



Recent Stop on the New York Convention Roadshow: **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

In September, ICCA was delighted to take its Judicial Roadshow to Ethiopia for the first time. The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed ICCA to Addis Ababa for a two-day event on 23 and 24 September.

Chaired by Mr. Reta Alemu, Director General of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' International Legal Affairs Department, the Roadshow was held at an important time for Ethiopian arbitration, as a dialogue is ongoing between governmental, legislative and judicial stakeholders as to whether Ethiopia should ratify the New York Convention.

The Roadshow was opened by H.E. Ambassador Fesseha Yimer, Special Adviser to the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who noted that Ethiopia is one of the ten fastest growing economies in the world today and that the increase of foreign investment and trade in Ethiopia will result in an increase in the number of commercial disputes. He stressed that economic progress requires a dispute resolution process to be available, and that the Government acknowledges that Ethiopia's dispute settlement framework is not keeping up with Ethiopia's economic growth. This is why the Government is now considering ratification of the New York Convention. Ambassador Yimer

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Participants and speakers at the September 2014 New York Convention Roadshow in Ethiopia

NYC Roadshow: Ethiopia

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concluded his remarks with the observation that Addis Ababa has the potential to become a centre for dispute resolution at a regional level.

ICCA members **Ms. Elodie Dulac**, **Mr. Thomas Snider**, **Ms. Erica Stein** and **Mr. Franz Schwarz**, together with senior Ethiopian lawyer **Mr. Tameru Wondm Agegnehu**, were honoured to be given the opportunity to address the approximately 80 participants, who included judges from all levels of the Federal Court system, members of the House of People's Representatives (including the Vice-Chair of the House of People's Representatives' Standing Legal Committee) and the House of the Federation, together with officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Finance and Economic Development, Trade, and Energy.

Also attending the Roadshow were the Director of the Arbitration Institute of the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations and representatives of major Ethiopian state-owned corporations such as Ethiopian Airlines and the Ethiopian Electric Utility Corporation.

During the Roadshow, speakers addressed international arbitration in general and the New York Convention in particular. Erica Stein gave a general overview of the Convention and of its methods of interpretation, while Ato Tameru discussed the current state of Ethiopian law on the recognition and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards. Articles I and II of the Convention were then addressed by Franz Schwarz and Erica Stein, Articles III and IV by Elodie Dulac and Articles V, VI and VII by Franz Schwarz, Erica Stein and Tom Snider. Ato Reta, Elodie Dulac and Tom Snider then led a debate with the participants as to whether Ethiopia should ratify the New York Convention.

The participants were provided with copies of the provisions of the 1960 Ethiopian Civil Code and the 1965 Ethiopian Code of Civil Procedure currently regulating the recognition and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards in Ethiopia, as well as with a copy of the New York Convention and of ICCA's Judges Guide.

The Roadshow sessions worked very well, with keen interest by the participants in the subject-matter and lively dialogue on the pros and cons of ratifying the New York Convention. ■

by Elodie Dulac, King & Spalding



Top: speakers (L-R) Tameru Wondm Agegnehu, Reta Alemu, Erica Stein, Franz Schwarz and Tom Snider. Bottom: participants each received a copy of ICCA's Guide to the NYC.