MEMORANDUM

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SUMMARY

CHINESE GROUP HUAWEI PLANS TO PROVIDE URBAN SECURITY SOLUTIONS TO MOZAMBIQUE

Chinese group Huawei is able to provide technological solutions to ensure safety in some of Mozambique's cities, the group's director for Eastern and Southern Africa said recently in Cape Town.

Li Peng, who spoke a few days ago at a conference of safe cities in Africa held in Cape Town, South Africa, said supplying security devices would depend to a large extent on the wishes of the Mozambican authorities .

The conference, which was attended by over 400 people, was intended to promote the exchange of ideas, development trends and worldwide success stories about public security in cities and to discuss ways to reduce crime and enhance security through solutions based on information and communication technologies.

Li Peng said the Huawei group was interested in working with African partners to deliver innovative solutions to their countries that would "help build safer and more harmonious business environments, tourism and urban residential areas to attract investment and increase employment for sustainable economic development."

"Countries around the world are formulating plans for the development of safe and smart cities to seize the new opportunities generated by global urbanisation," added the head of the group for Eastern and Southern Africa, cited by Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias. (04-05-2015)

SOUTH AFRICA: TISO BLACKSTAR WILL SEEK OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICA

Tiso Blackstar, the company that will emerge after the conclusion of a combination of Blackstar Plc and Tiso Investment Holdings next month, would open an office in London and focus on Pan-African investment opportunities, said Blackstar on Friday.

While the company did not specify any areas of interest in its push into the continent, Blackstar already owns infrastructure assets that have significantly increased its revenue from the rest of the continent in the past year.

Steel companies Stalcor and Global Roofing Solutions (GRS) — which have been merged into Consolidated Steel Industries (CSI) — are carving out a presence on the African continent.

"CSI has been able to buck the negative trend that most of the South African steel businesses find themselves in," said Blackstar.

GRS increased its Africa revenue to 40% of its total R1.8bn, while steel products supplier Robor has raised revenue from exports to 17% of the total. That comes from entities operating in Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Ghana. A presence in Mozambique is being established.

The companies will seek to raise revenue from the rest of the continent in order to counter an infrastructure investment slowdown in SA.

The aim is to benefit from the continent's future economic growth while it uses its South African assets as a launch pad.

"These acquisitions will set the platform for Tiso Blackstar's next exciting growth path and will bring in the skills of our new partners Nkululeko Sowazi and David Adomakoh," said Blackstar nonexecutive director Andrew Bonamour. Together with the Tiso Foundation, Mr. Sowazi and Mr. Adomakoh will become the largest shareholders of Tiso Blackstar.

The combined group will add to the broadcast and media assets already acquired by Times Media Group in Ghana and Kenya during the past two years.

Times Media, the publisher of this newspaper, as well as the Sunday Times and Sowetan, will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Blackstar ahead of the Blackstar/ Tiso merger.

Blackstar has offered to buy the 67.5% of Times Media that it does not already own for R24.50 a share, a deal that will be settled by the issue of new Blackstar stock. It has already been approved by the shareholders of both companies.

Times Media will be delisted from the JSE after the acquisition, which is expected to be implemented next month.

The transaction has boosted the intrinsic net asset value of investment company Blackstar, which rose 23% in the year ended December. Blackstar's sum of the parts total was valued at R1.6bn, or R19.29 per share, in the year ended December, the company said on Friday.

Times Media made up 62.8% of Blackstar's value in the year ended December.

The stock closed at R22 on Friday, while Blackstar was valued at a total of R984m.(BD 28-04-2015)

MIGRATION – EUROPE STILL UNPREPARED TO ADDRESS THE TRAGEDY OF THE DEATHS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

European, and other, media continue to report on the outcome of last week's emergency EU summit on migration, and tend to say that it has failed to face the humanitarian challenge. The emergency European summit failed to provide an appropriate response, claims *La Croix*. Pierre Henry, director of France Terre d'Asile, calls – in a debate broadcast on France 2 – the outcome of the European migration summit unworthy to address an issue of humanist nature. If European leaders, interior and defence ministers, and even European citizens do not come up with a way to prevent the mass deaths in the Mediterranean, the EU should return its Nobel Peace Prize, Eva Weissenberger says in an editorial for Austria's *News* magazine. What is more, according to *Kristeligt Dagblad*, the EU's plan to prevent refugees from drowning in the Mediterranean reflects the union's wish to prevent as many refugees as possible from seeking asylum in member states. Even EC President Jean-Claude Juncker was disappointed by the result of the European Council on the crisis in the Mediterranean, considering that the adopted measures were not ambitious enough, *Expresso* reports. Mr. Juncker would also like to have seen more solidarity among member states. The only result of the emergency EU summit on migration is that the EU will triple the budget of Operation Triton, patrolling the seas by Italy and Malta, *Vilaggazdasag* reports, while *La Croix* stresses that, although Triton's budget has tripled, and member states can provide additional equipment, the operation's mandate will not include rescue at sea. Despite *"Europe has awoken from its lethargy"* over the refugee issue after the recent tragic events in the Mediterranean, the simple policing of the area with coast guard vessels is insufficient, *Wirtschaftswoche* further notes. On *Deutschlandfunk*, German sociologist Ludger Pries agrees with a recent assessment of the EU's refugee policy by Amnesty International and states that while recent decisions are meant to portray Europe as being ready for the challenge, they instead show that *"the EU is conducting a policy that does not address the root causes of the refugee crisis."* Jim Molan, co-author of Australia's border control policy, argues in *the Financial Times Europe* that the lesson to be drawn from last week's meeting of EU leaders is that Europe is still not prepared to address the tragedy of the deaths in the Mediterranean in the most effective and humane way possible. Europe, he stresses, has still not made up its mind about border control. Europe should impose sovereign control of its borders, as Australia did, Jim Molan says, adding that Australia's comprehensive policy includes offshore processing, turning back boats, regional resettlement, the removal of internal policies such as full social service payments, and the political resolve to deliver effective and humane successes in border control. The EU's focus on human traffickers, Jim Molan further says, might be an appropriate technique – as is the need to rescue people at sea and to meet international refugee law; but the emphasis on destroying boats is frighteningly tactical and unlikely to produce the desired response. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, *Rai Tre* reports, will consider the option of sinking boats in Libya to prevent them being used for the people-trafficking racket. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will join Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and EU HR Vice-President Federica Mogherini today aboard the San Giusto ship, to view Italy's measures amid the immigration emergency, Italian media report. Ban Ki-moon is opposed to Europe's plans for a military option, and said that there is no military solution to the human tragedy in the Mediterranean, *Rai Tre* reports, stressing that the UN wants to concentrate on the migrants' safety and their protection. Italy, *The Washington Post* notes, is struggling to cope with an increasing number of migrants, which may increase during the summer, and Defence Minister Roberta Pinotti said they are making plans for military intervention. (© *European Union, 2015)*

FITCH RATINGS KEEPS MOZAMBIQUE'S RATING AT "B +" WITH A STABLE OUTLOOK

Fitch Ratings kept its rating on Mozambique's long-term debt in foreign and national currency at "B+" with a stable outlook, according to a statement released by the agency.

In the statement Fitch said economic growth was expected to fall this year to 6.8 percent, after an average of 7.2 percent recorded in the last five years, but higher than the median of 4.4 percent given to the "B" rating.

The cooling of the economy will continue to be due to the adverse impact of floods in early January on agricultural production and infrastructure.

Fitch said the prospect of developments in the economy in the medium-term remained favourable, despite the risks associated with the drop in the price of raw materials and the constraints in terms of infrastructure, with the development of the coal sector suffering from high transport costs and low prices in international markets.

"The development of projects related to the exploration of natural gas deposits is expected to continue, and it is estimated it will cost US$40 billion," the statement said.

However, given the current price of oil per barrel along with the possibility of US group Anadarko Petroleum selling its stake in the Area 1 block to Exxon Mobil, a final investment decision may not come before 2016, which would mean natural gas exploration would be pushed back to 2020 or even later. (04-05-2015)

FISCAL CONSOLIDATION, POWER SHORTAGES WILL STRAIN SOUTH AFRICA, SAYS IMF

Government's decision to slow the growth in spending and continuing electricity shortages will see SA's economy growing at less-than-desired levels, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) report said on Tuesday.

The IMF's sub-Saharan Africa regional economic outlook report showed SA was expected to grow at 2% this year and by 2.1% next year.

"Even this growth is slower than previously expected, with the net terms-of-trade improvement offset by fiscal consolidation and continuing problems in the electricity sector," it said.

Government is slowing spending growth to bring down a large budget deficit while power utility Eskom is struggling to provide adequate electricity.

A large budget deficit was one of the factors that caused SA's sovereign credit ratings to be downgraded over the past two years by various ratings agencies.

The IMF said the fall in the oil price from over $100/barrel in the middle of last year to around $64/barrel currently, would benefit the economy and state finances.

"Where the decline in prices is passed on to consumers, for instance in .. SA, consumption will increase to the extent that households and firms spend part of these savings; this, in turn, would increase revenue from taxes on goods and services," the IMF said.

The global lender forecast sub-Saharan Africa to grow by 4.5% this year and by 5.1% next year supported by improving global economic growth and demand, and infrastructure investment.

The IMF said a "bright spot" in sub-Saharan Africa was an increase in regional trade. The share of regional trade almost doubled over the last 20 years from a low base of 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) to 3.5% of GDP.

