

MEMORANDUM

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SOUTH AFRICA AND NIGERIA SEEK CLOSER TRADE AND INVESTMENT TIES

Misery loves company. Africa's two biggest economic rivals — SA and Nigeria — are turning to each other as they fall on tough times.

SA's economy is threatened with recession as demand from China, its main trading partner, weakens and commodity prices plunge, while Nigeria has been hit by a collapse in oil revenue.

To weather the global storm, the two countries are seeking closer trade and investment ties as South African President Jacob Zuma leads a high-level delegation of ministers and business executives to Nigeria on Tuesday. In the process, he may rebuild a relationship that has come under diplomatic strain in the past.

Nigeria may be Africa's largest economy — having overtaken SA in 2014 after the data was overhauled — but SA still dominates because of better power and transport infrastructure, a sophisticated financial services industry and a more diversified economy. Both economies are now under pressure, with growth slowing to 1.3% in SA last year and reaching a 16-year low of 3.3% in Nigeria, according to the World Bank.

On Tuesday the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics said the country's economic growth slowed to 2.11% in the fourth quarter of 2015 from 5.94% a year earlier as a result of lower oil prices.

SA is the biggest buyer of Nigerian oil in Africa, shipments of which have more than doubled between 2008 and 2014, according to data from the International Monetary Fund. However, Nigeria doesn't even feature in the top 20 of SA's export markets.

"There is scope for the two countries to expand trade ties, particularly in noncommodity products," said William Jackson, a senior emerging-markets economist at Capital Economics in London. There could "be greater benefits over the medium term, as rising trade in noncommodity goods tends to come alongside faster productivity growth and more rapid rises in incomes", he said.

The one thing standing in the way of stronger trade ties is the Nigerian currency. The central bank has effectively pegged the naira at 197 to 199 per dollar for a year by banning imports of everything from glass to wheelbarrows, and restricting foreign-currency supply. The currency controls are deterring investors, such as Truworths International, which shut its two remaining stores in Nigeria in January.

In his first state visit since Muhammadu Buhari was elected Nigeria's president last year, Mr Zuma may also seek to resolve a dispute that threatens the Nigerian operations of one of SA's biggest companies, MTN. Nigeria's telecommunication regulator imposed a record \$3.9bn fine on MTN last year for failing to meet a deadline to disconnect unregistered mobile-phone subscribers.

Even before that, diplomatic relations between the two countries were strained by xenophobic violence in SA last April, in which Nigerian businesses were attacked. Nigeria temporarily withdrew its two most senior diplomats from SA at the time.

"These two countries need this competitive kind of relationship, where they co-operate even though they are competing," said Azwimpheleli Langalanga, a visiting research fellow in the economic diplomacy department at the South African Institute of International Affairs.

Nigeria wants "to be taken seriously because they are a serious player on the African continent," he said. (Bloomberg 08-03-2016)

NIGERIAN VICTIMS OF S/AFRICAN XENOPHOBIA PRESS FOR COMPENSATION

Nigerians in South Africa have renewed their call to their government in Abuja to prevail on their host country to adequately compensate foreign victims of last year's xenophobic attacks.

Nigerians were listed as victims of the attacks in South Africa in 2015, which targeted black African foreigners living in the country.

The President of the Nigerian Union - South Africa (NUSA), Mr. Ikechukwu Anyene, made the appeal on Tuesday as President Jacob Zuma begins an official two-day visit to Nigeria.

Anyene urged President Muhammad Buhari to use the occasion to press for a resolution of their concerns to the South African leader.

Prior to Zuma's trip, the Nigerian government on Sunday said it was looking forward to using the occasion to address the challenges faced by Nigerians in South Africa.

Anyene who said that the April 2015 xenophobic violence affected many Nigerians in South Africa, expressed regret that none of them had been compensated over their mistreatment.

“Lots of Nigerians lost their means of livelihood, material possessions and for many, all their hard work.

