

MEMORANDUM

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BURUNDI CLOSES BORDER TO STEM RISING FLOOD OF PEOPLE TRYING TO FLEE

Nearly 10,000 Burundians fled the country at the weekend before Burundi closed its borders ahead of controversial and violence-wracked elections, the United Nations (UN) said on Tuesday.

Since Burundi's political turmoil began in April, 144,000 people have fled the country, with the numbers surging towards the end of last week, the UN refugee agency said.

"The pace this weekend spiked ... we saw at the weekend 10,000 more Burundians fleeing the country," UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokeswoman Melissa Fleming said in Geneva.

More than 6,000 had arrived in neighbouring Tanzania alone over the two-day period, bringing the total there to about 66,600.

Another 56,500 were in Rwanda, 11,500 in Democratic Republic of the Congo and more than 9,000 in Uganda, UNHCR said.

Burundian officials closed the borders late on Sunday ahead of Monday's controversial parliamentary polls — something they claim is common practice during an election.

"Over the past 48 hours, refugees have been trying to cross informal border crossings through the forest to leave the country," Ms Fleming said.

People arriving in neighbouring countries have told aid workers that roads are being blocked and people suspected of heading to the border are being forced off buses, she said.

"Many said they had to walk for hours through the bush without luggage so as not to attract the attention of the militia and the police," she said.

"We are concerned that people who want to flee to seek asylum, who fear their lives are in danger ... are not able to leave the country."

The troubled central African nation has been in crisis since late April over President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial bid to stand for a third consecutive five-year term, a move branded by opponents as unconstitutional and a violation of a peace deal that ended 13 years of civil war in 2006.

The opposition boycotted Monday's parliamentary elections, which precede the planned presidential vote on July 15. While the flood of refugees initially consisted largely of women and children, Ms Fleming said a growing number of men were now leaving.

They had told aid workers they had fled because of the breakdown in diplomatic negotiations and over fear the ongoing violence will escalate leading up to the presidential vote.

"They're very concerned that the country is going to break down." Ms Fleming said international appeals for funds to assist the refugees were "not meeting with much donor generosity".

A month ago, UNHCR and its partners appealed for \$207m to help protect and help up to 200,000 Burundian refugees but have so far received just 13% of that amount.

Election officials finished vote-counting on Tuesday.

"The counting is completed in all the polling stations throughout Burundi," election commission spokesman Prosper Ntahorwamiye told AFP, with those votes now being collated and taken to larger centres for final tallies before results can be announced.

Voting on Monday was marked by grenade attacks, with the election commission claiming an "enormous" turnout despite many polling stations remaining quiet.

The poll followed weeks of violence and a failed coup attempt sparked by Mr. Nkurunziza's defiant bid for a third term, with more than 70 people killed.

Almost 4-million people were registered to vote but the opposition boycotted the polls, as they did in the last elections in 2010, claiming that it was not possible to hold a fair vote.

The only international observers were those of the UN, who said their presence should not be "interpreted as a validation" of the process.

UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon earlier called for voting to be delayed, as Burundi faces its worst crisis since the end of its civil war nine years ago.

The African Union refused to send observers, saying that it was not possible to hold "free, fair, transparent and credible elections".

The European Union warned the polls would "only exacerbate the profound crisis", while former colonial power Belgium said the polls could "further divide the country".

Provisional results of local elections could be ready on Wednesday, when parliamentary results are also likely due, according to an election commission spokesman, who said it was "impossible" to give turnout figures before the results were fully compiled.

In polling stations in Bujumbura queues were short and turnout sparse, with election officials at times outnumbering voters, although in pro-government areas turnout was higher.

Monday's double polls were the first stage of three votes, with presidential polls due on July 15 followed by senatorial elections on July 24. (AFP 01-07-2015)

CAMEROON, FRANCE TO SIGN SERIES OF AGREEMENTS ON FRIDAY

Cameroon and France will sign a series of agreements on Friday, on the occasion of President Francois Hollande's working visit to Yaounde, according to the official schedule made public on Wednesday by the Civil Cabinet of the Presidency of the Republic.

The signing ceremony, areas of which were not specified, will follow a meeting between the two leaders who will also hold a joint press conference.

During this brief visit, President Hollande will also hold discussions with community leaders, leaders of political parties represented in the National Assembly and leaders of human rights organizations.