Trade sub regions were developing in the region, the IMF said, and it identified countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Kenya, and SA as hubs. (BD 28-04-2015)

SYSTEM DISTURBANCE PLUNGES ZAMBIA IN DARKNESS

A system disturbance on the national grid has been blamed for a night of darkness that affected most parts of Zambia and has continued into Tuesday, as engineers from the giant state owned Zambia Electricity Supply Company (ZESCO) struggled to bring the situation back to normal.

ZESCO spokesman Henry Kapata told journalists on Tuesday that the power supply company was doing all it could to restore power to parts of the country still affected by the outage that began on Monday evening.

He said eight out of ten provinces in the country with the exception of Western and Southern provinces were plunged into darkness for hours following a disturbance in the electricity supply network that triggered a protective shut down of most of the system.

He said the biggest power generation plants Kariba as well as the nearby Kafue Gorge south of the capital were the two that supplied power to most of the country and when the system disturbance occurred, both went into shut down leaving all but two provinces that are supplied from the Victoria Falls without power.

He could not say what the cause of the disturbance was but said the engineers were investigating what had disrupted the supply lines and caused the system to shut down.

He added that power had been restored to most parts of the country especially the copper mines in the north of the country as well as most parts of the capital but warned that with a shutdown of that magnitude power had to be restored in phases to ensure that all systems were working well. (APA 28-04-2015)

SOUTH AFRICA INVESTS IN MILK PRODUCTION IN MOZAMBIQUE

The government of South Africa plans to invest 50 million rand (US$4.1 million) in cattle and milk production in Mozambique under a bilateral cooperation agreement in force since 2007, a South African minister said recently in Beira.

The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of South Africa, Senzeni Zokwana, cited by Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias said that the funding was spent on the creation of a Milk Processing Centre (Copoleite) and construction of a plant for milk processing as well as the promotion of dairy farming.

Zokwana stressed that his visit to Mozambique also served to reinforce this same bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the veterinary area.

The South African minister added that the government of his country would continue to provide support to Mozambique following a bilateral agreement signed last Wednesday in Maputo for the transfer of food production technologies. (04-05-2015)

GAMBIA GOV’T REQUESTS ECONOMIC SUPPORT FROM IMF

The Gambia has requested support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF)—in an amount of 7.775 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR) or equivalent to 25 percent of quota—to cope with the urgent balance of payments needs and a one-year Staff-Monitored Program (SMP) to guide policy implementation before returning to a successor Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, provided policies remain on track.

A statement posted on the IMF website on Tuesday said the Gambian economy is facing urgent balance of payments needs triggered mostly by the impact of the regional Ebola outbreak on tourism.

Although, according to the statement, the Gambia remains Ebola free, but the impact of the outbreak of the disease in the region is expected to cut by more than half tourism receipts for the 2014/15 season.

During 2014/15, the impact of the shocks on the balance of payments, offset in part by lower global fuel prices, is estimated to be $40 million (over 5 percent of 2015 GDP). Policy slippages and persistent financial difficulties in public enterprises have exacerbated the problems and pushed the Gambia ECF arrangement off track.

The statement went on to disclose a Letter of Intent written by the Gambian authorities which notified the IMF of their decision to cancel the Extended Credit Facility arrangement.

The statement indicated that the Gambian authorities have taken a number of upfront policy actions. Those actions include the approved 2015 budget envisaging lowering net domestic borrowing (NDB) to 1 percent of GDP in 2015 from 12¼ percent in 2014, anchored by a set of revenue and expenditure measures, and complemented by some $22 million in external budget support. Therefore it said the Gambian authorities have taken steps to resolve the financial problems of key public enterprises and intend to take measures to secure their medium-term fiscal consolidation and poverty reduction objectives.

The statement concludes by disclosing that the Staff-Monitored Program will provide the Gambian authorities an opportunity to establish a track record before moving to a successor ECF to which they aspire. A period of monitoring will also allow the time needed to assess the impact of the shocks fully and hence better tailor the objectives of a successor ECF arrangement, it said. (APA 27-04-2015)

NIGERIA'S FA TO EARN OVER $3M FROM NEW DEAL WITH NIKE

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) says it will earn $3.75m during its three-and-half-year partnership with Nike and a $500,000 bonus if the Super Eagles qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia among other perks.

The contract is worth $750, 000 in its first year and will rise to $1million each year from 2016 till 2018. After ending its previous 700,000 Euros-a-year contract with German giants Adidas in December, the NFF has opted to go with Nike in a three-and-half-year deal which will see the American sportswear company supply kits from April 1, 2015, until at least 2018.

Nigeria has now joined Nike's portfolio of federation sponsorships which include Australia, Brazil, England, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa, South Korea and the U.S. among others.

NFF President Amaju Pinnick said in a statement on the federation's website that \"We are comfortable with the contract, because NIKE came across during the negotiations as being fluid and ready to listen to our demands. That is always the key aspect; you always need a partner with a listening ear."

"Nigeria football is happy to associate with a global leader and I am much convinced this is just the beginning. As we go along, NIKE may also be willing to partner with some of our domestic clubs and even the League Management Company," he added.
Nike will design performance and training apparel, and equipment, including team kits and footballs, for the Nigerian national football team players at every level of the game.

There will be an exclusive-edition team kit for all NFF teams until the 2016-17 kit launches in mid-2016.

In addition, Nike will design an assortment of products for Nigerians to show their support for the national team, to be available from mid-2016. (APA 28-04-2014)

NATIONAL BANK OF ANGOLA KEEPS “GOLDEN SHARE” IN INTERBANK SERVICES COMPANY EMIS

The National Bank of Angola is expected to keep a residual interest in the capital of interbank services company Empresa Interbancária de Serviços (Emis), which manages the Multicaixa card and the automatic teller machines (ATM) network in the country, said the company’s chief executive.

José Gualberto de Matos told Angolan newspaper Expansion that the National Bank of Angola (BNA), currently with a 41 percent stake, would reduce that stake gradually to keep a residual interest, which would eventually be just a “golden share.”

The terms of the BNA’s removal from the company that manages the Multicaixa network and payment terminals (POS) in Angola, keeping a “golden share” (a small stake that still gives voting rights to its holder) “will also be discussed,” he said.

“The BNA was part of the launch of Emis, with 100 percent of the capital, to bolster it,” Matos recalled, noting that in order to have this stake the central bank had to receive special legislative authorisation, which led to creation of a vehicle company.

According to the Emis website, after the BNA, the shareholders with more than 4 percent of its capital at the end of 2013 were Banco de Fomento Angola, Banco de Poupança e Crédito, Banco BIC and Banco Angolano de Investimentos, and most of the remaining shareholding banks had stakes of less than 2 percent.

In 2014, according to the chief executive, the Multicaixa network grew by 24 percent to 2,627 machines, and the POS increased 60 percent to nearly 50,000 units. (04-05-2015))

VALIDATION OF SENEGAL’S NATIONAL STATISTICS STRATEGY REMAINS A GREAT CHALLENGE

The political validation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) remains a major challenge in Senegal, Johan Verkammen, the Belgian ambassador to Senegal and co-chair of G50 (Group of Senegal’s 50 donors) said on Tuesday in Dakar.

Mr. Verkammen was speaking during a meeting between Senegal's technical and financial partners (TFP) and the National Agency of Statistics and Demography (ANSD) on the country's national accounts reforming project.

This validation will give more visibility to the NSDS, the Belgian diplomat who advocated for the establishment of a fund for this strategy, said.

Mr. Verkammen also suggested to the government that Senegal's accounts reform project must fall within the context of NSDS 2014-2019. He also believes that the links between the project and the Statistics Master plan (SDS) should be highlighted.

The project goal is to provide users with more current economic information and of better quality. To remain in compliance with the United Nations System of National Accounts, a new base year, namely 2014, will be developed. (APA 28-04-2015)

ESSO EXPLORATION ANGOLA STARTS COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION OF THE KIZOMBA SATELLITES PROJECT

Angolan state oil company Sonangol and Esso Exploration Angola (Block 15) announced the start of production of the Kizomba Satellites – Phase 2 project (Kakocha , Bavuka and Mondo Sul fields) in the deep waters of Block 15 in the Angolan sea.

Production at this early stage, is from the Mondo Sul field, with 10,000 barrels of oil per day, expected to reach 70,000, once the Bavuka and Kakocha fields go into operation and production expected to total about 190 million barrels oil.

The Mondo Sul, Bavuka and Kakocha are located at a depth of water depth between 750 and 1,100 metres.

This project reached a high level of Angolan participation, with the manufacture of almost all deck modules and subsea equipment on construction sites located in Soyo, Dande, Luanda and Lobito.

Esso Exploration Angola (Block 15) Limited is the operator of the concession of Block 15 with a 40 percent stake, and its partners are BP Exploration (Angola) Limited (26.67 percent), ENI Angola Exploration BV (20 percent) and Statoil Angola Block 15 AS (13.33 percent), whilst Sonangol is the concessionaire. (04-05-2015))

NIGERIAN FIRM PLANS HYDRO POWER PLANTS TO SUPPLY 4000MW

The Niger Delta Power Holding Company (NDPHC) has said the second phase of the National Integrated Power Projects (NIPPs), which will concentrate on building hydro power generation plants, will add 4000 megawatts (MW) of electricity to Nigeria's generation profile.

