

Jim Inhofe U.S. Senator for Oklahoma on a visit to Ethiopia

June 1, 2021

Mr Inhofe is briefed by the speaker of Ethiopia's House of Representative, Tadesse Chafo



Mr. Inhofe holding talks with Tadesse Chafo (photo : EBC) borkena

James Mountain Inhofe, the 86 years old United States' senator for Oklahoma, is on a visit to Ethiopia. He arrived in the country on Monday to a warm welcome.

Mr. Inhofe's visit to Ethiopia came about a week after he spoke on [the U.S. senate opposing proposed sanction and restriction against Ethiopian and Eritrean officials](#) , "for not ending the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia."

Many Ethiopians hailed him as a friend of Ethiopia.

"I welcome Senator Jim Inhofe @JimInhofe , a friend to Ethiopians, to his second home #Ethiopia," said Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in a Twitter message on Monday.

Abiy held a discussion with the visiting senator but not much was disclosed about it.

On Tuesday, Mr. Inhofe met with the speaker of Ethiopian House of People's Representatives. Tadesse Chafo.

According to a report by state media, EBC, Mr. Inhofe was briefed about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), law enforcement operations and humanitarian assistance in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, and the border dispute with Sudan.

The source added he was informed that Ethiopia is poised to undertake the second filing of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) during the upcoming Ethiopian rainy seasons.

Mr. Chafso told the Oklahoma senator that Ethiopia will undertake it in a way not to affect the interest of lower riparian countries.

Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) cited Mr. Inhofe as saying the brief he got helped him understand the activities that Ethiopia is making in different areas.

He also said, as reported by EBC, that he is "determined to support Ethiopia activities" in the areas mentioned above.

Mr. Inhofe seems to be an advocate of the presence of the U.S. military in Africa to "compete with Russia and China," as he put it in his remark about a nominee for the Assistant Secretary of Defense position. On May 27, he tweeted : " Chris Maier, nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the @DeptofDefense, understands the value of a limited but meaningful presence of U.S. military personnel on the African continent to compete with China and Russia and push back on terrorist organizations."

April 10, 2018

Inhofe in The Hill: Give Ethiopia a chance to change; House should reject strongly worded resolution

[The Hill](#)

Today, the House of Representatives will consider a resolution that condemns human rights and governance conditions in Ethiopia. Now is the wrong time to consider this, and it should be rejected.

Since being elected to the Senate, I have made 156 country visits to Africa. Eighteen of those have been to Ethiopia, where I have watched first-hand the economic transformation that's occurred. Their middle class is growing, and they have become a regional superpower, who is a friend of the United States. Their military is professional and capable, and they are punching above their weight in the war against terrorism that continues to plague the continent. They promote regional peace and security by being one of the top troop contributors to UN peacekeeping missions around the world.

The last few years have been tough domestically for Ethiopia on a number of fronts, but that's not surprising for a country that's continuing to transition from a communist to a democratic nation.

The good news is that the Ethiopian government understands that human rights and governance conditions need to improve. That's why the timing and negative, condescending tone of this resolution could not be worse and would work against the authors' intent. It would undercut the new prime minister at just the time he needs to be encouraged.

Just one week ago, Dr. Abiy Ahmed was sworn in as Ethiopia's new prime minister on a mandate to improve these exact issues. He is a personal friend of mine; in fact, I was with him on my last visit in October, and we prayed together for Ethiopia's disunity to be healed.

During his inauguration, Prime Minister Abiy stated his commitment to accountability, justice, freedom, and the rule of law. He expressed his commitment to allowing true democracy (and by extension, political parties of all persuasions) to flourish, underscoring why he is the one who has what it takes to bring real change to Ethiopia.

We should give Prime Minister Abiy the opportunity to prove himself as a national leader before having the full weight of the United States House of Representatives tossed against him. A heavy-handed, strongly-worded resolution condemning his government, so soon after being sworn in, will severely curtail Abiy's ability to enact needed reforms. In fact, they could backfire by fueling opposition groups in Ethiopia to undermine his entire administration.

Now is not the time to move a resolution with a tone like this. Ethiopia is a key friend, and Prime Minister Abiy deserves a chance at a strong start. The House can give him that by rejecting H. Res. 128.

Inhofe is the senior senator for Oklahoma.