The visit will end with a reception by the French community living in Cameroon followed by a speech he is scheduled to deliver.

Cameroon is France's first commercial partner in Central Africa, excluding oil, second client (behind Gabon) and second largest supplier (after Congo) in the sub-region. (APA 01-07-2015)

OPINION: THE ACP AT 40 – REPOSITIONING AS A GLOBAL PLAYER (BY PATRICK I. GOMES SG OF THE ACP GROUP)

In his memoirs, [*Glimpses of a Global Life*](#), Sir Shridath Ramphal, then-Foreign Minister of the Republic of Guyana, who played a leading role in the evolution of the Lomé negotiations that lead to the birth of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, pointed to the significant lessons of that engagement of developed and developing countries some 40 years ago and had this to say:

“As regards the Lomé negotiations, the process of unification – for such it was – added a new dimension to the Third World's quest for economic justice through international action. Its significance, however, derives not merely from the terms of the negotiated relationship between the 46 ACP states and the EEC, but from the methodology of unified bargaining which the negotiations pioneered.

“Never before had so large a segment of the developing world negotiated with so powerful a grouping of developed countries so comprehensive and so innovative a regime of economic relations. It was a new, and salutary, experience for Europe; it was a new, and reassuring, experience for the ACP States. Forty years later, that lesson remains retains its validity. Unity of purpose and action remains the touchstone of ACP's meaning and success.”

With a conscious appreciation of that founding unity of purpose and action, the ACP Group convened a high-level symposium at its headquarters in Brussels on Jun. 6. The event marked the milestone of four decades of trade and economic cooperation, vigorous and contentious political engagements and a range of development finance programmes – all aimed at the eradication of poverty from the lives of the millions of people in its 79 member states.

“The ACP will craft its future path to continue the struggle against power, inequality and injustice, the core purpose for which it was established in 1975”

In 1975, it was 46 developing countries that met in the capital city of Guyana, to sign the Georgetown Agreement and give birth to the ACP Group. They had recently embarked on their post-colonial path of independence following successful negotiations of non-reciprocal trade arrangements with the then nine-member European Economic Community (EEC) in February.

Known as the Lomé Agreement, after the capital of Togo where it was signed, this legally-binding, international agreement had a life-span of 25 years to 2000. Essentially, it comprised three pillars of

trade and economic cooperation, development assistance – mainly through grants from the European Development Fund (EDF) – and political dialogue on issues such as human rights and democratic governance.

During that period, the preferential trade and aid pact undoubtedly gave an impetus to various aspects of economic and social development in the ACP Group. Substantial revenue was received from preferential access to the European market for exports of clothing, banana, sugar, cocoa, beef, fruit and vegetables, for example, and with the accompanying aid programmes.

The benefits were seen in the economies of Mauritius, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Namibia, Guyana and Fiji, to name a few. Member states of the ACP Group, less-developed countries (LDCs), landlocked states and small island developing states (SIDS), had access to returns from trade for improved social services and in this sense, the first decades of Lomé were certainly gains for development in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific.

But these gains entrenched an aid-dependency of commodity export economies with minimal structural transformation through value-added manufacturing and related service sectors in ACP countries.

The fierce trade-liberalising world of the late 1990s, rising indebtedness due to enormous increase in the cost of energy and pressure from the challenge of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to the European Union's discriminatory practice of preferential trade and aid to this exclusive set of developing countries meant that post-Lomé ACP-EU trade relations had to be WTO-compatible.

Finding compatibility for "substantially all trade" between the economies of the ACP's 79 members – grouped in six regions of Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific – and Europe, and ensuring that development criteria take precedence over tariff reductions and WTO rules have proven contentious in this long-standing partnership.

With this overhang of tensions in its troubled access to its principal market, the ACP faces the conclusion of the 20-year Agreement signed in Cotonou, the Republic of Benin, in 2020.

A soul-searching and vigorous process to be repositioned as a global player defending, protecting and promoting an inclusive struggle against poverty and for sustainable development in a world enmeshed in inequality is the singular task on which the ACP now concentrates.

Such a task has entailed a series of actions that are informed by the report of the Ambassadorial Working Group on Future Perspectives for the ACP Group of States that was approved by the Council of Ministers in December 2014.

The main thrust of the transformation and repositioning of the ACP is captured in the strategic policy domains identified in the report.

