World Teachers’ Day 2014 Celebrated in Aksum University

World Teachers’ Day is celebrated every year all over the world to commemorate the signing in 1966 of the UNESCO /ILO Recommendation concerning the status of Teachers. It is also celebrated to commemorate the 1997 recommendation concerning Higher Education Teaching personnel. The main purpose of the celebration is therefore to make aware of the recommendations to the teaching professionals and to the wider public.

The theme of the 2014 World Teachers’ Day is termed ‘Invest in the Future; Invest in Teachers’. This is because what today’s children will face in adult life cannot be predicted and so the teachers of today and tomorrow need the skills knowledge and support that will enable them to meet the diverse learning needs of the children.

The 2014 World Teachers’ Day was celebrated in Aksum University located at about 1024 km away from Addis Ababa to the northern part of the country.

It was celebrated by organizing a two days conference from 5-6 October 2014. On the conference 16 research papers done by university and secondary school teachers and researchers from educational institutions and one paper concerning the Unite for Quality Education campaign were presented and discussed.

On the first day, programme introduction was made by president of Aksum University Teachers’ Association, Mr Deresse Mekonnen.

Followed by welcoming speech by president of the Ethiopian Teachers Association Mr Yohannes Benti, the conference was officially opened by HE Mr. Fuad Ibrahim, State Minister of General Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In his speech he addressed the conference as follows: As Ethiopia progresses, so must the skill levels of our students. Ethiopia is not an island. Our educated youth must be able to compete internationally. Our teachers must be capable and prepared both academically and morally for this challenge. This requires all teachers to adapt to the rapidly evolving level of the country. It is a challenge that all teachers can and must rise to. In his final wards the state minister promised on behalf of the
Ministry that the Ethiopian government and Ministry of Education will do the maximum to promote the profession.

He further added that the government and his Ministry will continue supporting ETA in its attempt to support education and to stand for teachers benefits and rights.

Followed by the Minister’s opening speech, Deputy president of Aksum University, Dr. Mekonnen Aregay, has addressed the conference participants. On behalf of the president, Dr. Mebrahtom Mesfin, in his speech, he said that he is honored to have the celebration held in his university and extended his thanks to Aksum University Teachers’ Association for lending their hands for organizing the world Teachers’ Day conference in the University.

Finally, Mr. Arnaldo Valente Nhavoto, Director of IICBA, has made a key note address and also read message of the day prepared by representatives of International Organizations, namely UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO and EI. Mr Nhavoto, in his message, presented to the conference that equipping teachers to succeed is a priority meaning that rigorous training, better conditions for employment, quality based teacher recruitment, thoughtful deployment and attracting new teachers
and talents, especially young people and women from under-represented communities. Reflecting on the lead-up to, and looking beyond, 2015, the Global thematic consultation on Education in the post-2015 Development Agenda aptly sums up the essentials for supporting teachers’ effectiveness as follows:

1. Decent conditions of employment, including appropriate contracts and salaries, and prospects for career progression and promotion;
2. Good conditions in the work environment, based on creating school contexts that are conducive to teaching;
3. High-quality pre-and in-service training for teachers, based on respect for human rights and the principles of inclusive education; and
4. Effective management, including teacher recruitment and deployment.

Followed by the speeches, the first research paper which focused on training of teachers in post graduate diploma program (PGDP), presented by a researcher from Addis Ababa University, was presented after which the conference participants went for break. Then the participants were divided into two to run the conference in parallel sessions so as to allow active participation and timely completion of the deliberation. Participants were drawn from federal government offices, non-governmental organizations, regional & university Teachers’ Associations, secondary and primary school teachers. Many of the 300 participants were from the locality.

Present of ETA

The conference was honored by the presence of Madam Assibi Napoe, Chief Coordinator of EI Africa Region where she presented the activities so far made at Continental and Global
level and the way forward on the unite for Quality Education for All campaign launched by Education International, our Global Teachers’ Union Federation.

The Association (ETA) would like to thank very much Aksum university administration, Ministry of Education and International Institute of Capacity Building for Africa (IICBA) for they contributed finance to organize the conference. At the end president of Aksum university, Dr. Mebrhtom Mesfin, has made a closing remark and expressed his happiness for the success of the conference.