

MEMORANDUM

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EGYPT'S EXPORTS TO TURKEY GO UP BY 7.6% IN 1ST QUARTER OF 2016

Egyptian Minister of Trade and Industry Tarek Qabil announced on Tuesday that Egyptian exports to Turkey went up to \$681.5 million during the first half of Fiscal Year 2016/2017, comparing with \$633.1 million over the same period of 2015, an increase of 7.6 percent.

Meanwhile, the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) said on Tuesday that Egypt's exports to non-Arab Asian countries rose to \$489.7 million by the end of the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2015/2016, compared to \$369 million in the same period of the previous year.

The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) also revealed on Tuesday a decline in the volume of imports from the Nile Basin countries to Egypt in May.

Imports totaled \$31.7 million in May 2016 compared to \$34.96 million in May 2015, making a decrease of \$3.25 million.

In its monthly bulletin, CAPMAS said that Egyptian exports to Nile Basin countries in May declined to \$100.995 million compared to \$102.929 million in the same month of last year, making a decline of \$1.934 million.

Exports to Sudan in May reached \$51.93 million compared to \$51.32 million last year, CAPMAS said. Imports from Sudan in May reached \$2.877 million compared to \$1.818 million in 2015.

Exports to Kenya reached \$22.839 million compared to \$21.442 million last year. Imports from Kenya reached \$25.606 million compared to \$26.591 million in 2015.

Exports to Ethiopia increased to \$11.703 million compared to US\$ 1.513 million in 2015, according to CAPMAS. Imports from Ethiopia reached \$1.023 million compared to \$874 million in 2015.

Exports to Tanzania in May reached \$6.057 million compared to \$1.703 million last year.

Imports from Congo reached \$1.24 million compared to \$5.21 million last year.

Exports to other Nile Basin countries declined, reaching \$8.459 million compared to \$26.948 million last year. (APA 13-09-2016)

IMF MISSION TO ASSESS PROGRESS OF ECF PROGRAM IN MALAWI

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission is expected in Malawi on Wednesday for the ninth Extended Credit Facility (ECF) review program.

According to a statement available to APA on Tuesday, the team is expected to assess progress in public finance management, net international assets, domestic assets and public expenditure.

"The team will also look into the rising inflation on the back of widespread hunger where over 6 million people have been affected, the depreciation of the Malawi Kwacha and the general macroeconomic environment," the statement said.

But Ministry of Finance spokesperson, Nations Msowoya said structural reforms the government is implementing are in line with IMF requirements.

"We are optimistic that the team will be impressed with what the government has achieved so far," he said.

IMF approved a three-year ECF program from March, 2012 to December 2016, to support the Malawi economy. (APA 13-09-2016)

EU ORGANISES CONFERENCE TO HELP EGYPT MOVE FORWARD IN DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STRATEGY TO 2035



The EU Delegation in Egypt organised this week the first 'Integrated Sustainable National Energy Strategy to 2035' conference, under the EU-funded project Technical Assistance to Support the Reform of the Energy Sector in Egypt (TARES) as part of the Energy Sector Policy Support Programme (SPSP).

The conference was an opportunity for the Egyptian public and private stakeholders, European policymakers and regulators, international investors in infrastructure and energy, in addition to energy sector players in Egypt or newcomers, to receive hands-on information and guidance about the Energy Strategy toward 2035 as well as business opportunities and challenges associated to it.

The National Energy Strategy to 2035 is reinforced by the following goals:

- Long term sustainability of the energy system
- Security of energy supply
- Good Governance Principles and Modernisation: (EEAS 22-09-2016)

NIGERIA'S EXTERNAL RESERVES DIP BY \$1BN

Nigeria's external reserves dipped by \$1bn in the last five weeks, the latest statistics from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has shown.

According to the statistics, the external reserves fell by 2.86 percent to \$25.45bn on August 29, 2016, up from the \$26.2bn it recorded at the end of July. The reserves have fallen by 18.9 percent year on-year.

The reserves had fallen by 0.4 percent at the end of July, down from the \$26.34bn recorded on June 29.