These are in five thematic areas that address:

- a) Rule of Law & Good Governance;
- b) Global Justice & Human Security;
- c) Building Sustainable, Resilient & Creative Economies; and
- d) Intra-ACP Trade, Industrialisation and Regional Integration;
- e) Financing for Development.

In each of these, and in ways that are mutually reinforcing, very specific programmed activities of an annual action plan are being prepared and will be executed.

For example, the annual plan will address the thematic area of "sustainable, resilient and creative economies" through the mechanism of an ACP Forum on SIDS with financial resources, mainly from the intra-ACP allocation of the EDF and the UN's Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO), one of the partner agencies of the UN system with which the ACP Group works very closely.

Conceptualised so as to address systemic and structural factors affecting sustainable development, the ACP emphasises South-South and triangular cooperation as a major modality for implementation of its role as catalyst and advocate.

The current stage of rethinking and refocusing provides an opportunity for 40 years of development through trade by which the ACP Group and the European Union could recast the world's most unique and enduring North-South treaty of developed and developing countries to effectively participate in a global partnership where no one is left behind.

The ACP has social and organisational capital accumulated from a rich experience on trade negotiations with the world's largest bloc of Europe and its 500 million inhabitants.

Undoubtedly marked by contentious issues on trade provisions to satisfy the WTO's non-discriminatory behaviour among its member States, ACP-EU relations reveal the persistent battle of poor versus rich with a view to finding common ground on issues of mutual interest.

The 40th anniversary celebration by the ACP Group at a High-Level Inter-regional Symposium on Jun. 4 and 5 witnessed reflections on achievements and failures, as well as limitations in the performance of the ACP Group, in itself as a group and among its member states, as well as in its partnership with the European Union and the wider global arena.

The theme of the symposium covered the initial Georgetown Agreement and the ambitious objectives that were set in 1975. The high point was the keynote address by H.E. Sam Kutesa, President of the UN General Assembly.

Interestingly, discussions revealed how relevant and timely they remain and of special note was the "promotion of a fairer and more equitable new world order".

This retrospective conversation has been recognised as fundamental for how, and in what direction, the ACP will craft its future path to continue the struggle against power, inequality and injustice, the core purpose for which it was established in 1975. (IPS 28-06-2015)

AU CHIEF APPRECIATES PRESIDENT OBAMA'S DECISION TO EXTEND AGOA

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, on behalf of all Africa Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) eligible countries, has commended United States President Barack Obama for his leadership and strong commitment to enhancing Africa-US economic partnership, the AU said in a statement on Wednesday.

President Obama, on Monday June 29, 2015, signed into law the Trade Preference Extension Act of 2015, to enact a 10-year renewal of the Act.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission also expressed her gratitude to members of both Houses of Congress for their strong and broad bipartisan support for the reauthorization of AGOA.

Their vote to extend AGOA for 10 years is an eloquent illustration of the importance they attach to the US's relationship with Africa, and their interest in advancing sustainable trade relations with the continent, she said.

The Chairperson also commended the efforts of the private sector, African civil society and the Diaspora, who worked tirelessly with the African Ambassadors Group in Washington, DC and the AU Mission to promote a long-term extension of AGOA for the best interest of Africa-US relations.

The preferences that AGOA provides have fostered a mutually beneficial partnership that will allow for job creation in both Africa and the US, and the enhancement of trade and business environments. AGOA demonstrates how a trade preference can catalyse the expansion and creation of new industries, new export sectors, and new jobs that promote the reduction of poverty and sustainable economic development of the continent, the statement says.

According to the statement, over 1.5 million jobs have been directly and indirectly created on the continent thanks to the economic opportunities the Act provides, with many supporting women and youth. Extending AGOA through September 2025 will provide the necessary certainty for long term and predictable US investments in Africa and foster ever increasing economic development and deepened commercial ties over the next decade. (APA 01-07-2015)

NINE NIGERIAN BANKS RANK AMONG 1000 GLOBAL BANKS

Nine Nigerian banks have made this year's top 1000 global banks, according to the Banker Magazine in London.

According to the top 1000 global banks released on Monday by the magazine, the Nigerian banks that made the top 1000 global banks, which are the top 25 banks in Africa include Zenith, Ecobank, First Bank, Gtbank and Access Banks. Others are Diamond Bank, UBA, Fidelity and FCMB.

The magazine added that Zenith bank placed first among Nigerian top banks in terms of tier 1 capital, but 6th in Africa with a capital of \$3.162 billion.