The NDPHC said in a statement on Monday in Abuja that in addition to its board's approval of the construction of the 1,030MW Mambilla hydro power project and 16 other identified medium and small hydro power projects, the second phase of the NIPPs would also include the construction of critical transmission projects that would enable the country wheel over 20,000MW of electricity generated from existing and new power stations to distribution networks across the country.

According to the statement, these projects are currently being assembled.

It noted that the NDPHC remains a registered limited liability company owned by the three tiers of the Nigerian government; federal, state and local governments, with a board as its highest policy and decision making organ that drive its operations.

“As one of the main resolutions of the National Economic Council (NEC), which comprises all the stakeholders at its meeting held in April 2013, the council approved
the second phase of the NIPP projects to include execution of the Mambilla hydro power project and 16 identified medium and small hydro power projects.

“This will create a mix power generation/supply system for
the country by balancing the phase one NIPP projects where 10 new thermal power stations located in the southern parts of the country were constructed.

“The second phase will contribute about 4,000MW into the national grid on completion,” the statement said. (APA 28-04-2015)

EU INVESTORS TO CONTRIBUTE $ 60 MILLION TO IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY IN GHANA

Vantage Capital, has announced that the DEG – (Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH) and four other European investors are contributing a total of approximately US $ 60 million to Vantage's third fund.

DEG's commitment to Fund III is US $ 20 million. In addition the DEG is providing US $ 15 million to a co-investment with Vantage in Surfline Communications, the leading 4G LTE network operator in Ghana. Vantage invested US $ 15 million in Surfline from its second fund late last year.

Gunnar Stork, Director Equity & Mezzanine for Africa and Latin America, said "DEG is excited to partner with Vantage in the investment in Ghana. We believe that the investment in Surfline will contribute to improve internet connectivity in Ghana and as such be an important factor to bridge the digital divide.

In addition we are pleased to continue our partnership with Vantage in general by investing in Fund III, after having already been an investor in Vantage's first Mezzanine Fund. We believe in this existing asset class on the African continent and see it as an important instrument to facilitate economic growth in Africa."

The funds committed by DEG to Surfline will be used for the on-going expansion of the company's 4G LTE network in Ghana as well as to enhance its product distribution and marketing capabilities. By deploying the first 4G LTE mobile network in Ghana, Surfline is able to offer high-speed internet connectivity (up to 10 times faster than the average speeds offered by the existing mobile network operators) at pricing that is competitive with existing internet service providers.

The network achieved an extremely successful commercial launch in August 2014 and is experiencing tremendous growth in its customer base. Surfline was recently nominated for "Breakthrough LTE Entrant" at AfricaCom in South Africa and won "Top Emerging Brand" at the Top Brands Awards in Ghana. The investment in Surfline by Vantage and DEG was nominated by Dealmakers Magazine for "Private Equity Catalyst Deal of the Year."

Colin Rezek, Managing Partner at Vantage, said "We are extremely pleased to receive the strong endorsement of DEG for our third mezzanine fund, which will employ a pan-African investment approach to focus on high-growth markets such as Ghana, Nigeria, the East African Community members and some of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. We also welcome DEG as a co-investor in Surfline, one of the most exciting deals out of the over 600 investment opportunities we have reviewed in the past five years."

DEG joins other investors that have already committed funds to Vantage, including a major South African pension fund and foreign investors such as the Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets ("SIFEM") which is advised by Obviam. Obviam's Chief Investment Officer, Andrea Heinzer stated: "Based on Vantage's robust and positive track record in South Africa, we see Vantage Capital as the ideal partner for SIFEM to develop the mezzanine asset class in Sub-Saharan Africa."

Vantage has made 12 investments in its second mezzanine fund, of which about 90 per cent of available funds have been invested. More than half of the capital deployed has gone into growth projects such as Surfline. Vantage is targeting a final close of its third mezzanine fund at approximately US $ 250 million later this year.(Ventures Africa 28-04-2015)

PRESCO OIL PALM FIRM ANNOUNCES EXPANSION PLANS IN NIGERIA

A leading oil palm firm in Nigeria, Presco Oil Palm Plc has announced plans to expand its investment in oil palm production, injecting millions of dollars into state-of-the-art vegetable refineries and oil mills.

Nigeria's This day newspaper report on Tuesday said that with this expansion programme, the company would boost Nigeria's local vegetable oil output and move the nation towards self-sufficiency in production of the essential commodity.

The Chairman of the company, Mr. Pierre Vandebeeck, told the newspaper that the investment was an indication of the company's confidence in the nation's economy and also a move to drive economic growth through job and wealth creation.

Vandebeeck also said that plans were in progress to diversify Presco's business into cocoa and rubber, noting that these two cash crops were pivotal in the company and the country's quest to diversify revenue base and source of foreign exchange earning.

According to him, the company had also acquired a biotechnology company in Belgium to produce high performing planting materials to achieve greater yields and quality.

He maintained that for the past 10 years, the company had been investing in a genetic bloc of oil palm, having over 200 different crossings from the whole world, which the company will propagate through tissue culture and also make available to anyone prepared to pay for it.

"We have the first result for this and five years after planting, we added 20 tonnes per hectare with an extraction rate of 29 percent and this means we are doubling the oil yields per hectare of what is obtainable now."

"We are doing the same thing for cocoa because personally I believe in three crops which are rubber, oil palm and cocoa. We are going to produce high performing clones that are disease resistant," he said. (APA 28-04-2015)

SOUTH PROGRAMME II: CALL FOR TENDER FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

The EU-Council of Europe (CoE) joint programme "Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme II) is launching a call for tenders for the provision of consultancy services in the field of human rights education in the Southern Mediterranean.

As part of its activities to support human rights education, the programme will set out a comprehensive demand-driven training programme (2015-2017) for Southern Mediterranean partners (PATHS). The training will be based on the needs of partner countries and the specific CoE experience in the field of protection and promotion of human rights, rule of law and democracy.

PATHS will take the form of a "training of trainers" programme complemented by standard training which will be provided to specific target groups.

The deadline for bidding is **22 May 2015**. (EU Neighbourhood 29-04-2015)

PATHS Call for tenders

AFDB COMMITS $72M TO SOUTHERN AFRICA BORDER POSTS

The African Development Bank (AfDB) will fund the construction of two new border posts between Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique to the tune of $72million.

The One Border Post Initiative will involve the rehabilitation of road in Malawi along Nacala Corridor, establishment of One Border post between Malawi and Zambia and between Mozambique and Malawi.

Malawi Minister of Industry and Trade Joseph Mwanamvekha told a local press on Tuesday that there is still a lot of work to be done before the much-awaited construction of the project kicks-off.

"We have not yet signed the bilateral agreement for the operations and also the two countries need to develop a domestic legal frameworks to back the initiative," he said.

The projects are expected to facilitate the speeding up of border formalities in the three countries.

However, the construction of the projects is expected to be completed in 2017. (APA 28-04-2014)

Xenophobic attacks threaten to overshadow Sadc summit
by Agency Staff, Abril 29 2015, 14:53

Zimbabwean President and chairman of the Southern Africa Development Community (Sadc), Robert Mugabe holds up a mock key to the Sadc Regional Peace Training Centre, to be built in Zimbabwe, during the regional bloc's summit meeting on Wednesday in Harare. Picture: AFP PHOTO

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ATTACKS on migrant workers living in SA threatened to overshadow a regional summit in Zimbabwe on Wednesday when leaders gathered to promote industrial growth.
Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has expressed "shock and disgust" at the xenophobic violence in Johannesburg and Durban in which at least seven people have been killed.

But he avoided the issue in his opening address to the Southern African Development Community (Sadc) summit, where President Jacob Zuma was among the delegates.

"Despite the rich endowment of our natural resources about 70% of our people live below the poverty line," Mr Mugabe said, calling for the region to develop its own industries rather than exporting raw materials.

"By exporting materials in their raw form, we can only earn marginal benefit," he said.

"Just (as) we were our own liberators from colonial bondage and oppression, we have to find the resources to free ourselves from economic bondage."

Thousands of foreigners were displaced by the unrest earlier in April as local mobs targeted workers from countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi.

The presidents of all three countries were among the 10 heads of state at the one-day event in Harare.

Ahead of the meeting, Zimbabwe's presidential spokesman George Charamba said that some heads of state might choose to address the attacks.

"Whether people are going to take advantage and bring the matter up will be at the discretion of the heads of state," he said.

The subject of the summit — industrialisation — could itself raise the issue of why so many citizens of neighbouring countries head for SA, the continent's most sophisticated economy, to find work.

Mr Zuma, who condemned the attacks after an outcry at home and abroad, focused on the problem on Monday in a manner unlikely to have been well received in neighbouring capitals.

"We cannot shy away from discussing the reasons that forced migrants to flee to SA," he said. "All of us need to handle our citizens with care."

Mr Mugabe, for example, has been blamed for a collapse in Zimbabwe's economy which has sent millions of his people to seek work in SA.

But Mr Zuma has also been criticised for failing to reduce rampant unemployment and poverty, which are seen as an underlying cause of the violence by mobs who accused migrants of stealing their jobs.

The Harare meeting is a follow-up to a summit in Victoria Falls last August that resolved to discourage the export of primary goods and develop industries to ensure the region reaps maximum benefit from its resources.

"The summit will discuss Sadc's draft industrialisation strategy and the regional indicative strategic development plan," Mr Charamba said.