“We have sought for compensation on behalf of these victims from the South African government through the Nigerian government so that the victims can be adequately compensated Anyene said.

“Up to this point in time nothing has been heard about the compensation request on behalf of the victims, a he sadded.

He said the only way to get the South African government to handle the situation with seriousness was for President Buhari to intervene and ensure that the rights of Nigerians were not trampled upon.

South Africans accused immigrants of taking jobs and opportunities away from them which resulted in attacks that saw some foreigners in the country killed and their properties destroyed.

The violence followed reported comments by Zulu King, Goodwill Zwelithini, an influential figure his community that foreigners should pack and leave.(APA 08-03-2016)

CHINA AND BRAZIL WELL POSITIONED TO BOOST AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA

China and Brazil are two countries that are well positioned to boost agriculture in Africa, whose growth sector is seen as vital for the continent's development, according to analysts.

An article published last week by the Institute for Development Studies gave the recent opening of the Novo Banco de Desenvolvimento bank's Johannesburg office as an example of the “increasing influence of China and Brazil in Africa”. The bank, previously known as the BRICS Development Bank, is expected to start providing loans in April.

Agriculture, the article said, is a “major area of involvement for China and Brazil in the continent,” and both countries are “particularly well placed to help African countries develop their agricultural sectors.”

“China provides favourable partnerships for both sides with unparalleled pragmatism, which are very well received as an alternative to an increasingly obsolete aid industry. Brazil offers tropical technology, which is reputed to be well adapted to the climates and soils of Africa,” it said.

The involvement of both countries in the agricultural sector in Mozambique was covered by researchers Kojo Amanor and Sergio Chichava in an article published in February, affirming that South-South cooperation is increasingly seen as able to “facilitate and complement other sources of assistance,” creating conditions for increased “multilateral and multipolar” cooperation.

“Agricultural development is an important component of China and Brazil's relations with African states. Both countries are among the five largest agricultural producers in the world (...), they have powerful agro-business sectors operating in global markets and are expanding through mergers and acquisitions,” they said.

The involvement of both countries in Mozambique has been extensively studied, given the importance of some of the support provided – a soft loan of US\$50 million (2010) for construction of three processing plants (cotton, rice and corn) and a long-term credit line from the Export and Import Bank of China (Exim – US\$60 million dollars, 2012) for a farming complex in Chokwe district.

According to the researchers, Chinese cooperation uses “two avenues” – the Umbelúzi Centre for Research and Transfer of Agricultural Technology (CITTAU), created in 2011, which tests and adapts seeds, as well as providing training and supply contracts between Chinese companies and local farmers. The main companies involved are Wanbao Africa Development Agriculture Limited (WAADL), considered by the China Development Bank to be the Chinese company most involved in Africa, Lianhe Africa Agriculture Development Company, China-Africa Cotton Mozambique Ltd. (CACM), Sunway International, China Africa Co Agriculture, Agricultural CCM and Hubei Lianfeng.

“Based on long-term involvement, cooperation for development and agro-industrial investment in Mozambique has expanded in recent years. Taking care of old state farms, encouraging planting of various crops, to address local food shortages, is a priority. This has had strong Chinese support and the expansion “should continue” they said.

The Brazilian initiatives in Mozambique, as in Ghana, are “structured around social protection, technology transfer and export of Brazilian agro-industrial products.”

According to the researchers, Mozambique favours large-scale investments and a greater openness to land acquisition by Chinese and Brazilian companies. (14-03-2016)

CONTINENT’S CAPITAL LOSS IS THE \$1-TRILLION QUESTION

Over the past 50 years, Africa is estimated to have lost more than \$1-trillion in illicit financial flows, but this may well fall short of reality, because accurate data does not exist for many countries.

The estimates often exclude illicit flows, such as the proceeds of bribery and the trafficking of drugs, people and firearms. The amount lost annually is, therefore, likely to exceed \$1-trillion by a significant amount.