Eco Transnational is second in Nigeria and 7th in Africa with a capital base of \$3.030 billion while First Bank ranked 3rd in Nigeria and 10th in Africa with a capital of \$2.327 billion.

Gtbank came 4th in Nigeria and 13th in Africa while Access Bank is 5th in Nigeria but 15th in Africa with a capital base of \$1.398 billion.

Others are Diamond which is 6th in Nigeria and 17th in Africa, UBA ranked 7th in Nigeria and 17th in Africa while Fidelity ranked 8th in Nigeria and 21 in Africa and FCMB ranked 9th in Nigeria.

According to the magazine, Nigerian banks endured a difficult period close to 2014, as the significant slump in oil prices caused havoc with the country's economy. (APA 29-06-2015)

ZIMBABWE: ZIMPLATS BUILDING U.S \$131 MILLION PLATINUM PROCESSING PLANT, ZIMBABWE'S FIRST

Zimbabwe's largest platinum mining company, Zimplats, is building a \$131 million base metal refinery at its Selous base, a senior official said Friday.

Acting chief executive, Stanley Segula, told parliamentarians visiting the company that \$20 million has so far been invested in the project which is expected to create significant new employment opportunities for Mashonaland West province.

According to the senior officials, the company currently employs about 5,800 workers, some 3,200 of them making up the permanent establishment.

"Our metal accounting is very strong and meets international standards but we haven't been able to process our platinum locally," said Segula.

"We have been exporting to South Africa all along but now we are setting up a base metal refinery plant which will be the country's first.

"We have engaged about 300 contractors on this project, so this is definitely going to create employment for local people as well as local experts."

Zimplats head of corporate affairs, Busi Chindove, said the company expects to commission the plant next year.

Segula told the legislators that Zimplats was also targeting to invest \$30million in upgrading the Selous-Ngezi road as part of their corporate social responsibility programme.

Beneficiating platinum to matte enables producers to realize 88,5% of potential revenue; at base metal refinery stage they get 89,7%, rising to 90% at precious metal stage.

Mines minister Walter Chidhakwa says platinum mining companies should demonstrate tangible progress towards building beneficiation facilities for government to scrap the 15% tax on raw platinum exports. (New Zimbabwe 27-06-2015)

SALE OF ANGOLA'S FIRST NATIONALLY-PRODUCED WINE BEGINS

The first wine "Made in Angola", called Serras de Xxila, is already being sold in the country and is expected to be exported to Portugal soon, said the chief executive of Herdade de Santa Maria, Carlos Carneiro.

Produced and bottled on the estate of Higino Carneiro, the Angolan army general and current governor of the province of Kuando Kubango, Serras de Xxila is made from the Angolan grape variety Muzondo Menga Ixi, from Kwanza Sul province.

“It is on this basis that we are producing (the wine),” Carneiro told Portuguese newspaper DN/Dinheiro Vivo, adding that “as we are at the beginning, it is difficult to draw a comparison with other wines,” notably with those from Portugal, which are the most exported Angola.

Figures from ViniPortugal show that Portugal sold 62.6 million litres of wine to Angola in 2014, worth 95.1 million euros. Angola is the second most important export market for Portuguese wine, after France.

The tasting notes for Serras de Xxila say it is a wine with an acidity of 4.19 and with an alcohol content of 15 percent, having matured in French and American oak barrels for a year and it is a fruity wine with notes of raspberry, blackberries and spices.

Soon, a 2013 reserve red wine be released, which has been maturing for the last 3 years, made from European grape varieties such as Touriga Nacional, Malvechet, Alicante Bouchet, Pinot Noir and Cevenet Bavignon.

The Herdade de Santa Maria estate covers 17,000 hectares, 50 of which are dedicated to production of wine and table grapes.

The project, which has Brazilian technical and Portuguese industrial assistance, has involved total investment of US\$16 million since 2008, a figure that also includes production of olive oil, for which olive trees have been planted, and even livestock, especially beef cattle and goats, installed in an area of 5,000 hectares. (30-06-2015)

RENAMO CHIEF ANNOUNCES CREATION OF PEACE COMMISSION

The leader of Mozambique’s opposition Renamo party Afonso Dhlakama, has announced the creation of a commission of Peace, Democracy and Economic and Social Development, the local media reported on Tuesday.