The foreign exchange reserves stood at \$26.42bn on May 28, down by 9.2 percent year-on-year.

This development forced the CBN to lift its 16-month-old currency controls on June 20 and auctioned about \$4bn on the spot and futures market to clear a backlog of dollar demand, to help boost interbank market trading.

The CBN's Monetary Policy Committee announced plans to adopt a flexible exchange rate policy after the external reserves fell to \$26.56bn on May 23.

The global plunge in oil prices has caused the country's reserves to deplete fast. (APA 13-09-2016)

NIGERIA TELECOM SUBSCRIBERS HIT 150M

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) on Tuesday said that active subscribers in the nation's telecommunications industry stood at 150.26 million in July.

The telecommunications umpire said in its Monthly Subscriber Data (MSD) that the active telecommunications service customers increased by 443,160 from the June 2016 figure of 149.8 million.

According to the data, less than 150 million of the more than 150 million active numbers subscribed to the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) network services.

The GSM operators' active customers increased by 528,994 from the less than 150 million subscribers they recorded in June.

The Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) operators had 371,614 active users in July, indicating a decrease of 82,479 from the 454,092 customers they had in June.

Also, the monthly subscriber data showed that the Fixed Wired/Wireless networks' consumers decreased to 164,114 in July, as they lost 6,425 customers to their record of 170,539 in June.

The chart revealed that the tele-density of the country's telecommunications industry increased to 107.33 per cent in July, from 107.01 per cent in June.

Tele-density statistics is used to measure the percentage of a country's population with access to telecommunications services as determined from the subscribers' base.

Nigeria's tele-density is currently calculated by the NCC on a population of 140 million people.

There is an increase of 0.32 per cent in the tele-density of Nigeria in July.(APA 13-09-2016)

SUDAN REITERATES REJECTION FOR HUMANITARIAN ACCESS FROM ABROAD



The Sudanese government renewed its rejection for the delivery of humanitarian assistance from Ethiopia as the African Union chief mediator Thabo Mbeki is expected to visit Khartoum in the upcoming days.

"The demand of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement- North (SPLM-N) for the humanitarian access across the border is a call for the continuation of war and the dismantlement of Sudan. Also, it is an attempt to force the government to concede the sovereignty of the Two Areas in favour of the SPLM-N," said the head of the government negotiating team and member of the national dialogue mechanism (7 +7) Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid on Monday.

Speaking after a meeting of the 7+7 committee at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum, Hamid reiterated the government categorical rejection to any preconditions on the cessation of hostilities, adding that the meeting discussed the position of SPLM-N and Darfur movements following the signing of the roadmap. Last Saturday, the presidential assistant accused political and armed opposition of lack of seriousness and stressed that peace and political talks would stop by the end of the national dialogue conference which will start on October 10th.

In a response to Hamid remarks, the spokesperson of the SPLM-N negotiating team Mubarak Ardol said the government has no desire to achieve peace but negotiates under international pressure.

"We are with equal dialogue to stop the war, provides freedoms and paves the way for (democratic) change, and the (government led-)dialogue is dead. Ibrahim Mahmoud has to stick to his remarks and concludes his unregrettable dialogue on October 10. It is a waste of money and time, and rejected by all

national forces and even for those who had bet on this process on good faith It became clear to them the lack of seriousness of Ibrahim Mahmoud, his party and his government."

MBEKI'S VISIT TO KHARTOUM

A member of the government negotiating delegation Hussein Karshoum announced that the head of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) Thabo Mbeki would visit the Sudanese capital in the coming days to present new proposals to the government before the resumption of negotiations. Karshoum expected the resumption of peace talks on Darfur and the Two Areas in Addis Ababa soon. He further stressed the government's keenness to achieve peace.

The peace talks were supposed to resume this month but, JEM leader Gibril Ibrahim said the mediation didn't yet determine a date for the next round of talks over the cessation of hostilities and humanitarian access.

Ibrahim further said the mediation should not call for a new round of talks before good preparations.