Former South African president Thabo Mbeki, who heads the high-level panel on illicit financial flows from Africa, has said: "Africa faces the great challenge of large volumes of capital leaving the continent illicitly — money that our continent needs to address the challenges of development.

"We, as Africans, have an absolute obligation to act on this to ensure that the rest of the world (the destination of these illicit movements of funds), by acting together, will help stop this drain of resources which belong to the continent that needs them so badly."

Sustained pressure needs to be put on corrupt leaders through asset-recovery campaigns that result in money being reclaimed and justice being done. Leaders need to be made aware they will be made accountable — even if only in the future.

Some African leaders have begun to focus on the repatriation of looted assets as an element of their anti-corruption efforts. SA would do well to investigate the full extent of the looting of public resources. In 2011, the Special Investigating Unit told Parliament that the procurement budget bled between R25bn and R30bn each year due to fraud.

In a leak that exposed the secretive world of Swiss banking, details about hundreds of South Africans who have stashed more than \$2bn in accounts at HSBC emerged last year. The leak exposed secret bank accounts in which crooks, tax dodgers, arms dealers, shady diamond dealers, politicians and celebrities stash their cash.

There were 585 South Africans who held \$2.09bn in 2,221 Swiss accounts. Fana Hlongwane, who had been special adviser to the late defence minister Joe Modise — accused of being the bagman for bribes paid in the arms deal — held several accounts.

The loss of resources through illicit financial flows can only deepen African countries’ reliance on foreign donors. Despite assertions of domestic ownership, development policy often reflects the perspectives of creditors or donors.

The illicit financial flows in Africa point to a governance problem — weak institutions and inadequate regulatory environments. The people and corporations behind illicit flows often compromise state officials and institutions. Left unchecked, these activities lead to entrenched impunity and the institutionalisation of corruption.

...
 Concern about corruption and the looting of public resources are fiercest in Nigeria and SA, the continent's biggest economies. Nigeria has lost \$89.5bn and SA \$24.9bn between 1970 and 2008 through criminal trade and money laundering.

The losses have been biggest in the natural resources sector, including gold and diamond mining in SA, and oil and gas in Nigeria. Some of the losses in SA date back to the shell companies set up by mining houses to evade anti-apartheid sanctions.

Examples of the corruption fuelling illicit financial flows came up at every stage of the panel's work, from bribes paid to customs officers and inducements to tax inspectors, including job offers; to payments to security officers, bankers and judges.

Political power is often used to prevent state officials from carrying out their duties. This includes forbidding officials to vet mineral exports or search private planes to prevent smuggling of cash, and politicians cutting deals to frustrate the prosecution of crimes relating to illicit flows.

These flows contribute to political discontent, partly due to the reduced ability of governments to provide social services, but also as a result of the resentment of corruption. These factors were evident during the Afro-Arab Spring. Participants in the panel's consultations in North Africa were particularly vocal in expressing their anger at the extent of their resources illicitly taken abroad and the cumbersome, lengthy and costly process of repatriating such funds.

Corrupt individuals should be exposed, prosecuted and, if found guilty, jailed. Illicitly acquired assets should be confiscated as a deterrent. The fight against corruption can be won only through evidence of leadership by example, and not leadership by message.

Government activities must be transparent as the keys to managing corruption effectively are honesty, integrity, effective leadership and governance, transparency, and accountability.

SA's crucial roles in developmental initiatives in Africa, such as the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) and the African Peer Review Mechanism, have positioned it to play a pivotal role in joint efforts aimed at the economic development of Africa.

The mechanism does not provide for monitoring the processes and effects of illicit financial flows. This should be fixed, as the mechanism is a good instrument.

...
 SA should work with its neighbours, the rest of Africa and the United Nations, to advance and implement economic and governance measures to curtail illicit financial flows and to impress upon the Group of 20 the need to correct its failures in oversight and regulation that have facilitated the absorption of illicit financial flows, and contributed to the current economic crisis.

