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In an opening speech, President Isaias Afwerki pointed out that the Ministry of Finance and the regional Administrations should effectively discharge their responsibility of ensuring effective tax collection system on the basis of sound structural and organizational balance vis-à-vis the

required facilities and well synchronized information system. He further stressed that the role of the regional Administrations is crucial to this end.

The President underlined that tax laws and implementation mechanisms need to have clarity and continuity, and that conducting periodic assessment is of vital importance in this regard. Moreover, he explained that the current tax collection system needs to be revised and improved this year through proper assessment of the competence and vitality of both the Ministry of Finance and the regional Administrations, along with the integration among the various government institutions.

President Isaias went on to emphasize the need for organizing continued seminar and training programs with a view to raising the awareness of both tax payers and collectors in view of the fact that such approach contributes to the prevalence of common understanding.



Likewise, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Berhane Habtemariam, who participated in the meeting, noted the importance of tax in subsidizing public service and emphasized that the payment of tax is the duty of all citizens who obtain service from government institutions. He also indicated that the process of tax collection in the country is undertaken in a centralized manner within the framework of the existing tax proclamations. In this regard, the Minister indicated that such a method is aimed at promoting equitability, complementarity and fairness in line with the Government's commitment of ensuring just and balanced development nationwide.

Furthermore, Mr. Berhane gave extensive briefings as regards the prevailing proclamations pertaining to tax and customs duties, in addition to the methodology applied



thereof. He also explained the ways and means of promoting work integration between the Finance Ministry and Local Government bodies.

In the course of the meeting, the regional Administrators conducted extensive discussion as regards reinforcement of information system, tax control, license issuing and renewal, control of contraband trade and the effective management of revenues from those urban centers where

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active business activities take place.

The meeting concluded adopting work directives that would enable the Ministry of Finance and Local Government institutions to carry out more gratifying and coordinated accomplishments regarding tax collection in 2013.