF III, but this awaits confirmation.

President Mbeki, who is currently in Australia taking part in the Commonwealth Summit, will participate in the Heads of State Forum, scheduled for the afternoon of 7th March and in the wrap-up session on 8th March. He is one of the African Heads of State who support the vision of a united Africa.

The Libyan Press Agency recently announced that it had arranged a telephone interview last Thursday with Colonel Mouammar Gadhafi, on the topic of the African Union. Colonel Gadhafi is the leader of the Libyan revolution, and is credited with helping to bring about the arrangements for the African Union project.

Over 1000 delegates to the Forum will be briefed on the leadership positions and the challenges the continent faces in building a "United States of Africa".

The contributions of the Heads of State and Government are all the more important in that they will enrich the recommendations emanating from the Forum, which will be reviewed during the 38th Session of the OAU, taking place in Pretoria, South Africa in June 2002.


EDITORIAL

Not Just Another Conference

Regional Integration. Pan-Africanism. Inter-continental partnerships. However it's labelled, this notion of connecting the African continent first to itself then to the wider African Diaspora and the world at large, is one of those ideas that makes one feel it's a good one – even if one can't really see immediately how it might be realised or even if it will be.

The theme of this Third African Development Forum (ADFIII) is "Defining Priorities for Regional Integration." It could have perhaps been called, "Bringing Africans Together to Define Priorities for the Continent."

For in a very real sense, what is "at stake," as another speaker has called the urgent need to make this concept of integration work, is the very pressing need for Africans to decide whether they will be self-defined in the future or defined by outside, external global forces.

And to do this self-defining for the future, Africans must do what they do so well – talk – but this time focusing on reaching out beyond those artificially drawn but now well-established physical and mental borderlines that are enhanced by often historically ingrained ideas shaped by language, religion, gender or ethnicity or other "isms."

More than 1,000 people from across the continent have gathered in Addis to attend this week's conference. This gathering thus provides an opportunity to be more than "just another conference with a lot of talking" but one where the most important of all integration processes – that of people connecting with each other – can begin.

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ADF in Retrospective

HIV/AIDS, as well as the youth, were urged to strengthen their cooperation, evaluate their experience and prepare their contribution to the Special OAU Summit that would take place in Abuja in June 2001. This was done.

However, in terms of implementing ADF II resolutions, Thomas Tchelmi, President of the Youth Media in Cameroon, said that that young people lack the financial means to carry out their plan of action effectively, because of lack of confidence on the part of national leaders. Nevertheless, he added, the network of young Africans against AIDS who took part in the last Forum, had continued to take part in the debate on the fight against HIV, via the Internet.

Conference Exhibition Displays Seek to Inform, Entertain and Educate Visitors

By Maria Thundu

Bright posters, computers, brochures and photographs and an art exhibition are just some of the ways that exhibitors who have set up displays in this year's ADF Exhibition Hall are attracting participants to their booths.

Some 31 exhibitors representing close to 50 different organizations have displays in this year's ADF Exhibition, which is located on the ground floor of the UNCC building.

The Exhibition Hall is one of the constant features of the ADF. As in years past, "this exhibition gives delegates the chance to see a different view on the more intellectual aspect of their fields," said Ann Matthews, a consultant from South Africa who has been hired for the third year to coordinate this aspect of the Forum.

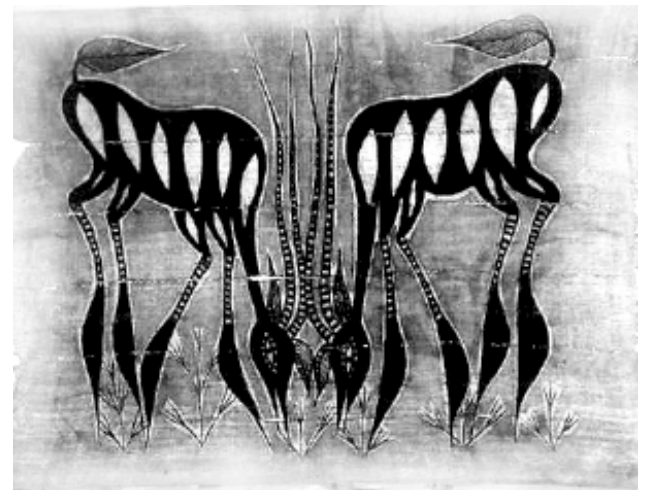
The displays cover a range of issues of importance to the continent including the media and communications, gender, peace development, cultural integration and civil society. "Many of the organizations are displaying at the ADF for the first time," said Matthews, "because of the difference in the themes of the past two ADF meetings," she added.