Mbeki maintains that governments in Africa lose big amounts of revenue owed to the state due to the unlawful outflow of significant capital that Africa needs for development. He says to combat this, interventions are needed from institutions such as tax authorities, customs, central banks, financial intelligence units for combating money laundering, audit and anti-corruption authorities and the police. Mbeki sees a need for legislation to give these institutions the mandate they need to co-operate in the fight against illicit capital outflows that move across shared borders.

Advocacy is an essential part of the fight against corruption. There is a need to raise awareness among government officials, citizens, national and international development partners of the scale and effect of such financial outflows on development.

The experiences of Kenya and Nigeria demonstrate the difficulties likely to be faced by countries launching on such campaigns, but hobbled by a lack of technical and legal expertise. Both countries had to outsource aspects of their investigations to skilled and costly foreign personnel.

Nigeria achieved a "qualified success", recovering a significant amount of money, but had to make unsatisfactory compromises with offenders. Kenya seemed to be on a productive path before an apparent implosion of political will left its asset-recovery campaign floundering. It is believed to have lost as much as \$1.51bn between 2002 and 2011 to trade misinvoicing.

A recent study funded by the Danish government shows Kenya's tax loss from misinvoicing by multinationals and others could be as high as 8.3% of state revenue.

Recovery attempts are complex because those implicated in public looting are usually those with the most power. In Nigeria, former president Olusegun Obasanjo's national security adviser became forensic auditor and travelled the globe, following the trail left by his predecessor Sani Abacha's money. Abacha had bank accounts in Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Jersey, the US and more than 140 accounts in Switzerland.

While relatively few funds were found in Britain, the electronic footprints of more than \$1.3bn were unearthed there. A Swiss committee found much of Abacha's money in Swiss accounts had been laundered through Britain, and a third through the US.

There is a tendency to link grand corruption and public theft with postcolonial African regimes, yet the looting of assets and stashing of the proceeds in northern financial institutions is entrenched. While it is true colonial governments were guilty, Africa needs to take responsibility for what has happened since the colonisers left. (BD 09-03-2016)

ETHIOPIAN, ITALIAN LEADERS DISCUSS BILATERAL ISSUES

The Ethiopian President Mulatu Teshome on Monday held discussion with his Italian counterpart, Sergio Mattarella on several bilateral issues such as economic cooperation, migration, peace and security.

President Mulatu said Ethio-Italy cooperation had reached a new height after Italy selected Ethiopia as priority investment destination in Africa.

President Mattarella who is on a visit to Ethiopia said Italy has high interest to boost relations with Ethiopia in the areas of trade, investment, tourism and capacity building.

President Mattarella arrived in Addis Ababa on Sunday for a five-day official visit to Ethiopia.

During his stay in Ethiopia, President Mattarella will also hold discussions with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn as well as visit a refugee camp in Gambella and the World Heritage Site of Lalibela, among others. (APA 14-03-2016)

ANGOLA FOCUSES ON INCREASING COFFEE PRODUCTION

The director of the Angolan National Coffee Institute (INCA), João Ferreira Neto, last week in the Amboim municipality launched a programme for increasing coffee production and export, which aims to triple the amount of coffee exported to 30,000 tons within two years.

This programme, which is designed more to support existing producers than to promote the crop, includes the delivery of 250 million coffee seedlings and 1.5 billion palm seedlings, according to news agency Angop.

Coffee is currently produced in 10 of Angola's 18 provinces, namely Cabinda, Bengo, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Uíge, Benguela, Huambo, Bie, Malanje and Huíla, in an area of 18,000 hectares, compared to 120,000 hectares in the period before independence in 1975.

In 2015 the coffee production structure comprised about 50,000 registered producers, of which 98 percent represented family farms and the remaining 2 percent were corporate farms in the provinces of Bengo, Kwanza Sul and Uíge.

In addition to increasing production, INCA is supporting sales programmes through direct purchase of coffee by private commercial agents and through rural markets in cooperation with the authorities.