Private daily paper O Pais quoted Dhlakama as saying the Commission chairperson will be hitherto unknown Claudio Mapulango, who will be deputized by Helena Macul, while its general secretary Mauricio Agostinho Juma.

Dhlakama had proposed the creation of such a commission earlier in the month at the end of a meeting of the Renamo National Council.

This is not a Renamo commission, it's a commission of the country and within a year the headquarters will move to the south, and a year after that to the north, he said without disclosing how the commission will be funded or how it would relate to existing bodies such as the government, parliament or local authorities.

At this stage, the commission will be responsible for establishing the conditions for the take-off of activities, and to set up provincial offices. It should also involve academics, politicians, religious figures, and traditional leaders, among others, the former rebel leader said.

We want this commission to contribute to the construction of an effective peace and to the consolidation of democracy and the idea is that it will act as a driving force to solve any kind of conflict and a means of persuasion against possible acts that might endanger stability of the country, he added.

Last month, Renamo warned of a growing risk of instability in Mozambique after parliament rejected a bill that would have given it autonomous powers in regions where it has strong support. (APA 30-06-2015)

NIGERIA: FORTE OIL SIGNS U.S.\$83 MILLION CONTRACT WITH SIEMENS TO UPGRADE POWER PLANT

Forte Oil, one of Nigeria's energy firms, has said that it had signed an \$83 million contract with Siemens to upgrade its 414 megawatt gas-fired power plant and that the work would be completed next year.

According to a report by Reuters, Forte Oil, which also has interests in fuel retailing, was one of several firms to buy government power assets two years ago, sold as part of a privatisation meant to end decades of blackouts in Nigeria.

Forte Oil had through Amperion Power Distribution Company Limited, its power generation arm, acquired majority stake in the 414MW Geregu Power plant located in Kogi State of Nigeria, under the government-led privatization programme in the power sector.

The Geregu Power Plant was commissioned in 2007 with three Siemens V94.2 open cycle gas turbine power generation units totaling 414MW of installed capacity. The three operational units namely GT11, GT12, and GT13 have a rated capacity of 138MW each. The station received gas from two pipelines, a 24-inch wide old pipeline and 36-inch wide 136 KM long new pipeline from the Natural Gas Treatment Plant. These, the company said, are able to satisfy the fuel requirements of 3 units running on a full load of 414MW.

Forte Oil had said recently that it was committed to expanding the 414megawatts Geregu Power Plant to 600MW in the short to medium term.

The company, had in a statement signed by the Head, Brand and Corporate Communications, Mr. Odion Aleobua, said that it had taken full operational control of the power plant since it was handed over to it by the Federal Government on November 1, 2013.

Forte Oil said it acquired Geregu Power as part of its diversification from primary business of petroleum products marketing, adding that it planned to carve a niche for itself in power generation by increasing the current capacity of the plant to over 600MW in the short to medium term.

The optimisation, according to the company, will be a demonstration of the company's commitment to bridge the current power deficit in Nigeria and help to actualise Nigerians' expectations from the power sector. (Daily Independent 30-06-2015)

NIGERIA: APEX BANK EXTENDS REGISTRATION FOR BANK VERIFICATION NUMBER

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has extended the June 30th deadline for the bank verification number (BVN) registration to October 31, 2015.

A statement by the CBN on Tuesday in Abuja noted that the extension is meant to facilitate smooth completion of registration.

Mr. Dipo Fatokun, the CBN's director for banking and payment system department, said in the statement that "it has come to our notice that the BVN registration has elicited tremendous interest from the Nigerian bank customers who crowded the banking halls in order to beat the deadline."

"In view of the foregoing, it has become imperative for the banks to extend the timeline for all customers to have the BVN.

"The deadline for the enrolment is hereby extended from June 30 to October 31," the statement said.

It added that the extension would give Nigerian bank customers in the diaspora, enough time to enrol into the programme, noting that the guideline for the enrolment of diaspora account holders was being finalised and would be released soon. (APA 30-06-2015)

ANGOLA HIRES CHINESE COMPANY TO BUILD HYDROELECTRIC PLANT

The government of Angola has hired a consortium made up of the China Gezhouba Group Corporation (CGGC) and Niara Holding to build the new Caculo Cabaça dam, in the Middle Kwanza Basin, according to a presidential order.

The order authorises the Ministry of Energy and Water to sign the contract with the consortium in the amount of 489.6 billion kwanzas (about US\$4 billion), which will be secured through a loan from a Chinese bank.

