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**EIMA 2022: the relaunch of cooperation between Ethiopia and Italy**

***Presented in Addis Ababa, the 45th edition of EIMA, the great exhibition of agricultural machinery promoted by the Federation of Italian Manufacturers. Important role played by the ICE Agency, which is organising the presence at the Bologna Exhibition of a delegation of Ethiopian trade operators. Agriculture is becoming increasingly strategic in the economy of African countries, which are expressing a demand for specific machinery for the crops and agricultural business models in the various countries.***

Agriculture is the fundamental sector of the Ethiopian economy and innovative agricultural machinery can greatly increase the soil’s productivity. This was the theme of the press conference held this morning in Addis Ababa on the initiative of the Italian foreign trade agency ICE and the Italian federation of agricultural machinery manufacturers FederUnacoma. The purpose of the meeting was to present EIMA International, the major exhibition of agricultural machinery organised by FederUnacoma, which will hold its 45th edition at the Bologna exhibition centre from November 9 to 13. The need for agricultural machinery in Ethiopia is vast, as the country's crops are extensive and diversified. Agriculture accounts for almost half of Ethiopia's GDP - as noted in the conference, whose speakers included Addis Ababa ICE Director Riccardo Zucconi, First Secretary of the Italian Embassy in Ethiopia Andrea Pascali, and FederUnacoma Deputy Director General Fabio Ricci - and employs 85% of the population. Renewing the agricultural sector - the conference said - means significantly increasing the profitability of production and the quality of life of Ethiopia's rural communities. Every production, from cereals to oilseeds, to vegetables and fruit, requires specific machines, capable of preparing and carrying out sowing, fertilisation, treatments, irrigation and harvesting. On show at EIMA are multiple models of machinery and equipment specifically for these crops, many of which are designed specifically to operate in climatic and environmental settings such as those in Ethiopia and certainly more suitable for the country's small farms. At EIMA International there are about 50 thousand models on display, produced by the more than 1,500 manufacturers present, representing 50 countries. "The exhibition," explained Fabio Ricci, "is addressed to an audience of professional operators, and is presented with a rigorous product subdivision that envisages 14 sectors of specialisation and 5 themed shows, respectively dedicated to components (EIMA Components), irrigation systems (Idrotech), bioenergy supply chains (Energy), advanced electronic and information technologies (Digital) and gardening and landscaping (Green). To guide visitors through the vast pavilions of the exhibition (120 thousand square metres of net exhibition space) and to promote business relations, the ICE Agency and FederUnacoma are organising targeted visits to the various sectors of the exhibition and "B2B" meetings between trade operators and manufacturers, while a rich programme of conventions and seminars will provide an in-depth look at technical issues, such as those relating to climate change and the management of water resources, which are increasingly necessary and precious.

EIMA International will therefore be attended by an official delegation of Ethiopian trade operators promoted by the ICE Agency and FederUnacoma, and will be attended by dealers, entrepreneurs and technicians in the agricultural sector from the African country (around 70 in the 2018 edition before restrictions due to the health emergency). Events such as EIMA 2022 are an opportunity to strengthen cooperation relations between Ethiopia and Italy - said Riccardo Zucconi - in a sector such as agriculture that is becoming increasingly strategic in the African setting, to respond to demographic growth and to increase the autonomy of individual countries while also protecting them from geopolitical factors that can jeopardise food supplies. Every cooperation initiative between Ethiopia and Italy - underlined the Embassy representative Andrea Pascali - is set in a very favourable framework, given the excellent relations between the two countries, and the common sensitivity for a development model that aims to increase productivity and welfare, but with the utmost attention to the environment and natural resources that are a heritage to be protected and handed over to future generations.

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