(Sudan Tribune

(ST)

TUNISIAN AIRLINE ADDS DOULA AS NEW ROUTE



The Tunisian national airline (Tunisair) announced on Tuesday the opening of a new line to Douala, in Cameroon before the end of 2016.

This is the second announcement of the new itinerary after that of 2014, when Tunisair planned to serve the Central African Republic from Douala International Airport.

In addition to serving Douala, the airlines announced a stopover in Ndjamena whose flights are dependent on the operating plan from Douala.

The delay noted so far in the commissioning of these new routes could arise from difficulties facing the company.

Last week, the national carrier announced the layoff of 1,000 employees on the grounds of necessity to reduce costs and improve competitiveness.(APA 13-09-2016)

GHANA'S INFLATION INCHES UP FROM 16.7 % TO 16.9% IN AUGUST

Ghana's inflation has shot up from 16.7% in July to 16.9% in August 2016, Government Statistician Dr Philomena Nyarko has announced in Accra on Wednesday.

According to her, inflation for imported items also rose from 15.2% in July to 17.3% in August while locally produced items however dropped from 17.3% in July to 16.7% in August.

The Greater Accra region, she said, recorded the highest combined inflation rate of 20.1%, the Ashanti region came second with 18.5% while Upper East recorded the lowest of 11.8%.

The non-food and non-alcoholic beverages group recorded a year on year inflation rate of 8.5%.

This, she said was 0.1 percentage point lower than the rate recorded in July 2016. The non-food inflation group recorded a year on year inflation rate of 21.5% in August 2016, compared to the 21.2% recorded for July 2016.

Dr. Nyarko said price drivers for the non-food items include education, housing, water, and transport, among others while the price drivers for the food inflation included vegetables, mineral water, coffee, tea, cocoa among others.

The government statistician blamed the rise in the August inflation rate on the non-food sector and the increase in import inflation rate.

According to her, prices of goods are on the ascendancy due to uncertainties around the impending December 7 presidential and parliamentary elections. (APA 14-09-2016)

INTERVIEW: TIME FOR MUGABE TO GO, SAYS BOTSWANA PRESIDENT KHAMA



Zimbabwe's 92-year-old President Robert Mugabe should step aside without delay and allow new leadership of a country whose political and economic implosion since 2000 is dragging down the whole of southern Africa, Botswana President Ian Khama said.

Despite his reputation as one of Africa's most outspoken figures, Khama's remarks are certain to raise hackles in Harare, where factions of Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF party are locked in a bitter struggle to succeed the only leader Zimbabwe has known.

Asked by Reuters if Mugabe, who came to power after independence from Britain in 1980, should accept the reality of his advancing years and retire, 63-year-old Khama responded: "Without doubt. He should have done it years ago." "They have got plenty of people there who have got good leadership qualities who could take over," Khama, the UK-born son of Botswana's first president, Seretse Khama, and his British wife, Ruth, continued.

"It is obvious that at his age and the state Zimbabwe is in, he's not really able to provide the leadership that could get it out of its predicament," Khama said, in comments that breach an African diplomatic taboo banning criticism of fellow leaders.

Botswana, the world's largest producer of diamonds, shares 800 km of border with Zimbabwe and has felt the full effects of its neighbour's economic collapse under the weight of political violence and hyperinflation since 2000.

Although the economy stabilised in 2009 with the scrapping of the worthless Zimbabwe dollar, a slump in commodity prices over the last two years has triggered a cash crunch that has fed through into unprecedented public anger at Mugabe.

No clear potential successor has emerged from the destabilising factional fight to take over after Mugabe.

Khama said the instability was damaging Botswana's efforts to wean itself off mining — which accounts for 20% of GDP and nearly 60% of exports — by promoting itself as a regional logistics and services hub.

The unrest was also forcing more and more Zimbabweans to leave the country, he added.

Botswana is home only to an estimated 100,000 Zimbabweans — a fraction of the 3-million believed to be in SA — although this is still enough to strain public services in a nation of 2.3-million people.

Botswana's jails held "significant numbers" of Zimbabweans, Khama said.

"It is a big concern," the British-trained former general said. "It is a problem for all of us in the region — and it is a burden. There's no doubt about that."