Among those with displays are four

United Nations agencies: UNHCR, UNESCO, UNFPA, and UNAIDS. Other exhibitors include *The Sub-Saharan Informer* daily newspaper in Addis which is devoting two pages of coverage each day this week on ADF-related news. There are also organizations such as *The African Centre for Civil Society*, *The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa*

(COMESA) and *The South African Development Community* (SADC). The *Ethiopian Women's Lawyer Association* has set up a display promoting women's human rights.

In addition to the exhibition hall displays there is an art display entitled "*Steps & Corridors: vitrine of a moving continent*" showcasing the works of artists from North, West, East and Central Africa. The exhibit, organized by ECA and curated by Leo Lefort with the support of the Alliance Ethio-Francaise, Asni Gallery, Ethiopian artists (Behailu Bezabih,



Getahun Assefa and Mezgebu Tessema), private collectors and the embassies of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Mauritius, Nigeria, and Rwanda.

The purpose of the exhibit is to demonstrate the important role that art and culture play in society and "to sensitize the various governments in Africa to their expected roles in providing support for the arts as the principal purveyor of civilization," according to the programme organizers. The art display can be viewed throughout this conference week from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Multiple Issues on the ADF3 Agenda

By Adwoa Asiedu

For African leaders, the Third African Development Forum provides an opportunity to come together and discuss some of the most important issues that seem to have blighted the continent's developments.

Despite the fact that all issues of the continent cannot be discussed now, the topics selected hope to offer the right impetus for more stakeholder involvement in regional integration and development.

Topics like Building an effective African Union, Economic policies for accelerating regional integration, Peace and security architecture, HIV/AIDS, Gender, Information and communication technology pose challenges to individual African countries.

The poor state of some countries on the continent has brought in its wake disease, mounting debts and lack of infrastructure among many other derailments, but some of this year's participants are hopeful of the forum's outcome.

Madam Christine Warioba from the Southern African Development Cooperation secretariat in Botswana says, "the discussions of the issues would lead to implementation. With all the stakeholders here, we will come out with concrete work plans".

Mr. Darmanand Virahsawmy, senior manager, Mauritius Stock Exchange, spoke of what integration has done for the European Union with ref-

erence to the Euro. "We also need to transform our region," he said.

On infrastructural development in Africa, Mr E A Kwakye, Director of Planning at Ghana's Ministry of Transport and Communications, talked of the Trans-West Africa Coastal High-

way which runs from Aflao through Accra to Elubo as an important link for Togo, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire and said such roads through Africa would remove the high cost of transporting goods within the continent.



Gorée Photo Exhibit

Ethiopian photographer Indrias Getachew is offering his views of East looking at West in an exhibit about Senegal's historic Gorée Island which was one of the main departure points during the Transatlantic Slave Trade and which today is one of UNESCO's cultural heritage sites.

The exhibit, entitled, "Gorée: Photographic Moments." The exhibit opens tonight at 6:30 p.m. at the Gallery of the Alliance Ethio-Francaise. For more information call 55.02.13

The ECA and African Mosaïque present . . .

African culture will be the focus of an evening of pulsating music and fabulous fashion taking place on Thursday, March 7 in the Lalibela Ballroom at the Sheraton Addis. The Economic Commission for Africa and African Mosaïque, a socio-cultural international program present a benefit entitled "Weaving the Continent Together." This star-studded event will be attended by internationally acclaimed models and designers including Brita Maselethulini