"These programmes have contributed significantly to the distribution of coffee, thus increasing the interest in coffee production and agro-business," INCA said, adding that there are currently high levels of collective sale of coffee and signing contracts for future sale of coffee, which ensures an increase in price for the farmers themselves.

INCA's medium-term plan includes programmes that cover the re-launch of coffee production in Angola, through the increase in cultivation areas, production of coffee seedlings, improving productivity and quality, as well as the participation of more producers.

"We also expect to set up coffee husking units and washing factories in the production regions, as well as promoting the industrialisation and export of coffee with the installation of roasting and milling industries," said Joao Ferreira Neto.

Recent studies by INCA found that in the medium term (five years), with investments channeled into coffee, Angola may be producing 50,000 tons of commercial coffee per year. This is about a quarter of the production before independence, when the country was the world's fourth largest coffee producer. (14-03-2016)

TUNISIA: FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

The Tunisian Ministry of State Property and Land Affairs organised a seminar on corruption and the forfeiture of illegal assets in Tunis on 3 and 4 March 2016, in collaboration with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the European Union (EU). A new draft 'law on forfeiture' was presented to all those assembled.

The draft law "aims to introduce new approaches and new methods for formulating legal procedures for the forfeiture of any illicit assets that are the products of corruption or money laundering, by introducing a civil element to the tracking down of these assets", explains the EU Delegation in Tunis. The EU "considers that asset recovery is an important aspect of its partnership with its neighbours in the South, including Tunisia", the Delegation said in a news release. (EEAS 08-03-2016)

CABO VERDE'S FLAGSHIP AIRLINE LAYS OFF STAFF TO ATTRACT INVESTORS

Cabo Verde's (Cape Verde's) flagship air carrier TACV plans to lay off a quarter of its staff in order to reduce debt and make the company more attractive to potential investors, said Monday the chief executive of TACV said Monday .

João Pereira Silva told Reuters the restructuring plan to be implemented required elimination of 120 jobs out of a total of 510, a measure intended to "reduce the size of the team to make the company more profitable."

In February, TACV saw one of the aircraft in its fleet, a Boeing 737 called "Emigranti" seized in the Netherlands, after AerCap, an aircraft leasing company, submitted a complaint to repossess a debt of US\$2.45 million.

The TACV website reports that the airline flies, in addition to domestic destinations to Amsterdam (Netherlands), Bissau (Guinea-Bissau), Providence (USA), Recife (Brazil), Dakar (Senegal), Fortaleza (Brazil), Lisbon (Portugal) and Paris (France). (08-03-2016)

CHAD'S DEBY IN KHARTOUM FOR IMPORT-EXPORT TALKS

President Idriss Deby of Chad is in Khartoum for talks with his counterpart, Omar Al-Bashir over the importation and exportation of goods and services from his land-locked country through Port Sudan.

As a landlocked country, Chad faces constant challenges with the movement of goods and services in and out of the country and has been in negotiations with Khartoum for a favourable bill of lading deal from Sudan that would ease this problem.

According to a 2011 estimate, Chad had spent \$3.512 billion for the importation of machineries and equipment, industrial goods, food and textiles.

Sudan's Foreign Affairs ministry official, Kamal Ali told journalists in Khartoum that since Deby's arrival on Tuesday, the two leaders have been engaged in a mini-summit, with a specific focus on strengthening bilateral trade and improving cooperation on security.

President Deby was received at Khartoum Airport by his Sudanese host with whom an agreement is expected to be reached over a joint military force to deal with insecurity along their common border.

The talks also headlined the situations in Libya and South Sudan which are viewed with some concern in both Khartoum and N'Djamena.

Deby's visit which ends on Wednesday also coincides with a Saudi-led military exercise known as 'North Thunder' which the Chadian leader will attend tomorrow.

The exercise comprising the armies of countries contributing troops to the military campaign against the Houthi rebels in Yemen comes within the framework of the Saudi-led alliance to tackle radical Islamists in the region. (APA 08-03-2016)

SOUTH AFRICA: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ON NUCLEAR BUILD SCHEME LIKELY AT END OF MARCH

The Department of Energy is preparing to issue a request for proposals for the government's 9,600MW nuclear build programme at the end of this month to test the market, director-general Thabane Zulu said on Wednesday.