Many member countries of Sadc, which seeks to promote economic, political and security co-operation, are rich in minerals

Ebola: Liberia introduces WASH protocol in schools

0 0 0 **APA-Monrovia (Liberia)** Liberia's Ministry of Education has instituted the so-called WASH protocol in schools as part of its post-Ebola recovery initiatives.

According to Education Minister Etmonia Tarpeh, the protocol contains guidelines to ensure the implementation of water, sanitation and hygiene in all schools across Liberia where over 3, 000 people had died of the disease since its outbreak in March 2014.

Speaking at the launch of â€˜Liberia Wins WASH Programâ€™ in Monrovia on Wednesday, Tarpeh explained that the initiative was as a result of collaboration between the Ministries of Education, Health and Public Works and partners.

She encouraged all education stakeholders including education
officers, principals, teachers, parents, communities and students to adhere to the protocol to ensure a safe, healthy and conducive school environment.

She pointed out that without the involvement of everyone, it will be difficult to achieve the targeted results.

Tarpeh reiterated the ministryâ€™s commitment to the fighting Ebola, and recounted that during the diseaseâ€™s outbreak, the ministry trained 6, 800 school administrators and teachers to conduct prevention awareness in all communities.

The minister stated that with support from partners, the ministry distributed several Ebola prevention materials including buckets, thermo flash, boots, soap and chlorine, among others, to public and private schools prior to the resumption of academic activities.

Meanwhile, Tarpeh also solicited the continued support of partners in order to improve the WASH program at schools.

TSS/as/APA 2015-04-29 17:55:04 - See more at:
http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822863#sthash.XaGFi1OV.dpuf

Botswana, New Zealand to ink beef deal

0 0 0

APA-Gaborone (Botswana) Botswana and New Zealand will on May 5th sign a memorandum of understanding on the former’s beef industry, APA learnt on Wednesday.

A statement from Botswana Ministry of Agriculture states that Botswanaâ€™s Minister of Agriculture Patrick Ralotsia together with, Richard Mann, the High Commissioner of New Zealand to Botswana, will launch the project and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) detailing the obligations and responsibilities of either party.

The statement states that the overarching goal of the project is to improve the livelihoods of communal beef farmers in Botswana.

â€œThe long-term outcome is a sustainable increase in productivity and profitability of beef farming in Botswana,â€ the statement adds. Botswanaâ€™s beef industry was dealt a heavy blow when the European Union delisted the countryâ€™s beef in 2010.

This followed a recommendation from the EU that Botswana should put in place clear documented procedures and relevant official controls in order to grantee that only eligible animals are slaughtered for export to the EU.

Botswana restarted to sell its meat to EU market in 2013.

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- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822861#sthash.C9FFetUv.dpuf

Gambia seeks to upgrade national broadcast frequency **APA-Banjul (The Gambia)** The Gambia government has disclosed plans to upgrade its national frequency to ensure efficiency in the nation's bandwidth and frequency modulation of all operating radio stations in the country.

The Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) on Wednesday made an announcement, requiring all radio stations in The Gambia to submit a detail of their operational system to the authority, including name of radios, frequency, coverage area, technology used, among others by the 30th April deadline.

According to PURA, these details are needed to determine the frequency level of various radio stations operating in the country and to upgrade the national frequency to provide a more efficient broadcasting services to the citizenry.

PURA is the state authority mandated by law to regulate the operation of all utility companies in The Gambia, by making sure that they provide the required services such as electricity, water, and communication services to consumers.

EJ/as/APA 2015-04-29 16:43:55
- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822855#sthash.wGTdK4CS.dpuf

Namibia to import US$220m worth of electricity **APA-Windhoek (Windhoek)** Namibia's power utility NamPower said the country is going to import N$2.6 (about $220 million) worth of electricity this year, managing director Paulinus Shilamba revealed Tuesday during the Blue Economy conference in Windhoek.

Shilamba told the two-day conference held under the theme 'Sustainability for Poverty Reduction' that the cost of importing energy will escalate to N$12 billion (about US$1 billion) over the next four years.

Namibia relies on electricity imports from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique that made 80 percent of electricity consumed in the country.

Shilamba has attributed the high cost of importing electricity to cancellations of several Power Purchase Agreements with other entities in the region.

The agreement with the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) for 150 megawatts (MW) ceased last year, which was followed by a 200MW supplementary agreement with South Africa's Eskom that expires in April 2015.

Other agreements nearing their expiry date are 115MW with Mozambique\'s Aggreko, which lapses in August 2015 and a 300MW off-peak agreement with South Africa's Eskom that expires in April 2016.

The NamPower boss noted that importing electricity is expensive and there are challenges associated with more regional import contracts, adding that Namibia will grapple with power supply challenges at least until the commissioning of the Kudu base-load power plant in 2018.

He said 2016 will be the most critical period, "when enormous strain will be placed on the system and when an additional generation capacity of at least 250MW will be needed to ensure security of supply for the country".

NamPower hoped to avoid a power crisis with the 250 MW gas power plant in Walvis Bay, which is expected to be operational by August 2016.

"We want to develop our own power stations in the country as a main source of supply and use imports to fill gaps only," he said. "The commissioning of this power plant (Walvis Bay) will give us the breathing space and confidence to overcome the challenges and difficulties prior to the commissioning of the Kudu Gas-to-Power station in 2018".

Namibia is in the process of developing the massive 1.3 trillion cubic feet gas fields, which is 170 km off the north-western coast of Oranjemund, with a 1.050 MW Kudu gas power plant to be constructed at the diamond-mining town, and expected to come on stream by 2018. **AT/jn/APA** 2015-04-29 14:41:56 - See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822841#sthash.s8TCX6Uv.dpuf

Moroccan airline to launch Tangier-Istanbul direct weekly flights

0 0 0 **APA-Rabat (Morocco)** The Morocco's low-cost airline, Air Arabia, has announced the launch, on 3 July, of a direct flight connecting Tangier in Morocco with Istanbul in Turkey, sources at the airline disclosed.

The airline is due to begin two flights a week on Mondays and Fridays to the Turkish capital, one of the worldâ€™s most beautiful cities, Air Arabia Morocco declared in a statement.

Straddling Europe and Asia, the city of Istanbul connects two continents and cultures with its multi-millennial history. For almost ten centuries, Istanbul has represented the epitome of civilization enriched with many civilizations that have marked the history of the world.

"The launch of this new itinerary will allow our passengers to discover the incredible beauty of the fascinating city of Istanbul. With maximum comfort they have at their disposal direct flights at low pricesâ€ Adel Ali, the CEO of the airline said.

After reaching its sixth operational year, Air Arabia-Morocco has won the confidence of millions of passengers with comfortable and reliable services from and to Morocco.

HA/pn/daj/APA 2015-04-29 14:40:45
- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822839#sthash.bkSPVpBA.dpuf

Mozambique: SEFA boosts investment in renewable energy

0 0 0 **APA-Maputo (Mozambique)** The Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) has approved a $740,000 technical assistance grant to Mozambique to enhance the enabling environment for private investments in the country's promising renewable energy sector, reports said on Wednesday.

According to a press release published on Wednesday by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the new SEFA grant will support the implementation of the countryâ€™s feed-in tariff regime for small and medium renewable energy projects, through the provision of standardized power purchase agreements, guidelines for grid connectivity and investor guidelines for prospective developers.

The grant will additionally lay the foundations for a mini-grid regulatory framework, with special focus on designing a tariff structure and corresponding technical and environmental regulations, as well as providing capacity-building and awareness-raising activities for national and local representatives, the communiquÃ© reads in part.

Abundant renewable energy sources in Mozambique still remain untapped in a country where only 33 percent of the population has access to electricity.

After the approval, Joao Duarte Cunha, SEFA Coordinator at the AfDB, stated: â€œthis SEFA project will play a key role in unlocking investments in small-scale renewables, particularly in rural areas where needs are greatest.

Cunha added that this would certainly improve energy access for households and businesses while reducing dependence from large-scale hydro and upcoming coal and gas projects.

ABJ/APA 2015-04-29 13:54:42 - See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822836#sthash.tVETxf7o.dpuf

Kenyan economy slowed down in 2014 - official

0

0 0 **APA-Nairobi (Kenya)** Figures released by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics on Wednesday suggest that the country’s economic growth slowed down to 5.3 percent in 2014.

According to the report released in Nairobi, agriculture and tourism sectors took a beating last year, due to erratic rainfall and travel advisories issued by Western countries due to threats of terrorism.

While releasing the report, Cabinet Secretary in charge of devolution Anne Waiguru said that inflation increased from 5.7 percent in 2013 to 6.9 percent in 2014.

The increase in the inflation rate was attributed to increases in the prices of food and other goods outweighing falls in the cost of electricity and petroleum products.

According to the report, the economy however created 800,000 jobs in both the formal and informal sectors.

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Ethiopia’s economic growth among world’s highest - UNDP

0 0 0 **APA-Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** Ethiopia has achieved impressive economic and social changes, registering some of the highest growth rates in the world, according to the UNDP’s Human Development report covering the country .

â€œEthiopia sees steady increase in its human Development index from 0.35 in 2005 to 0.461 in 2013.

â€œThis is an impressive annual average change of 3.5 growthâ€□, UNDP Ethiopia Resident Representative Eugene Owusu said while launching the report in Addis Ababa on Wednesday.