Resurrection man

In the latest controversy over his health, Mugabe left a summit of southern African leaders at the end of August without warning and went to Dubai, fuelling rumours he had been taken gravely ill or may even have died.

Khama did not discuss any specifics of Mugabe's condition at the meeting but said his counterpart looked tired. "We're talking about a 92-year-old man and there's just so much you can do at that age to try and keep up."

Mugabe frequently refers to himself as "fit as a fiddle" and hints at a desire to stay in power until he is 100. After his Dubai trip, which he attributed to a family matter, Mugabe joked about online reports of his imminent demise.

"Yes, I was dead. It's true I was dead. I resurrected as I always do. Once I get back to my country I am real," he told reporters at Harare airport.

Khama reiterated his government's concerns about the credibility of the elections Mugabe has won in recent years, but said irrespective of the results no leader should cling on to power for that long.

"My opinion has always been that 10 years leading any kind of organisation — not just a country or a government, any organisation — is pretty much the maximum," he said.

During its 50 years since independence, Botswana has emerged as a politically and economically stable nation that has used its mineral wealth prudently — a rarity on a continent where such treasures have been routinely squandered, stolen or the cause of civil war.

Khama's second five-year term in office ends in 2018 when he will hand over to vice-president Mokgweetsi Masisi in a carefully scripted political succession that makes instability almost impossible.

After 2018, Khama, a keen nature-lover whose wood-panelled office is adorned with pictures of the African savannah, said he wanted to dedicate his time to tourism and conservation.

Thanks to a focus on safari tourism and a zero-tolerance approach to poaching, Botswana boasts more than 150,000 elephants, a third of Africa's entire population of the animals.

But Khama said there was no room for complacency in the fight against the illegal ivory trade given the rampant poaching in other countries on the continent.

"One day if their animals become extinct and we still have viable populations, all the guns will be focused on us," he said. (Reuters 21-09-2016)

CAR COMMERCIAL BANK FACILITATES CLIENT ACCESS TO MORE SERVICES

The Central African Commercial Bank (CBCA) has decided to facilitate access to its services through a new subscription launched Wednesday in Bangui.

The subscription to this service provides access to several CBCA products including cheque book, SMS, e-banking and magnetic card. Those products were not free for clients.

The move aims to reduce the cost of access to banking services and facilitate access by making available bank products to customers at short notice.

The subscription that CBCA offers is already available in some local banks like Ecobank Centrafrique. (APA 14-09-2016)

ETHIOPIA FINALIZES INSTALLATION OF TRANSMISSION LINES TO SUDAN, DJIBOUTI



Ethiopia has finalized installation of transmission lines to transfer power generated from the nearly completed Ghibe III dam in the south-west of the country to the national grid in a landmark move to boost electricity generation, the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity said Wednesday.

According to the Ministry the project has the capacity of generating 1,870 megawatts and had already supplied 800 megawatts with six turbines.

The project, the ministry further added, is the biggest Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC) dam constructed by the nation.

State Minister Wondimu Tekle said that the dam helped the nation to address shortage of power in 2016.

The dam is a big project that could hold excess water and will be used for fishing and transport, the state minister said, adding that the dam will serve both for tourism development and keeping the environment suitable.

Ethiopia plans to provide 100MW and 75MW to Sudan and Djibouti respectively, the state minister added. (APA 14-09-2016)

PRIVATE EQUITY FIRMS CAPITALISE ON DEMAND FOR HEALTHCARE IN AFRICA



Private-equity companies are taking advantage of a surge in demand for health-care products in Africa to invest in a market that's suffering from government underfunding.

Abraaj Group invested \$145m to improve facilities and medical equipment at hospitals and clinics in Tunisia and Egypt, with a similar amount now being planned south of the Sahara. London-based Development Partners International may invest as much as \$150m in health-care assets for its second fund in Africa over the next three to four years. The fund, which closed in April last year, took DPI's assets in the region to \$1.1bn.