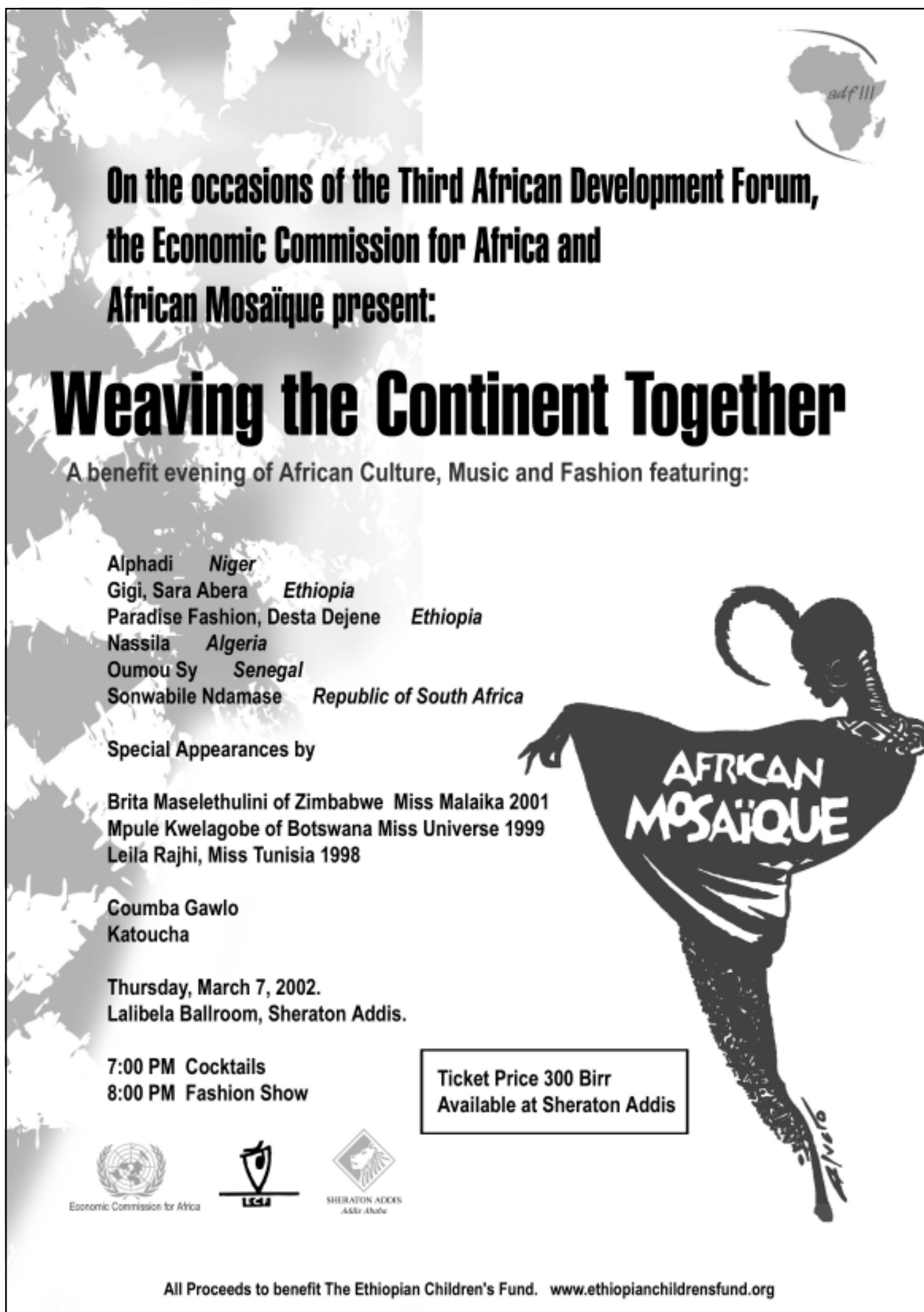
of Zimbabwe, Miss Malaika 2001, Miss Universe 1999, Mpule Kwelagobe of Botswana, and Leila Rajhi, Miss Tunisia 1998. Senegalese singer and winner of the 2001 Kora Music Award for Best West African Artist, Coumba Gawlo will perform and model at this festivity. It has been celebrated and presented in various cities worldwide, including Detroit, New York, Paris, and Washington D.C.

The fashion show will incorporate

designs from African designers such as President of the International Festival of African Fashion, Alphadi of Niger, Oumou Sy of Senegal, Sonwabile Ndamase of South Africa and Fatiha Kitoun of Algeria. In conjunction with the movement towards regional integration and "to celebrate and honor the rich culture and creativity thriving in the continent" gowns have been custom made for this event. "Designers . . . will be using fabrics and textiles from

other subregions of the continent to present inter-regional and continental inspiration and creation," programmers have said. An auction of the gowns will be held at the end of the evening and the proceeds will benefit the Ethiopian Children's Fund child protection and development program.

Tickets are being sold at the Sheraton and cost 300 birr. The evening starts with cocktails at 7 p.m. and the fashion show at 8 p.m.



**On the occasions of the Third African Development Forum,
the Economic Commission for Africa and
African Mosaïque present:**

Weaving the Continent Together

A benefit evening of African Culture, Music and Fashion featuring:

Alphadi *Niger*
Gigi, Sara Abera *Ethiopia*
Paradise Fashion, Desta Dejene *Ethiopia*
Nassila *Algeria*
Oumou Sy *Senegal*
Sonwabile Ndamase *Republic of South Africa*

Special Appearances by




Brita Maselethulini of Zimbabwe Miss Malaika 2001
Mpule Kwelagobe of Botswana Miss Universe 1999
Leila Rajhi, Miss Tunisia 1998

Coumba Gawlo
Katoucha

**Thursday, March 7, 2002.
Lalibela Ballroom, Sheraton Addis.**

7:00 PM Cocktails
8:00 PM Fashion Show

**Ticket Price 300 Birr
Available at Sheraton Addis**

All Proceeds to benefit The Ethiopian Children's Fund. www.ethiopianchildrensfund.org

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