



Global Awareness Lecture
Fall 2005

Ethiopia–U.S. Relations

His Excellency

Kassahun Ayele

Ethiopian Ambassador to the U.S.

Wednesday, 9 November

NOON

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Ambassador Kassahun Ayele served as Minister of Trade and Industry (1995–2001) with over twenty-eight years of engineering, consultancy, management, and policy-related experience to his credit. During that time, Ayele successfully negotiated Ethiopia's certification for the U.S. African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), led several successful promotional trade missions to foreign countries, including the U.S. and traveled extensively, working with government officials, business leaders, and Ethiopians residing in the U.S. to promote trade and investment in Ethiopia. His career also includes being head of the Productive and Support Services Bureau in the Office of the Prime Minister (1993–95), acting general manager of the Development Projects Study Authority in Addis Ababa (1992–93), leading project engineer and senior project engineer for Industrial Projects Service, a state-owned consultancy enterprise (1982–92), technical expert at the Ethio-Libyan Joint Sugar Company (1983–84), and a range of responsibilities at the Metahara Sugar Factory (1973–83). Ayele has been active in a number of organizations as member and chairman of the Ethiopian Society of Mechanical Engineers; as a member of management boards for Ethiopian Airlines, the National Bank of Ethiopia, the Export Promotion Agency of Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Investment Authority, the Basic Metals and Engineering Industries Agency, and the Public Enterprises Supervising Authority; as a member of the advisory council of the Environment Protection Authority; and as a member of the Ethiopian National Council for HIV/AIDS. He received a BSC in mechanical engineering from Haile Sellasie I University in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, an MSC in tribology in machine design from Leeds University in Leeds, England (1988). Ayele was born in Bale Goba, Ethiopia; he and his wife have two children.