"We bought into the growth story," said Sofiane Lahmar, a partner at DPI, which has two pan-African private-equity funds. "That's about macroeconomic trends, the high level of population growth, the aging and urbanisation of the population that creates more need for pharmaceutical products, and that there are more complex diseases."

Non-cyclical

Health-care spending in Africa is expected to grow about three times faster than in developed markets because of rising income levels and the move from rural areas into cities, according to Dubai-based Abraaj, which has \$9.5bn under management. The number of people in Africa over the age of 60 will increase by 64% by 2030, according to the UN. At the same time, after increasing by 670-million people over the past 60 years to 856-million, the World Bank predicts the population will probably reach 2.7-billion by 2060.

The health-care industry is also attractive because it can overcome the ups and downs of business cycles at a time when sub-Saharan Africa economies are expanding at their slowest pace in 15 years. Government budgets from Mozambique to Ghana are coming under pressure from lower commodity prices and declining foreign donations.

"Also, there's been a big push by governments in Africa to promote local production because it reduces the import bill and it promotes transfer of technology and job creation," Lahmar said.

DPI's investment in 2013 in Biopharm, a leading Algerian pharmaceutical wholesaler and generic drug producer, is performing better than the 25% internal rate of return it generally targets, he said.

Poorer neighbourhoods

After investing in telecommunications, food services and retail business on the continent since its formation in 2007, DPI is now considering buying businesses in sub-Saharan Africa either in pharmaceuticals or health services, Lahmar said.

The Abraaj Growth Markets Health Fund, which has raised half its \$1bn target, plans to invest "a few hundred million dollars over the next few years" in hospitals and clinics among poorer neighbourhoods in Nairobi, Lagos and Addis Ababa, Khawar Mann, the company's health-care team managing director, said by phone from Nairobi.

The fund is seeking internal rates of returns of more than 25%, he said. He couldn't be more specific about amounts, in line with company policy. The Cambridge Associates' US Private Equity Index returned 5.9% net last year.

While investments into health care are still relatively small, they are increasing. In southern Africa, where total private-equity funds under management amount to R165bn, at least 4.7% of investments in 2015 went into health care, compared with 1.2% the previous year, while less money flowed into banks and insurers, infrastructure projects and mining, according to data compiled by the Southern African Venture Capital and Private Equity Association and KPMG.

There are also gaps for companies to invest in projects and businesses around HIV-AIDS. In SA, which has a 19% HIV infection rate among adults, the government is expanding testing and treatment as it faces increased expenses for new drugs as effectiveness wanes. Foreign donors cutting AIDS funding and a state budget that must also improve basic care in the world's most unequal society offers opportunities for investors to fill the gaps.

AIDS economy

"The economics behind AIDS and HIV can be lucrative because treatment requires not only medicines but also nutritional requirements," said Siyabonga Nhlumayo, a partner at Medu Capital, a Johannesburg-based investment-management company with R1.6bn under management. "There are opportunities through the value chain from wholesalers all the way to distributors."

Medu Capital invested R30m rand in Medipost Courier Pharmacy, made back the money within two years and sold the business in 2014, he said, declining to give details. Medipost took over the distribution of prescription drugs and other products and extended deliveries throughout SA, beyond its home base in Pretoria.

"There is a big emerging middle class in Africa" consuming more drugs, said Andre Sturmer, managing director of Trium Investments. The company eight years ago invested in Johannesburg-based Trinity Pharma, which sources and distributes generic drugs to some of the country's largest retailers, making more than five times what it put in.

"It's about people being more educated of what they can do to prevent and to treat illnesses," Sturmer said. (Bloomberg 21-09-2016)

BOTSWANA MAINTAINS A2 RATING, REFLECTING BALANCED SHEET

International rating agency Moody's Investors Service said Wednesday that Botswana's A2 issuer rating and stable outlook reflect the government's strong balance sheet and low debt burden set against its small economy that is heavily dependent on the diamond industry and public sector.

The country's fiscal strength is assessed as very high, reflecting the low level of public debt and the government's position as a large net external creditor due to a track record of strong fiscal surpluses and prudent fiscal management.

