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Addis Ababa, 19 October 2016 (ECA) – Outgoing Economic Commission for Africa's Executive Secretary, Carlos Lopes, this week bade farewell to Ethiopia's Prime Minister and President respectively as he nears the end of his term at the ECA.

Mr. Lopes first met Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn at his offices on Monday and then had the opportunity to bid farewell to President Mulatu Teshome at the presidential palace Wednesday.

The ECA chief, in both meetings, expressed his gratitude to the leadership of Ethiopia for their support during his time at the helm of the ECA, an organization tasked to promote the economic and social development of the African continent.

He conveyed his attachment to Ethiopia, not only because the country is the host of the ECA but also because of its willingness to adopt policy measures suggested by the ECA in its quest to make unique contributions to address Africa's developmental challenges.

"As the ECA we are formulators of ideas and we had the privilege of seeing Ethiopia using some of them in its policy formulation processes, making the country a permanent laboratory of ECA policy suggestions," said Mr. Lopes.

Both the President and the Prime Minister extolled Mr. Lopes for his work as the ECA chief in promoting Africa First as well as improving the ECA's visibility on the continent and the world at large.

In praising Mr. Lopes for his leadership at the ECA, Messrs Desalegn and Teshome said the ECA's visibility had increased remarkably during Mr. Lopes reign, adding debates on Africa had also increased both in quantity and quality.

The Prime Minister asked Mr. Lopes to remain strategically engaged with Ethiopia.

President Teshome said he was pleased to have worked with Mr. Lopes over the past few years, adding as the patron of the Africa Hall, he will miss the great work they were doing together in revamping the historic hall in the ECA compound.

The President, who's the patron of Africa Hall, said the hall is a living symbol of Africa's rich history, whose preservation will serve, not just as a catalyst of African unity but also as a source of belonging for all of Africa.

He thanked Mr. Lopes for his role in convincing the UN General Assembly to renovate, preserve and conserve Africa Hall as a permanent symbol of Africa's history and unity.

Issued by:

Communications Section

Economic Commission for Africa

PO Box 3001

Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

Tel: +251 11 551 5826

E-mail: ecainfo@uneca.org ^[1]

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[1] <mailto:ecainfo@uneca.org>