The timing of the issuing of the request would depend on the outcome of current discussions among the department, the Treasury and the office of the independent power producers, on the procurement strategy for the project.

"We want to make sure that the process plan is thorough, effective and properly implemented," Mr. Zulu told the media after attending a meeting of Parliament's public enterprises committee, which was briefed by Eskom CEO Brian Molefe and other Eskom executives.

He explained that the request for proposals was based on the Cabinet's decision to go ahead with the nuclear build programme, and was aimed at testing the market in terms of SA's state of readiness for the project and the best funding model to use. Suppliers would submit technology and funding proposals.

The request would ultimately show what the best and most cost-effective method would be for proceeding with the programme. The government could then proceed to determine a funding model.

Mr. Zulu clarified that there was a difference between a request for proposals and tenders, though tenders might not be necessary if any of the proposals met the government's requirements.

The Department of Energy is the procuring agent for the project, while Eskom is the designated operator for any future nuclear stations. (BD 09-03-2016)

INVESTMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE FALLS 74.5 PCT IN 2015

The value of investment projects authorised in Mozambique fell by 74.5 percent in 2015 over the previous year to US\$1.7 billion, according to figures from the Centre for Investment Promotion (CPI).

The CPI data, cited by Portuguese news agency Lusa, showed that foreign direct investment (FDI) fell by 60 percent, Mozambican investment decreased 83.2 percent and loans and supplies fell 94.1 percent.

Spain leads the list of projects approved, with a total of US\$320 million, ahead of China and the United Arab Emirates, in a list in which Portugal ranks fourth and South Africa fifth.

Foreign direct investment totalled US\$991 million, of which 75 percent came from the top five countries. This investment was mainly channeled into industry, construction, public works and services and was also concentrated in the Mozambican capital and Maputo province.

Mozambican direct investment totalled US\$382 million, in addition to supplies and loans worth US\$414 million.

In Mozambique in 2015 there was a cooling of economic growth, with gross domestic product (GDP) rising by 6.1 percent, down 1.1 percentage points compared to growth in 2014, due to a strong devaluation of the metical against the dollar, increased inflation and falling foreign investment and foreign aid. (09-03-2016)

UNE FIRME AUSTRALIENNE VA CONSTRUIRE UNE USINE DE TRANSFORMATION DE CACAO AU CAMEROUN

La firme australienne Atlantic Group envisage de construire à Kribi, dans le Sud du Cameroun, une unité de transformation de fèves de cacao, a-t-on appris lundi de sources concordantes.

L'information est révélée dans un appel à manifestation d'intérêt publié ce 14 mars 2016, lequel invite les entreprises à soumissionner pour la réalisation de ce projet porté par la société Atlantic Cocoa Corporation (ACC), «filiale» locale d'Altantic Group.

Selon les promoteurs, ce «projet de mise en place d'une unité agro-industrielle de traitement primaire des fèves de cacao s'intègre dans les objectifs du gouvernement de promouvoir la transformation du cacao à hauteur de 50 pour cent de la production nationale, pour retenir une partie significative de la valeur ajoutée des filières agricoles dites stratégiques sur le territoire».

Le Cameroun dont la production cacaoyère moyenne se situe autour de 230.000 tonnes, ne transforme localement qu'à peine 25 pour cent de sa production, un volume que le pays entend doubler d'ici à 2020.

Spécialisée dans la restauration, le cartering et l'organisation des réceptions, ce sera la première expérience au Cameroun de la société Atlantic Group.(APA 14-03-2016)

SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS EXPECTS PROFIT IN 2017-18 AFTER PROBABLE LOSS OF OVER R500M THIS YEAR

South African Airways (SAA) is projecting to generate a R117m profit before interest and tax in the 2017-18 financial year, which would be a dramatic R660m improvement from the R543m loss expected for 2016-17.