The country's key credit strengths include the government's large fiscal reserves and very low debt levels, which are projected at about 17% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2016," Zuzana Brixiova, a Moody's vice president and senior analyst said in a statement.

He said Botswana was also well-positioned to implement counter-cyclical fiscal policy during this fiscal year and the next due to its high fiscal reserves.

Positive pressure on Botswana's rating could stem from further diamond beneficiation and progress towards broader economic diversification over the medium-term, combined with efficiency-enhancing public sector reforms, said Brixiova.

On the other hand, he said a significant deterioration in the net asset position would put downward pressure on Botswana's creditworthiness. (APA 14-09-2016)

QATAR FIRM EYES GAS EXPLORATION IN MOZAMBIQUE'S ROVUMA BASIN

A Qatar-based firm says it wants to join Exxon Mobil to buy part of Italian group ENI's operation which is exploring for gas in the Rovuma Basin in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province, APA learnt here on Wednesday.

ENI plans to sell 50 percent of its stake in Area 4 of the Rovuma Basin, which has estimated gas reserves of 85 trillion cubic meters.

Qatar Petroleum recently confirmed that it was interested in acquiring stakes in gas concessions in Africa.

Exxon Mobil obtained three licenses in October 2015 for oil exploration in offshore blocks south of where United States group Anadarko Petroleum and Italy's ENI discovered natural gas deposits worldwide.

The economic links between Exxon Mobil and Qatar Petroleum, the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas, include RasGas partnership, which extracts and liquefies natural gas extracted in Qatar and has a gas terminal in the US state of Texas. (APA 14-09-2016)

SUDAN BANS EGYPTIAN FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND FISH IMPORTS



Sudan has temporarily suspended imports of fruit, vegetables and fish from Egypt as of September 20 on safety grounds, the Sudanese trade ministry said, without elaborating.

Its move came less than a week after Russia announced it would suspend fruit and vegetable imports from Egypt.

"Importing fruit, vegetables and fish from Egypt is temporarily suspended until laboratory tests are complete to guarantee safety," Sudanese state news agency Suna quoted a trade ministry statement as saying late on Tuesday. (Reuters 21-09-2016)

KENYAN LEADER DECRIES HIGH BANK INTEREST RATES



President Uhuru Kenyatta on Wednesday urged commercial banks to work closely with the Central Bank and other stakeholders to provide affordable credit to Kenyans. Kenyatta expressed concern that interest rates in Kenya have remained higher than in comparable middle-income economies despite the deepening of financial markets and the recent introduction of credit-information sharing.

“Consumers are yet to benefit from reduced cost of credit. The concerns led to recent legislation capping commercial bank interest rates,” said the President during the Central Bank of Kenya’s 50th anniversary celebrations in Nairobi.

The President last month signed into law a Bill capping bank interest rates at 4 per cent above the Central Bank Benchmark Rate of 10.5 percent.

He said more reforms are necessary in the financial sector to create a vibrant and competitive financial sector that drives high savings and supports investment in line with the country’s development blueprint, Vision 2030.

“We experienced banking crises in the 80’s and early 90’s, resulting largely from weak corporate governance, insider lending, and poor asset quality and management. The Central Bank played a key role in coming up with appropriate reforms to address the weaknesses and foster financial stability,” he added. (APA 14-09-2016)

TANZANIA FREIGHT FORWARDERS DISGRUNTLED WITH RWANDAN COUNTERPARTS



Tanzania Freight Forwarders Association (TAFFA) is up in arms over the decision by their counterparts in Rwanda lobby to be allowed to clear their cargo at the Tanzania ports. TAFFA is therefore calling on the Tanzania government not to accept Rwanda’s request.

TAFFA chairman Steven Ngatunga said this on Wednesday when briefing journalists in Dar es Salaam, stressing that if Rwanda was allowed to clear its own goods, it would be tantamount to denying Tanzania’s employment at their own port.

Explaining he said that three week ago a delegation from Rwanda arrived in the country and met with several institutions including the shipping line, the Central Corridor secretary general, Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) among others.

After talks it was then discovered that their mission was to request the government to allow them clear their own goods at the country’s ports.