According to information from the consortium, cited by Portuguese news agency Lusa, the value of the contract is set at US\$4.5 billion and 80 months of work to build the dam with a capacity to produce 2,171 megawatts of electricity.

The specifications provide for construction of tunnels, civil works, supply, installation and testing of electromechanical equipment.

It also authorises inclusion of the project in the Public Investment Program (PIP), and the finance minister, Armando Manuel, will “identify the fiscal space needed for initial payment of work” and negotiate a loan from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China with hedging by the China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation (Sinosure), to “ensure full payment of the contract.” (01-07-2015)

TANZANIA GAS DISCOVERIES HELP ATTRACT INVESTORS

According to newly launched World Investment Report 2015, the growth makes Tanzania, the leading FDI’s destination in the East African Community (EAC).

However, the report indicates that Global FDI inflows in 2014 fell by 16% to \$1.2 trillion, mostly because of the fragility of the global economy, policy uncertainty for investors and elevated geographical risks.

Speaking on behalf of The Minister for Investment and Empowerment, Eng. Christopher Chiza at the launching ceremony of the report held in Dar es Salaam last week the Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister’s Office, Dr. Florence Turuka, said the country’s FDI inflows represented its highest level in 2014 given that it attracted slightly \$ 2,142 million compared to its last peak of \$2,131 million in 2013.

“This amount is significantly higher than the very low level of \$640 million between 2005-2007 (pre-crisis). This achievement is due to gas discoveries in Tanzania. Indeed, Tanzania once again is the leading FDI’s destination in the East African Community,” proudly announced the Minister.

According to the report Uganda registered \$1.147 billion in FDI last year; Kenya received \$989 million in FDI while Rwanda and Burundi came fourth and fifth with FDIs to the tune of \$268 million and \$32 million respectively.

Further the report mentioned South Africa as the Africa’s largest recipient of FDI in 2014 with inward FDI Stock of \$145,384 million while also mentioning China as the largest recipient of FDI in 2014, followed by Hon Kong (China) and the United States of America.

Developing economies as a group attracted \$681 billion worth of FDI with a 2% rise, thus the countries are currently account for 55% of global inflows, according to the report.

It further mentioned that among the top 10 FDI recipient in the world, half are developing economies; Brazil, Hong Kong (China), India and Singapore.

“In this light, strengthening the global investment policy environment, including both the International Investment Agreements (IIA) and the international tax regimes, must be a priority,” he said.

Giving opening remarks at the ceremony, the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) Board Chairman, Prof. Lucian Msambichaka congratulated the UNCTAD for the important report and the Government of Tanzania through Tanzania Investment Center (TIC) for their efforts to promote, facilitate and reducing restrictions on investments.

“I am confident that the United Nations in Tanzania, and UNCTAD and UNDP Tanzania in particular, will stand ready to continue to support the Tanzanian government more broadly with both strategic policy advise as well as more practical guidance based on global good practices as the country seeks to implement the New Economic Model and achieve Vision 2020” he said.

He further added that more work needs to be done to attract investment into other sectors that have greater propensity to attract job such as manufacturing and agriculture.

“Ethiopia and Mozambique are countries that we have a lot to learn from. Ethiopia FDI’s has surged on its improved performance of textile manufacturing. Mozambique has done well in gas and has been a star performer in attracting FDI in the SADC region,” he said.(Business Week 28-06-2015)

AFRICA’S FIRST FACEBOOK HQ OPENS IN JO’BURG

The social media site Facebook has announced the opening of its main headquarters in Africa in the South African city of Johannesburg.

Facebook said its new office in South Africa is aimed at boosting the number of its users on the continent which currently stands at 120 million.

Its vice-president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa Nicola Mendelsohn was on Tuesday quoted by the local media as saying that its main marketing thrust will be concentrated in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, which are seen as growing hubs for Facebook on the continent.

Countries such as Senegal, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Uganda, Ethiopia, Zambia and Mozambique among others will also be a priority for Facebook to strengthen its existence in Africa, Mandelsohn said.

According to Facebook figures, 80 percent of mobile phones used on the continent are the commonest means of connecting to its pages in Africa where one in five people have access to the internet, a situation which it hopes to improve in the next five years.(APA 30-06-2015)

AFREXIMBANK FINANCES HOTEL PROJECT IN CABO VERDE

The African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) has granted a credit facility of US\$57 million to the Decameron New Horizon group to build a five-star hotel on the beach in Santa Maria, on Cabo Verde’s (Cape Verde’s) Sal Island, the bank said.