The key findings of the report shows Ethiopia can move from its current â€˜low human developmentâ€™ designation to a medium human development category by 2025 if it sustains the current growth trend.

However the report has indicated that the countryâ€™s relative ranking has not moved appreciably during the past decade.

â€œThe progress is tempered by the fact that although incidence of poverty has declined, its severity in increasing.

â€œThere is also the sobering reality that some 25 million Ethiopians are still living below the poverty line,â€□ Owusu says.

The report highlights that the absolute number of poor people has remained largely unchanged over the last 15 years as result of high population growth.

According to the report, Ethiopia's strong economic growth has helped to reduce poverty since 2005.

â€œ25 million people have been lifted out of poverty and incidence of poverty fell from 38.7 percent in 2004/05 to 29.6 percent in 2010/11 and estimated to have further declined to 26 percent in 2012/13â€□, the report indicates.

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- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822866#sthash.88GIWTOe.dpuf

Somalia in record 5 million livestock export - FAO

APA-Nairobi (Kenya) Somalia in 2014 exported a record five million livestock to markets in the Gulf of Arabia due to heavy investments in animal disease prevention backed by the European Union and the United Kingdom, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Wednesday.

This is the highest number of live animals exported from Somalia in the last 20 years which were characterized by political instability.

The export data, collected by the FAO-managed Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), indicates that Somalia exported 4.6 million goats and sheep, 340,000 cattle and 77,000 camels in 2014, worth an estimated $360 million.

Livestock is the mainstay of the Somali economy, contributing 40 percent to the country's Gross Domestic Product.

â€œThis is a key milestone for the Somaliaâ€™s livestock sector that reflects the large investments being made to support the commercial development of the livestock sector to become more competitive in international markets,â€ said Said Hussein Iid, Somaliaâ€™ Livestock, Forestry and Range.

â€œThis is important for both Somaliaâ€™s economy in general and for the livelihoods of the millions of livestock owners throughout Somalia,â€ he said i Nairobi by FAO.

Buyers from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait Qatar and United Arab Emirates have all taken advantage of Somalia's thriving livestock scene and its improved disease surveillance and control mechanisms, said FAO.

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Somalia registers record exports of 5 million livestock in 2014

Long-term sector investment boosts country's trade with Gulf States

Traders preparing to load goats and sheep for export onto a truck in Somalia.

29 April Nairobi/Mogadishu - Somalia in 2014 exported a record 5 million livestock to markets in the Gulf of Arabia thanks to heavy investments in animal disease prevention backed by the European Union and the United Kingdom, FAO said today.

This is the highest number of live animals exported from Somalia in the last 20 years.

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Livestock is the mainstay of the Somali economy, contributing 40 percent to the country's Gross Domestic Product.

“This is a key milestone for the Somalia’s livestock sector that reflects the large investments being made to support the commercial development of the livestock sector to become more competitive in international markets,” said Said Hussein Iid, Somalia’s Minister of Livestock, Forestry and Range. “This is important for both Somalia’s economy in general and for the livelihoods of the millions of livestock owners throughout Somalia.”

“The sector’s potential is enormous,” Iid added.

"This shows that despite the challenges, the Somali people are successfully working to improve their economy and food security," said Richard Trenchard, head of FAO's office for Somalia. "FAO and our partners are committed to remaining engaged and involved in supporting those efforts."

Buyers from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait Qatar and United Arab Emirates have all taken advantage of Somalia's thriving livestock scene and its improved disease surveillance and control mechanisms.

Saudi Arabia, in particular, has contributed to steadily rising exports over the last six years, following a move to lift a 9-year ban on the import of livestock from Somalia aimed at preventing the spread of Rift Valley fever.

Return on investments

For the last five years, FAO, with financial support from the European Union and the UK government, has engaged with the Somali government to invest heavily in livestock infrastructure, fodder production and livestock vaccination and treatment services. Transboundary animal diseases have been a major point of attention because they can kill large numbers of animals, resulting in food shortages, market disruptions and trade and export barriers.

Every year, FAO vaccinates an average of 12 million animals in Somalia against *peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) – a highly contagious and often deadly viral disease of goats. Another 12 million goats are treated and vaccinated every year against Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP), a source of major losses among Somali livestock producers.

In addition to animal health campaigns, four modern slaughterhouses, four meat markets and three livestock markets are also boosting local livestock trade across Somalia.

“There is no doubt that livestock is, and will remain for a long time, central to the Somali economy,” said Trenchard.

Continued investment in building Somali livestock institutions is key to boosting incomes, reducing the vulnerability of rural households, and steering the future growth of the sector, according to Trenchard, who says the livestock sector is at a tipping point.

“An investment in livestock means an investment in economic growth for the whole of Somalia,” he said

Added value from by-products

With trade of live animals booming, FAO is now working with the Somali government and partners to identify other opportunities to derive added value from livestock by-products.

In 2012, under a UK-funded initiative, Somali pastoralists were trained in soap manufacturing using camel bone marrow and trained jewelers carved spoons, necklaces and flower vases out of the dense bones.

In May 2015, FAO will start training 150 Somalis in curing leather, a potentially lucrative opportunity for the entire livestock sector, while an EU-funded programme is currently underway to improve milk quality in northwestern Somalia, one of the country’s main milk production regions.

The 2014 figures represent an optimum level of live animal export for Somalia, according to FAO experts, who urge producers to shift focus towards export of meat and other by-products.

A livestock certification system developed by FAO along the Galkayo-Bossaso livestock corridor will further help to ensure high quality livestock for local consumption and export.

Uganda removes oil and mining taxes to attract investors

April 30, 2015 Editor Business, Energy, Finance/Money, Mining & Construction

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VENTURES AFRICA – Uganda, yesterday, announced it has removed taxes on its oil, gas and mining industries in order to attract more private sector investment. Finance Minister Matia Kasaija told attendees of an oil conference in Kampala that investors will only be charged when they start production of oil. The convention was organized by the Uganda Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (UCMP) in collaboration with the Standard Chartered Bank, Zakhem International Construction and other petroleum firms.

The Ugandan government is seeking to boost the interest of oil exploration companies in the country's burgeoning downstream sector, and the move already seems to be working. "These new developments give us a good platform to reexamine ourselves and reassess the potential of our oil and gas industry in relation to the general socio-economic outlook of the country" said Elly Karuhanga, the Chairman of Uganda Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (UCMP) during a press briefing before the conference.

Uganda discovered oil and gas deposits in 2006 at the Lake Albert basin containing an estimated 6.5 billion barrels of oil. According to current projection, the deposits will fetch the government over $3 billion in annual revenue by 2020.

In February, the government lifted a 7 years moratorium on the issuance of oil mining licenses and announced its first-ever open bidding process for oil firms. The move opened the ground for more interested industry players to invest in the oil-rich Albertine Graben region.

By Tobi Eyinade

Region's maize harvest shrivels in drought

by Tshepiso Mokhema, Abril 29 2015, 07:23

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THIS year's maize harvest in Southern Africa will probably shrink 26% from last year because of erratic rains, raising food prices and increasing the need for imports, says the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Regional output is forecast at 21.1-million tonnes, or 15% lower than the five-year average, the FAO said on Tuesday.

The worst drought since 1992 in SA, the continent's biggest maize producer, has damaged plants, amid predictions of a 32% drop in the 2015 harvest to the smallest in eight years. Botswana said crops were showing signs of "total failure" due to below-average rainfall, while floods in Malawi and Mozambique have curbed production.

The FAO said: "The bulk of growth in imports is expected from SA, mainly … yellow maize used in the feed industry."

Maize imports for the year to April 30 2016 may rise to about 1.8-million tonnes, or "double the low level of 2014-15 and one-third above the average. Price increases are expected to mostly affect those countries that rely more on maize imports such as Namibia," it said.

David Phiri, FAO subregional co-ordinator, said: "The carry-over stocks from 2014's bumper maize crop is expected to partly offset the impact of lower domestic production and somewhat contribute to stabilising national supplies in some countries."

Bloomberg

Signature de cinq conventions de financement de 63 millions d'euros au profit de la Tunisie

