



**The Ministry of Finance of Ethiopia and
Ethiopian Communications Authority
Welcome the Award of New Telecommunication
Licenses to the Global Partnership for Ethiopia**



Addis Ababa, 22 May 2021 – The Ministry of Finance and the Ethiopian Communications Authority warmly welcome the award of one new telecommunication license to the Global Partnership for Ethiopia a private consortium of Safaricom (Kenya), Vodafone Group (UK), Vodacom Group (South Africa), CDC Group (UK), & Sumitomo Corporation (Japan), and Development Finance Cooperation (DFC) today, reflecting a major external investment into Ethiopia and its telecommunications market and an end to a decades-long state monopoly.

« Today marks a decisive day for our economic reform path in Ethiopia. With the liberalization of the telecom market through a fair and transparent process, the government enables every Ethiopian to access quality services at an affordable price”, said Finance Minister Ahmed Shide upon the announcement.

The selection of one winner completes a transparent process which began in October 2020 to open Ethiopia’s telecom market to operators beyond Ethio Telecom, the publicly-owned national telecom company. At the end of April 2021, the Ethiopian Communication Authority announced that two consortia had submitted proposals: a consortium of Safaricom (Kenya), Vodafone Group (UK), Vodacom Group (South Africa), CDC Group (UK), & Sumitomo Corporation (Japan), and Development Finance Cooperation (DFC) and the South African telecommunications giant MTN Group Limited, supported by Silk Road Fund, a Chinese investment fund.

Subsequent to the announcement of the decision by the Government of Ethiopia, ECA director general, Eng. Balcha Reba said “This decision ushers in a new era of telecom service development in our country which will benefit millions of Ethiopians to have access to quality and reliable communications services. Global Partnership for Ethiopia is a consortium of reputable telecom companies providing service to over 750 million customers all over the world and committed to create new jobs, support the economy through introduction of new and efficient services. I am also very pleased the consortium will invest 8 billion USD over the next ten years”.

The entry of a new operator signals the government's commitment to the reform agenda introduced two years ago as part of the Homegrown Economic Reform program, an ambitious and far-reaching package of economic reforms aiming to transform Ethiopia’s economy to create millions of jobs through private-sector led growth, to develop manufacturing and other sectors, and to encourage foreign direct investment.