Cited by pan-African news agency Panapress, the bank’s chairman president, Jean-Louis Ekra, said the approval of the lending facility was part of a strategy to facilitate growth of the tourism sector in Member States under the Construction and Tourism-Linked Relay Financing Facility (Contour).

The first phase of this facility, of 30 million euros, will provide a payment guarantee to Ecobank Cabo Verde, the local administrative and financial agent of the construction work and allow the London-based Decameron New Horizon to finance the work as well as to buy equipment and furniture.

The second phase, of 27 million euros, will be granted to contractor Es-Ko Group, as capital for the purchase of equipment, furniture and additional accessories.

“This facility covers our support to the tourism sector in Cabo Verde of US\$102 million,” said the chairman of Afreximbank, adding that this support was in line with a recent forecast by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) that Cabo Verde could become one of the world’s top ten destinations in the next ten years.

The hotel complex building will have 544 rooms and will include a conference centre, seaside restaurants and other facilities. (01-06-2015)

ZAMBIA TO RATION POWER TO MINES

Zambia has started rationing power supply to mines, an industry source said on Tuesday, as Africa’s second-biggest copper producer struggles to meet electricity demand.

"They have given us a schedule indicating how much electricity they will supply to us at different times of the day due to the power shortage," the source, who declined to be identified, said.

"The idea is to see how we can manage with the limited power to ensure safety and uninterrupted operations."

Zambia said in May it had cut its power generation by 300MW after water levels in the Kariba Dam, and other sources of hydro power, fell after a prolonged drought.

Last week, state-owned power company Zesco said it was increasing the rationing of electricity for all its customers, including mining companies due to a power deficit of 560MW.

Analysts said the electricity rationing was also putting pressure on the kwacha due to reduced revenues from mining companies and other producers.

"The expectation is that the country's mining and other industrial production will go down because of these increased power blackouts," BancABC's head of treasury, John Mapiye, said.

Some of the foreign mining companies in Zambia include Glencore, Barrick Gold, Vedanta Resources and Canada's First Quantum Minerals.

Zambia's copper production dropped to 708,000 tonnes in 2014 from 760,000 tonnes in 2013. (Reuters 30-06-2015)

BOTSWANA SUFFERS DECLINE IN TOURIST ARRIVALS

Latest figures released by Statistics Botswana on Tuesday show that the country has witnessed a decline in the number of tourist arrivals throughout 2013.

Despite the decline, the number remains above two million which was first achieved in 2010.

The latest annual agency statistics depict a 1.0 percent decline in tourist arrivals in the year 2013 compared to 2012.

The report states that Botswana received a total of 2 598 158 arrivals in 2013 as compared to 2, 612, 555 in 2012, reflecting a decline of 14, 397.

A breakdown of the data indicates that male tourist arrivals accounted for 60.9 percent (1, 583 408) which is an increase of 1.1 percentage points from the previous year.

The figures also show that Zimbabweans continue to dominate in the number of arrivals having accounted for 13.8 percent (825 717) of 2 598 158.

This is followed by South Africa with 742 639 (28.6 percent) while Zambians represented 12.8 percent (33 799) of the total 2013 arrivals in the country. (APA 30-06-2015)

CABO VERDE'S ECONOMY GROWS 1.0 PCT IN FIRST QUARTER OF 2015

The Gross Domestic Product of Cabo Verde (Cape Verde) grew by 1 percent year on year in the first quarter of 2015 the archipelago's National Statistics Institute (INE) said Tuesday in Praia.

The results of the Quarterly National Accounts showed a slowdown of the economy, at least year on year, given that growth recorded in the first quarter of 2014 was 4.8 percent.

However, compared to the fourth quarter of 2014, when the economic growth rate was 8 percent, there was a 20 basis points increase.

INE also said that the downturn in economic growth year on year stemmed from a decrease in gross value added in various sectors, including agriculture, trade, provision of services to businesses, public administration and construction. (01-07-2015)

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

Ghana - <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2015/pr15307.htm>

Mozambique - <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2015/pol070115a.htm>

Uganda - <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2015/pr15305.htm>

Sudan - <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2015/pr15303.htm>

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