The main driver of the expected gains is projected aircraft lease costs, which are forecast to remain relatively stable at R4bn in both years, while revenue is expected to rise 13% compared to the 12.6% increase in operating costs.

SAA has not yet released its 2014-15 financial results but the airline's corporate plan tabled in Parliament on Monday shows that its operating performance improved by R358m in the nine months to the end of December. In 2013-14, operating costs amounted to R30.6bn, totally wiping out revenue. Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan last month asked Parliament to provide him with a month's extension for the tabling of the SAA annual report so that provision could be made for its ongoing financial viability.

The report was due to be tabled today. Mr. Gordhan said previously that he wished to present a comprehensive plan for the airline at the same time that he tabled the report.

The corporate plan noted that the profit projection would result from "the combined effect of the elimination of the loss-making routes, a reprieve in oil prices (although somewhat offset by currency weakness) and an increased sales effort."

It noted that SAA had reduced its unit costs 17% over the last three years, saving R2.1bn despite a 46% deterioration in the value of the rand and inflationary pressures. A further R1.1bn in savings is forecast for the next three years.

Regarding its financing plans, SAA envisages capital market funding resulting from its government guarantee. It wants to issue bonds and commercial paper, and raise loans out of the domestic medium-term note programme, though SAA conceded that "the risk around the (government) guarantee first needs to be addressed". The government has provided SAA with total guarantees of R14.4bn.

The assumptions used for its profit forecasts include a rand-dollar exchange rate of R16.28, an oil price of \$35 a barrel, continued reduction in costs and achieving higher revenue. (BD 14-03-2016)

NAMIBIA DEFENDS MUNITIONS PROJECT BY NORTH KOREA

Namibia has denied claims made in a UN report that a munitions factory that was built by North Korea in Windhoek is in contravention of international sanctions against the East Asian nation.

Namibia was figured for its close ties to North Korea in a UN panel of experts' report presented to the UN Security Council last month.

In the report, the panellists raised concerns about the construction of a munition factory by the North Korea at a military base in Windhoek.

Responding to the UN report, International Affairs and Cooperation Minister, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said the munitions factory was not in contravention of any UN sanction against North Korea, according to a report by {The Namibian} on Monday.

Nandi-Ndaitwah, who double as deputy prime minister stressed that the government was not involved in anything untoward and that it has cooperated fully with the UN and openly answered and forwarded information requested about North Korea's involvement in Namibia.

She said relations between the two countries date back to Namibia's liberation struggle, with North Korea assisting Namibia before it attained independence 26 years ago.

According to her, the sanctions against North Korea covers mainly nuclear armament.

"Namibia is not prohibited from having diplomatic ties with that country" said the deputy premiere, before claiming that all the projects the two countries had collaborated in began before the UN sanctions were imposed.

North Korea's Mansudae Overseas Project Group has built multimillion dollar national monuments in Namibia on a no-bid basis.

It built the Heroes Acre outside Windhoek, the Independence Memorial Museum in the heart of the capital and a military academy in Okanhandja.

The company also dominate security contracts with Namibia having built the military academy in Okahandja.

It is also linked to the N\$600 million contract to build a new headquarters for the Ministry of Defence and upgrading and building new military bases across the country for around N\$5 billion.

The state house in Namibia was also designed and constructed by the North Koreans.(APA 14-03-2016)

MAROC: LANCEMENT JEUDI DU BAROMÈTRE DE LA CRÉATION D'ENTREPRISE

L'Office marocain de la propriété industrielle et commerciale (OMPIC) va lancer jeudi son baromètre de la création d'entreprise.

Accessible sur Internet, cet outil se présente comme un concentré d'informations sur les entreprises créées au Maroc et donne accès à toutes les données traitées par l'office depuis sa création.

Il propose également de regrouper les informations relatives à la cartographie des entreprises du Maroc en un seul endroit.