Les 29 et 30 avril 2015, Johannes Hahn, Membre de la Commission européenne chargé de la Politique européenne de voisinage et des négociations d'élargissement, a effectué un déplacement en Tunisie, un partenaire clef de la politique européenne de voisinage.
Lors de ce déplacement, Johannes Hahn s'est notamment entretenu des progrès remarquables accomplis par la Tunisie en matière de gouvernance démocratique avec le Chef de Gouvernement, M. Habib Essid et le Ministre du Développement, de l'Investissement et de la Coopération internationale, M. Yassine Brahim.
« La signature de cinq conventions de financement d'un montant total de 63 millions d'euros est un signal fort de l'appui sans faille que souhaite apporter l'Union européenne à la Tunisie» a déclaré Johannes Hahn à l'issue de son entretien avec le Chef du Gouvernement M. Habib Essid, soulignant que *« l'Union européenne souhaitait accentuer davantage ses appuis financiers en 2015. Nous avons accompagné la Tunisie tout au long de la période de transition, en doublant nos soutiens financiers. Nous sommes prêts à intensifier davantage notre coopération »* a insisté Johannes Hahn.
Les cinq conventions de financement signées aujourd'hui pour un montant total de 63 millions d'euros portent sur la réforme de la justice (15 millions €), le renforcement du secteur des médias audiovisuels (10 millions €), la promotion de l'égalité homme-femme (7 millions €), le développement des quartiers populaires (28 millions €), la gestion des frontières et la protection internationale des migrants (3 millions €).
Grâce à cette signature, ces cinq programmes pourront démarrer rapidement, permettant au gouvernement tunisien d'initier des réformes ambitieuses s'inscrivant dans le droit fil des nouvelles dispositions de la nouvelle Constitution tunisienne.
Background :
Le **programme de réhabilitation des quartiers populaires en Tunisie** est l'un des programmes emblématiques de la coopération de l'UE en Tunisie. Lancé en 2012, ce programme concerne 119 quartiers répartis sur 50 communes et conseils régionaux, regroupant environ 200 000 logements et abritant un million d'habitants. Les zones à réhabiliter ont été identifiées par l'Agence de Réhabilitation et de Rénovation Urbaine (ARRU), les besoins portant sur l'amélioration de l'habitat et des infrastructures de base (réseaux d'assainissement et d'éclairage), la création d'équipements socio-collectifs et de locaux industriels.
Ce programme – dont le coût total s'élève à 217,5 millions d'euros - est cofinancé par l'Etat tunisien (84,5 millions) avec l'aide de l'Agence Française de Développement (30 millions d'euros), de la Banque Européenne d'Investissement (70 millions d'euros) et de l'Union européenne. Avec cette **nouvelle dotation de 28 millions d'euros**, le soutien total accordé par l'UE à ce programme s'élève à 69 millions d'euros.
Avec cette action d'envergure, l'UE met l'accent sur l'amélioration des conditions de vie des tunisiennes et des tunisiens, par la réhabilitation et le désenclavement de quartiers populaires défavorisés dans toute la Tunisie. Ce programme permet également de créer des espaces socio-culturels et sportifs au profit notamment des jeunes, ainsi que des espaces dédiés à des activités économiques génératrices de revenus. Autre originalité de ce programme, une partie des personnes employées sur les chantiers de rénovation habitent dans ces quartiers, permettant ainsi à des jeunes de s'insérer sur le marché du travail.
Avec le programme « **Promotion de l'égalité homme-femme en Tunisie** » bénéficiant de **7 millions d'euros**, les autorités tunisiennes s'engagent avec l'UE pour les femmes et contre les violences faites aux femmes. Mis en œuvre avec le ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfance, ce programme comportera trois volets :

- renforcement des capacités du ministère et de ses partenaires, étatiques et non étatiques, en matière d'intégration de l'approche genre ;
- amélioration de la participation de la femme dans la vie économique et publique ;
- lutte contre les discriminations et les violences faites aux femmes.

Le **programme d'appui à la réforme de la justice** (PARJ 2), de **15 millions d'euros** a été conçu dans la continuité et en complémentarité du programme PARJ, en cours de mise en œuvre. Ce nouveau programme va soutenir plus particulièrement la réforme de la chaîne pénale, l'appui au processus de justice transitionnelle dans le traitement des dossiers par les autorités judiciaires, la mise en place progressive d'un système d'information et le renforcement de l'infrastructure judiciaire, pénitentiaire et des lieux de détention.

Doté de **10 millions d'euros**, le **programme d'appui aux médias audiovisuels en Tunisie** vise à consolider les acquis en termes de liberté des médias. L'audiovisuel public, les médias de proximité et l'ensemble du paysage médiatique tunisien seront concernés par ce projet ambitieux. Le programme, qui sera mis en œuvre étroitement avec les autorités tunisiennes et la Présidence du gouvernement au moyen du Centre africain de perfectionnement des journalistes et communicateurs (CAPJC), orientera son appui dans trois grandes directions :

- accompagnement à la modernisation du secteur des médias, en transformant les médias d'Etat existants en médias de services publics au service du citoyen: évolution statutaire et organisationnelle, refonte éditoriale pour produire une information de qualité ;
- professionnalisation des acteurs de l'information, de la régulation et de l'éducation aux médias: il s'agira ici d'intégrer la déontologie et l'éthique journalistique dans la ligne éditoriale des principaux médias. Un intérêt particulier sera porté au traitement de l'image de la femme dans les médias, et à l'éducation aux médias des jeunes générations ;
- renforcement de l'accès à l'information de proximité et développement de médias professionnels au niveau régional. Il s'agira ici de décentraliser l'activité médiatique en soutenant le déploiement local des chaînes régionales de la radio publique, de la télévision publique et de l'agence de presse nationale.

Le **programme d'appui au Gouvernement tunisien dans les domaines de la Gestion Intégrée des Frontières et de la Protection Internationale**, doté de **3 millions d'euros**, vise renforcer les capacités des autorités tunisiennes dans les domaines de la prévention de la migration irrégulière et la mise en place d'un système national d'asile et de protection internationale. Il se veut précurseur d'un programme plus vaste de réforme du secteur de la sécurité prévu dans le cadre du plan d'action annuel 2015 et qui comportera un volet "gestion des frontières". Le programme se décline selon deux composantes complémentaires :

- Une composante "Gestion des frontières et prévention de la migration irrégulière" visant à soutenir le renforcement des capacités nationales tunisiennes impliquées dans la gestion des frontières à plusieurs niveaux:
  - Au niveau opérationnel, par la modernisation des méthodes de travail à des fins de sécurisation des zones frontalières, mais également de facilitation du passage licite des frontières, facteur de développement local et régional;
  - Au niveau stratégique, par le renforcement des capacités de coopération et de coordination entre les autorités en charge de la gestion des frontières.

- Une composante " Asile et protection internationale" pour apporter un soutien technique aux autorités tunisiennes dans la mise en place progressive d'un système national de protection des réfugiés. Cet objectif s'inscrit dans le cadre de la Convention de Genève de 1951 relative au statut des réfugiés et à son Protocole de 1967. En 2011, les nouvelles autorités tunisiennes ont pris la décision de développer un cadre législatif national en matière de protection des réfugiés, décision qui a ensuite été formalisée dans la nouvelle Constitution de janvier 2014 qui prévoit à son article 26 l'adoption d'une législation nationale en matière de protection des réfugiés.

What bosses and foreigners say about work in SA

Abril 30 2015, 06:46

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A street nail technician works on a client's manicure. Picture: REUTERS/CARLOS JASSO

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- **Topics:** Xenophobia
-

RICHARD, human resources manager of several family-owned restaurants in Cape Town: "We always look locally first, but where scarce skills are required — like baking or cooking — or applicants don't meet criteria, we do hire foreigners.

"The reason so many foreigners find work as waiters is that their English is good and they have an ability to talk to customers and make them feel comfortable. They also meet other skills requirements like literacy, numeracy and computer literacy.

"I don't believe foreigners work harder. It depends on the individual, but we have found a foreigner is more likely to work continuously without taking time off.

"They are here to work, so there are fewer disruptions. South Africans are more likely to go absent without leave without following procedures to attend family affairs in the rural areas and so on.

"I've had lots of problems with foreigners and just as many with locals. A lot of them come with skills, but many exaggerate their skills and their CVs don't check out. In places like Zimbabwe, Congo, Malawi there are five-star trained waiters who are very tourist-focused, who come looking for work.

"We require permits from asylum seekers and that these be renewed whenever they expire. We require a passport. If people's documents expire or their application for asylum fails, then their employment is terminated.

"We have regular inspections by the Department of Labour.

"It's not true to say that South Africans have a bad attitude. Foreigners also bring risks; often they are responsible for card skimming and scams like those. It is also not true to say that foreigners are less likely to go the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration when aggrieved — that hasn't been my experience.

"All our waiters are on the same pay, with slight differences if they have been here longer."

...

MARK, Cape Town restaurant owner: "We haven't specifically targeted foreign nationals for employment. Pretty much all our employees are local except for two Zimbabweans and one Congolese — out of 20 people.

"The Congolese guy was a barman I met at another restaurant and he was just so cool and amazing that I gave him my number. He walked in the door and now he is our barista and barman.

"The Zimbabwean happened to walk through the door three years ago and had excellent references from several people I know in the business. They all strongly recommended him so I took him and now he is my manager and runs the place when we aren't there. He had experience; he's on the level and he's a great guy.

"But there are no hard and fast generalisations: Zimbabweans do tend to be well educated, their English and their elocution is excellent; they are computer literate; they are worldly. You have to be choosy about what kind of person serves your client; they must be able to make them feel at home; explain the menu well and so on.

"On wages — it is totally untrue that in most restaurants foreigners are paid less, but I think it does happen in some places that people are very badly paid. There is a restaurant near us that employs only foreigners and looking at that business I shudder to think what they are paid.

"We insist on original documents from home affairs."

...

MOHAMMED, Somali refugee working in a tuck shop in Mitchells Plain:

"When I came to SA, it was mostly by walking. I haven't heard from my parents in Somalia since I left.

"The Mubarak tuck shop belongs to a relative, who owns several tuck shops and who bought it from Faizal, a fellow Somali.

"Faizal was the first foreigner to establish a tuck shop in Beacon Valley. Now there is a Somali or Bangladeshi shop on every corner. The neighbours, a local family, also started a shop with his encouragement.

"But Faizal said they didn't know how to do business. If they felt like closing the shop they did. They didn't wake up early. Now they are renting it to Bangladeshis."

Low mark-ups, high volumes, long hours and a willingness to give credit were key to Faizal's success.

"Faizal is now in the US. He earned refugee status in the land of opportunity.