“They want to outsmart us, despite the fact that the single custom territory allows members from another country to prepare documentation for their cargo and send to their counterparts where the port is for clearance of to be delivered to the respective country.” he said.

In view of this, he said their decision to lobby to be allowed to work at the port clearly shows that they want to deny Tanzanians the opportunity to enjoy their own ports and also access employment as they have initially been doing.

Mr Ngatunga said that he has communicated with East African Community Freight Forwarders section

lodge their complaint, as the community has made it clear that regimes should first consider its own citizens by giving them first priority in matters of employment especially where they have the skills to do so.

He underscored the fact that President Magufuli has stressed severally that Tanzanian jobs should be done by locals which should include clearing and forwarding works at the country's ports. (APA 14-09-2016)

BOTSWANA BREAKS RANKS WITH NEIGHBOURS ON IVORY TRADE AHEAD OF UN MEETING



Botswana, home to the world's largest elephant population, will break ranks with its southern African neighbours and not support bids at the next UN conference to allow sales of ivory, its president says. Trade in ivory will take centre stage at the meeting of the UN's Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) in Johannesburg from September 24 to October 5.

Environment Minister Edna Molewa said on Tuesday the Southern African Development Community would take a united stand and support Namibian and Zimbabwean proposals to be allowed to sell ivory, a coveted commodity used for carving and jewellery.

But Botswana President Ian Khama has said his nation will not support loosening restrictions on the trade.

"We're opposed to that.... We need to keep elephants on Appendix I so that there's no trade in ivory," he said in an interview. Animals listed on Cites' Appendix I are afforded the highest level of protection and global trade in products derived from them is prohibited.

Botswana will be joining Kenya and other African nations seeking to snuff the trade out completely.

Southern Africa's elephant populations — with notable exceptions such as Mozambique — have grown or stabilised, in contrast to the rest of the continent, where the animals are being depleted by poachers to feed an illicit market with the bulk of the demand from Asia.

"We shouldn't think that because we are doing well we should be selfish," Khama said.

Opponents are concerned that if Cites allows ivory to be traded, even from stockpiles and as a one-off, it would send a signal that it is socially acceptable, which could spur demand and further poaching.

"We are on this continent and if we support an act or a view that may see us have some temporary benefit but yet it encourages the illegal trade, it means other countries that are struggling with their populations are going to suffer," Khama said.

"It means other countries that are struggling with their populations are going to suffer, and one day if their animals become extinct, and we still have viable populations, all the guns will now be focused on us," he said.

Botswana is a sparsely populated, arid and land-locked nation with about a third of Africa's elephants.

Botswana's elephant numbers fluctuate between 140,000 and 200,000, depending on the season as the animals move back and forth across borders. Sandwiched between Namibia and Zimbabwe, many of its elephants cross into their territories.

The global ban on trade in ivory products — which does not apply to domestic markets — was imposed in 1989 in response to a wave of poaching. One-off auctions from Southern African stockpiles have since been held in 1999 and 2008.

Molewa had said the sale would be to support the communities affected by living near elephants. "If you look at the communities that are bearing the brunt of living with these animals, their ecological systems are degraded and they lose food security and grazing lands," she said.

She said "we are quite optimistic" the proposals would pass but expected tough negotiations. (Reuters 21-09-2016)

The Memorandum is supported by the ACP-African, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat, Chamber of Commerce Tenerife, AHEAD-GLOBAL, Business Council for Africa, Corporate Council on Africa, ELO - Portuguese Association for Economic Development and Cooperation, Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development, HTTC - Hungarian Trade & Cultural Centre, NABA - Norwegian-African Business Association, NABC- Netherlands Africa Business Council, SwissCham-Africa and other organisations.

The Memorandum is also made available by AHEAD-GLOBAL, BCA, Chamber of Tenerife (by posting it at the Africa Info Market), CCA - Corporate Council on Africa (USA), ELO, HTTC, NABA, NABC (by posting selected news) and SwissCham-Africa to their Members.

As from today the Canadian Council on Africa based in Ottawa, Canada, joined our group of 12 supporting organisations.



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