La mise à jour des données sur les entreprises sera effectuée le premier mercredi de chaque mois. Les données disponibles sur le baromètre de la création d'entreprises concernent dans un premier temps les personnes morales, les personnes physiques seront intégrées dans un proche avenir.

Les informations sur les créations d'entreprises peuvent être éditées par région, secteur, âge de l'entreprise, etc. De même, des analyses mensuelles, comparatives, sectorielles ou encore régionales peuvent être générées et visualisées. De nouvelles fonctionnalités seront ajoutées au fur et à mesure. (APA 14-03-2016)

REFUGEES: GENDER-SENSITIVE MEASURES TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF WOMEN SEEKING ASYLUM

The reform of EU migration and asylum policies and procedures needs to include gender-sensitive measures to ensure the safety of women seeking asylum, many of whom travel with young children and other dependents, according to a resolution voted on by MEPs on Tuesday 8 March 2016.

“This report highlights the exceptionally vulnerable situation of women refugees in the European Union. They have fled persecution in their home countries, undertaking a perilous journey in order to reach a place of safety. On arrival at reception centres these already vulnerable women, who may be victims of sexual violence, trafficking or other violent crimes, face additional barriers which exacerbate their already vulnerable positions”, said the rapporteur. (PARL- 08-03-2016)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20160303IPR16927/MEPs-call-for-gender-sensitivity-in-asylum-policy>

MOZAMBIQUE WANTS TO ATTRACT CAPITAL FOR CABOTAGE

The government of Mozambique is preparing the legal and regulatory framework to attract the private sector to invest in cabotage, said the Minister of Transport and Communications, Carlos Mesquita.

The minister noted some of the advantages of cabotage such as reduction of freight prices and consequent lower product prices at the destination, as well maintaining national cohesion, through the north-south connection, which is currently only provided by road .

Mesquita, cited by Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias, said that another of the advantages of cabotage was increased productivity, as producers will now have easier access to potential markets. The minister, who was speaking at a business meeting between Mozambique and Canada, said that "if all goes well, by the end of March we will be able to present a document for assessment and approval to the Council of Ministers."

Cabotage is shipping along the coast, specifically between ports in the same country. (09-03-2016)

NIGERIA TO PARTNER CUBA ON VACCINE PRODUCTION

Nigeria's National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) is to partner with Cuba in producing vaccines against killer diseases, Professor Lucy Ogbadu, the Director-General of the agency has revealed.

She said on Monday in Abuja that it was disheartening that Nigeria had not been able to produce vaccines against typhoid and other killer diseases.

"We want to go into that because some decades ago Nigeria was producing vaccine, but we have so many things in Nigeria that have collapsed" she added.

According to her not a single human vaccine is produced in Nigeria despite the production of animal vaccines, a situation which cannot continue.

"So because this falls within our mandate, we have taken it upon ourselves to ensure that Nigeria goes back to vaccine production.

"And we thought of no better country to approach than Cuba, because eight out of the 11 vaccines that are involved in the national immunisation programmes in Cuba are produced in Cuba" Ogbadu said.

She said Cuba as a third world country will move in tandem with Nigeria than any other country in the sense that their circumstances as developing nations are not dissimilar.

"So, we approached them and we entered into an agreement with them, they are willing to assist us by transferring technology on vaccine production to us.

"So, we are following closely on that to ensure that we acquire the recent technologies that are available in vaccine production" she added.

She said although Nigerian scientists have done some work in vaccine production, their methods are outdated.

Ogbadu said technology transfer from Cuba had become necessary as Nigeria mulls an ambitious plan to produce vaccines even for export.

The director-general stressed the need for the agency to adhere to best global practices in producing vaccines, with Cuba the best country to emulate. (APA 14-03-2016)

The Memorandum is supported by the ACP-African, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat, Chamber of Commerce Tenerife, AHEAD-GLOBAL, 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, and other organisations.

The Memorandum is also made available by AHEAD-GLOBAL, 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) to their Members.



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