

Press Release



New situation in Ethiopia: time to seize the opportunity

***Menschen für Menschen* – Karlheinz Böhm's Ethiopia Aid, sets new priorities**

Munich/Addis Ababa, 20 August 2018. Ethiopia is in a state of upheaval. In the first months after the new Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed took office there has been a cascade of positive news from the country at the Horn of Africa. In this context, the peace treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea can be seen as visible progress.

“Since Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed came to power in Ethiopia, positive changes have been felt in virtually all spheres of life. Apart from the fact that ethnically based tension and conflict still persist in certain regions, and some parts of the country are struggling with a lack of food security, Dr Abiy has generally inspired new confidence in the people and given them hope for a better life in their own country. The path thus taken is right and will help to take Ethiopia forward,” says Peter Renner, Director of the *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation and responsible for the organisation's project work in Ethiopia. Renner continues: “The peace treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea offers a unique opportunity for sustained structural changes in the country. For this precise reason, we in Germany must also respond quickly. We appeal to all social, economic and political decision-makers to help the people in Ethiopia to pursue the route already embarked upon into a better and self-determined future.”

The *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation – Karlheinz Böhm's Ethiopia Aid (www.menschenfuermenschen.de) – has been providing aid for self-development for almost 37 years. Within the framework of so-called integrated rural development projects, together with the local population *Menschen für Menschen* dovetails measures in the areas of agriculture, water, education, health and human development in currently twelve project areas with over 700 full-time employees, almost exclusively Ethiopians. Thanks to the work of Karlheinz Böhm's Ethiopia Aid, to date about 6 million men, women and children in Ethiopia have received the opportunity of a better life.

Christian Ude: “Strengthen the development partnership”

Christian Ude, former Lord Mayor of Munich and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Karlheinz Böhm's Ethiopia Aid, also emphasises the importance of development partnership: “In times like this our priority should be to support countries such as Ethiopia. Imagine what would be possible in terms of self-development, education and health services, economic growth and infrastructure, if the billions allocated to the arms industry were to be redirected to an effective development partnership.” Ude continues: “Especially in view of the current refugee flows, we in Europe should take a reasonable and natural interest in helping countries such as Ethiopia, to enable the people there to independently overcome their problems in the long term and embark on positive economic development, so that fleeing to Europe is not the only life perspective.”

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The *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation sees the peace treaty with Eritrea as a major opportunity for continued, faster and more peaceful development at the Horn of Africa. “We will be adapting our work to the new situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea, expanding our activities and projects to further areas and defining new priorities such as targeted measures for the creation of jobs and value-added chains,” explains *Menschen für Menschen* Executive Director and Ethiopia specialist Peter Renner. Stronger promotion of so-called cooperatives is proposed, for example in honey or oil production, in order to establish the individual elements of a value-added chain in a region.

About *Menschen für Menschen*

For over 36 years the *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation has been providing long-term support for self-development in Ethiopia. Within the framework of integrated rural development projects, together with the local population *Menschen für Menschen* combines measures in the fields of agriculture, water, education, health and human development. The foundation stone for *Menschen für Menschen* was laid by former actor Karlheinz Böhm († 2014) on 16 May 1981 with his legendary bet in the TV show “Wetten, dass..?” Since 1993 the Foundation has continuously carried the donation seal of the German Central Institute for Social Affairs (DZI). *Menschen für Menschen* is currently implementing measures in twelve project areas with more than 700 full-time, almost exclusively Ethiopian employees.

Further information at www.menschenfuermenschen.de

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