"The shop sells the kinds of goods people in this neighbourhood need: small plastic packets of cornflakes, sugar, coffee or tea for R1; loose cigarettes; and single disposable nappies.

"I also sell mielie meal, baby food, tinned food, sweets, cold drinks and bread.

"My prices are very good. There's a Pick n Pay just two blocks down the road, but I can sell many things for much cheaper than them."

...

GEORGES, Congolese waiter, Cape Town: "I'm a challenging person — even when it comes to my rights. I've studied South African law, so when it comes to the companies I've worked for I can tell you there is discrimination against foreigners.

"It is mostly used when you do something wrong or they do something wrong to you — then they use the word 'if'. If you don't like it, you don't need to stay if you don't want to.

"On the wages: everyone gets the same. But then when you get reviewed, some get increases, others not.

"They know you are desperate. Theoretically they say to me, you are the best, but they use me because I am good. If you are good they might even promote you, but they don't pay you much more.

"They will say, 'We are doing you a favour'; but it could be that you are an asset to the country.

"I left Congo in 2005. I was in my final year at university in Lubumbashi. Students were protesting against the government. There were some killings; some students died and some students killed soldiers.

"They arrested all the young men. I was arrested and paid bribes to escape and crossed into Zambia.

"Three of us took the same road. The two stayed in Zambia; I came here because I wanted to be far from Congo.

"Before I got arrested I was running a small business with my cousin, buying wholesale nuts and reselling them, so I had some money. I came through two countries by paying truck drivers, until I got to Joburg. The truck driver was continuing to Cape Town so I went with him.

"I slept outside somewhere near Epping; I didn't know anyone. I started washing cars and then became a car guard. I had basic English from school but I am good with languages. Someone advised me to read newspapers, which I still do. That is how I improved my English skills.

"Then I got a job as a security guard doing night shift at a big hotel. I studied during the day — did a call centre course and an admin course. My salary was R2,100.

"After that I got a job as a receptionist and my salary went up to R3,000. I worked there for four years. I did a business management course at the College of Cape Town.

"I went for some job interviews but as soon as they saw I was a refugee they said, 'Sorry we can't employ you.'

"I never lived in the township, so I can't see the person whose house I might have taken. I live in town. I've been 10 years in SA and I have my refugee status.

"Most foreigners here look for work at the restaurants because they can't get other work. Foreigners get employed in restaurants, in hotels. Yes, the wage is very small. South Africans do apply but they also consider the pay to be low. A foreigner who is desperate for a plate of food on his table will take it.

"We are not taking over SA, it is just a place that we have found refuge. South Africans should have their rights and benefits, but just be fair to everyone."

...

PAMELA, Zimbabwean beauty therapist, Cape Town:

"I came to SA in 2009 to train as a beauty therapist. I applied for asylum seeker status when I got here. I did a six-month course as a nail technician in Durbanville, then I got work at a salon.

"The work is hard and so not everyone can do it. Your back can ache because you never sit in a chair. We work weekends and holidays and time off is during the week when everyone else is working.

"In 2010, I applied for the Zimbabwean special dispensation, so I have another two years until that ends. But I've heard if you have been here for nine years you can get permanent residence.

"South African girls also apply to the salon, but they don't stay long. We have girls here from Zimbabwe who are teachers but they can't get jobs teaching, so they work here.

"I can't go back to Zimbabwe. There is nothing there. I don't think Zimbabwe will get better. There is no work. My son is seven and he has only known SA."

...

CYNTHIA, Zimbabwean teacher working as a farm worker in Worcester:

"I came to SA in search of employment in 2008. I've worked on the farms at De Doorns and Worcester and I've had a temporary job cleaning. I also tried selling things — socks, ties, comforters — but it wasn't profitable.

"I'm a teacher by profession. I qualified in 2004. I taught for one year before I came to SA. The money was so little. I got 300 Zim (Zimbabwean) dollars a month. You can't buy anything with that.

"I came here in search of greener pastures, but up until now I haven't found anything. My work on the farms is just for a few months from October to December.

"I have a work permit but it is about to expire. I need to go back to Zimbabwe and renew it. It is a permit that I got at the border coming in. I got it from the Department of Home Affairs — you can get them for two years or four years. For two years it is R2,000.*

"I did apply at some schools for teaching jobs but I was very unlucky; there were no openings."

** The work permit has probably been obtained illegally.*

Flyafrica.com to finally take off in Namibia **APA-Windhoek (Namibia)** After several delays, Africa low fare airline Flyafrica.com will finally take off in Namibia in mid-May after it was awarded a Foreign Operators Permit by the Directorate of Civil Aviation last week, APA learnt here Thursday.

Namibia Flyafrica, a joint venture between Namibia's Nomad Aviation and Mauritius-based Flyafrica Ltd, will operate daily flights between Windhoek and Johannesburg at a minimal fares from N$799 (about US$67) per flight.

Nomad Aviation chief executive officer Cliford Strydom told Windhoek Observer on Thursday that they now had everything in place and they will start advertising flights next week.

He said the airline planned to commerce flights from Windhoek to Johannesburg on February 2, but had to cancel due to lack of necessary documents.

Nomad Aviation will use locally registered Boing 737-500s to operate daily flights from Windhoek to Johannesburg as well Cape Town.

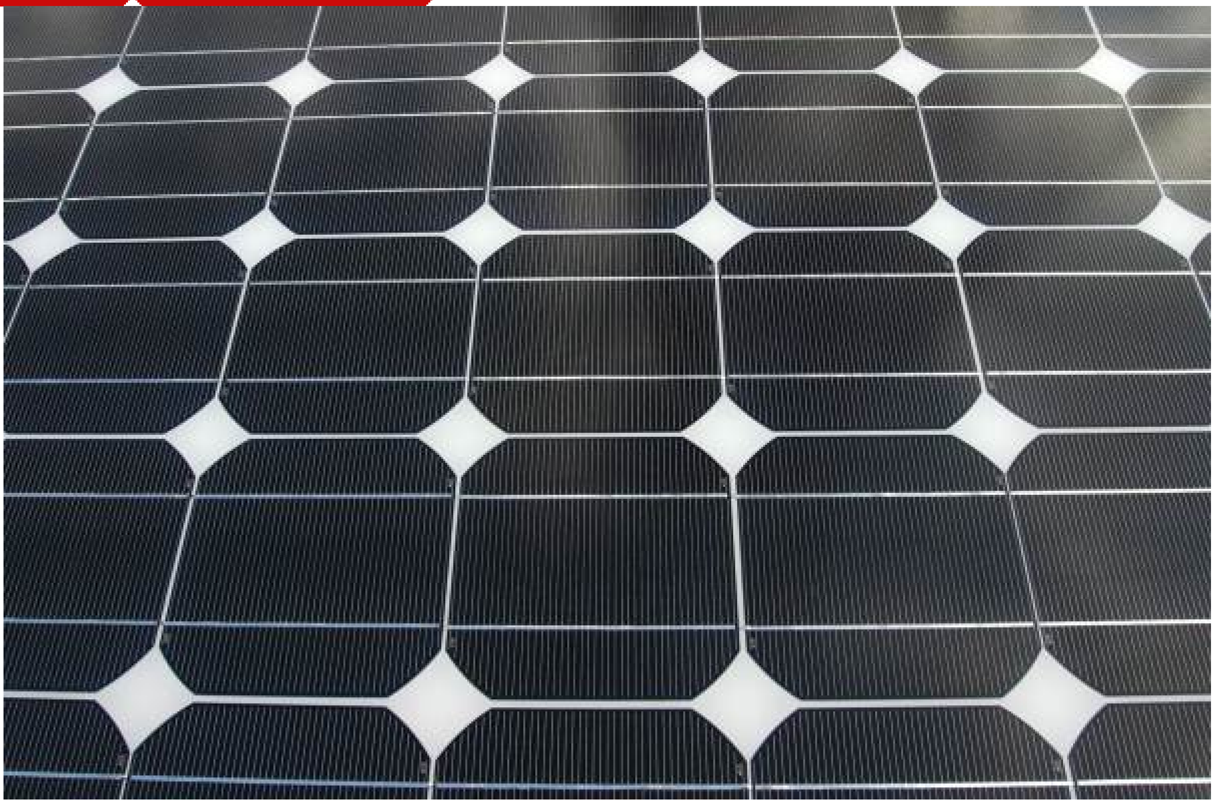
Strydom was earlier quoted as saying: "Nomad has been operating a successful airline in Namibia since 1989, but we have always wanted to offer more to the travelling public. Our partnership with flyafrica.com delivers what we have always wanted: low fares and exceptional service. Travellers to Namibia have paid too much for too long and the launch of Namibia Flyafrica will change that".
AT/jn/APA 2015-04-30 14:52:18
- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822953#sthash.XgoXaSLn.dpuf

Cameroon aims to boost reliance on renewable energy

Source: Thomson Reuters Foundation - Fri, 1 May 2015 06:30 GMT

Author: Elias Ntungwe NgalameMore news from our correspondents

MORE ON ENERGY MORE ON CLIMATE POLITICS



A solar panel board is pictured at the Safaricom Base Transmission Station (BTS) in Kajiado, 100 km (62 miles) south of Nairobi, October 1, 2009. REUTERS/Noor Khamis

NKOLFOULOU, Cameroon, May 1 (Thomson Reuters Foundation) – Cameroon will increasingly rely on renewable energy as it moves towards its goal of "economic emergence" by 2035, the government has announced.

Speaking at the Nkolfoulou landfill treatment centre, which is part of an upcoming project to generate electricity and cooking gas from municipal waste, officials said a new crop of renewable-energy startups could help provide the solution to Cameroon's energy shortages.

"Energy supply has been the main hurdle in Cameroon's path towards economic growth," said Basil Atangana Kouna, Minister of Water and Energy Resources. He said the country uses less than one percent of its renewable energy potential.

Hele Pierre, the Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development, said Cameroon is ready to move seriously toward renewable energy – alongside plans to expand fossil fuel plants – but will need financial help to do so.

"The government needs to harness … solar, wind, biomass and small-hydro," he said. "But the government needs the support of its development partners to achieve this goal."

During their visit to Nkolfoulou landfill in April, Pierre extended an appeal to Michaëlle Jean, secretary general of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (IOF) – a group that represents French-speaking nations – asking her to encourage the IOF to support a Cameroon Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project based on converting biogas into electricity.

Under the expiring Kyoto Protocol, which aims to cut climate-changing emissions, the CDM allows developing nations to sell carbon credits earned by carrying out emissions reduction projects.

The credits can then be bought or traded by richer nations to meet part of their own requirements to meet emissions reduction targets.

LOW ACCESS TO ENERGY

According to a recent report by the Africa Development Bank, despite Cameroon's abundance of energy resource resources – including oil, gas hydropower and solar – only 18 percent of people in the country had access to those energy sources in 2013, a rate experts said is low for Africa.

The report says currently 60 percent of the country's installed electricity generating capacity of 1,400 MW is based on hydropower, "which fluctuates greatly during the dry season, forcing Cameroon to rely on expensive emergency thermal units," or fossil fuel power.

To carry out its Energy Sector Development Plan—which aims for a 75 percent electrification rate by 2030—and reach its economic goals, Cameroon needs more and more reliable energy, experts say. The country also needs new energy grids to reach rural areas and other development infrastructure such as roads, they say.

"The key to the government's 2035 economic growth plans lies in the provision of energy, especially to the over 70 percent of the population who live in rural areas," said Richard Balla, the director of renewable energy for Cameroon's Ministry of Water and Energy.

However Cameroon's renewable energy developers complain that the current state of the carbon market is putting off investors looking to gather credits from CDM projects.

"The price of carbon has dropped from 12 euros per metric ton (about FCFA 7,800) to less than 1 euro today," said Michel Ngapanoun, general manager of the Hygiene and Sanitation Company Cameroon (Hysacam), the company investing in the Nkolfoulou landfill project.

Ngapanoun hopes the IOF secretary general will highlight the issue of low carbon prices at the U.N. climate negotiations in Paris in December.

"An increase in the price of carbon would certainly encourage other companies in Cameroon to invest" in emissions reductions projects, he said.

INVESTMENT IN SOLAR

Along with the Nkolfoulou landfill project, Cameroon has a range of other plans to help it achieve its renewable energy goals.

In January, the country got a cash boost from the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (Sefa) to help launch a 72-megawatt solar power plant.

By providing financial support to medium- and small-scale clean energy and energy efficiency projects, Sefa helps offset preparation costs and enables these projects to become financially viable, experts say.

With Sefa's $777,000 grant and support from the African Development Bank, Cameroon is set to start building its first renewable energy independent power producer (IPP) – a facility not owned by the government that can generate electricity for sale to utilities or the general public.
"Its success will have significant effects on the country's power sector and the continent at large," predicted Alex Rugamba, director of energy, environment and climate change at the African Development Bank.
Meanwhile, South African company GSC Energy has entered into a 27-year partnership agreement with the Cameroon government to construct 10 solar parks.
At its peak, the $2.2 billion project will create up to 4,000 direct and indirect jobs and produce enough energy to power more than 50,000 homes, the government says.
Jean, the IOF secretary general, praised the Cameroon government's push to support renewable energy projects.
"There is need for this new push for energy diversification in Africa and I think Cameroon is quite on track," she said. "We need to work together to better promote best practices and preserve the environment."
(Reporting by Elias Ntungwe Ngalame; editing by Laurie Goering)

Portuguese firm cancels $50m project in Malawi  0

0 0 **APA-Lilongwe (Malawi)** A Portuguese construction conglomerate, "Mota Engil" has announced the cancellation of a MK22 billion (US$50 million) project for a 5-star hotel in the resort district of Mangochi in southern Malawi.

The company's Public Relations and Media Consultant, Thomas Chafunya, said Thursday in the capital Lilongwe that the companyâ€™s decision follows misunderstandings with the community because of land issues.

"The situation on the ground compelled the firm to abandon the project which was supposed to facelift the lake-shore district," he said.

The communities vehemently blocked the 100-hectare land the government allocated to the company arguing that the area was too huge and could affect many people.

Meanwhile, the government has initiated a round table discussion with the company and representatives of the community to map the way forward on the project.

FT/daj/APA 2015-04-30 14:47:05
- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822952#sthash.CFJVAuRt.dpuf

Africa, Democracy, Economy & Trade, Headlines, Newsbrief, TerraViva United Nations

Nigeria's Anti-Corruption Pledge Resonates in Far-Off Zambia

By Lisa Vives Reprint | | Print | Send by email

NEW YORK, Apr 29 2015 (IPS) - Nigeria's president-elect is already making waves with his pledge to attack corruption, starting with the missing 20 billion dollars allegedly swiped from the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation during the previous administration.

Muhammadu Buhari pledged to pursue the claim of former Central Bank governor, Lamido Sanusi, who was suspended last year by former president Goodluck Jonathan after he warned of massive mismanagement by the oil corporation. His claim was never investigated by the ex-president.

"This issue is not over yet," declared Buhari, who will be sworn in on May 29. "Once we assume office we will order a fresh probe into the matter… We will not allow people to steal money meant for Nigerians to buy shares and stash (them) away in foreign lands."

Buhari's warning to those who pocketed national funds thrilled Africans as far away as Zambia and prompted an editorial in The Post newspaper.

"Nigerian President-elect General Muhammadu Buhari's message on corruption brings some hope for that country and our continent," wrote The Post's editor in a piece viewed 1,294 times.

The editorial continued: "We wish this was the message we were getting from our own President, Edgar Lungu. But it is not. If there is anything Edgar hardly talks about, it is corruption.

"What we have in Zambia today is a corrupt government… This is a government where those in leadership are the ones getting government contracts. They are the suppliers of government. Leaders and cadres of the ruling party are the ones doing business with government.

"If one scrutinises all government contracts, it will not be difficult to discover that almost all of them have been given to people connected to the ruling party and its leadership…. When one criticises such practices, he is seen to be hurtful, frustrated.

"Look at how quickly those in the leadership of government, from president to the lowest cadre, become rich! What is the magic? Where is the money coming from? It is from corruption, from bribes, from selling government policy. There is no other source of that money other than corruption."

Africans surveyed by the group Afrobarometer in 2013 expressed similar views and many believe the situation has deteriorated in the last decade.

In the survey of 34 countries, 56 percent of the 51,000 people surveyed thought their governments were doing “fairly badly” or “very badly” in the fight against corruption. Only 35 percent said their governments were doing “fairly well” or “very well”.

Among those most dissatisfied by official efforts to end corruption were Nigerians and Egyptians at the top, followed by Zimbabweans, Ugandans and Sudanese, Kenyans, Malians, Tunisians, Togolese, Tanzanians and South Africans.

Edited by Kitty Stapp

IMF, W/Bank announce $1.1bn debt relief for Chad

0 0 0 **APA-Washington-(United States)** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have decided to support $1.1 billion in total debt relief for Chad, of which $1.0 billion is expected to be delivered by multilateral creditors and the remainder by bilateral and commercial creditors, reports said on Thursday.

Mauricio Villafuerte, IMF mission chief for Chad said reaching the Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) completion point represents an important achievement and milestone for Chad.

According to him, it reflects the significant improvement in economic management in recent years, including during the period covered by a staff monitored program (SMP) approved by Fund management in July 2013 and the ongoing three-year ECF-supported program approved by the Executive Board in August 2014.

â€œIt will also help Chad allocate more resources for poverty reduction and the promotion of economic growth. Sound macroeconomic management will remain critical after the completion point for Chad to reap the full benefits of the debt relief,â€ Mr. Villafuerte said.

â€œThe attainment of the HIPC completion point opens a new development era for Chad. It acknowledges the many efforts accomplished by Chad to exit from a difficult decade of conflict and instability, and allows refocusing attention and resources on Chadâ€™s forward looking emergence agenda,â€ said Paul Noumba Um, World Bank

Noumba Um added that in the next months, the World Bank will present its new Country Partnership Framework to support Chadâ€™s aspirations over the period 2016-20, notably in terms of rural development, health, education, social protection, and governance.

ABJ/APA 2015-04-30 13:17:35 - See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822942#sthash.JbXCI3D7.dpuf

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Nigeria: Telecoms market offers multiple growth opportunities

April 30, 2015 • Mobile and Telecoms, Top Stories

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Ogunsanya noted that strong growth is expected from mobile financial services over the forecast period. (Image Source: Airtel).

Airtel Nigeria CEO, Segun Ogunsanya, has stated that the country's telecoms market offers multiple growth opportunities, stating that with 78 percent mobile penetration in December 2014, there is massive untapped market potential.

Ogunsanya also revealed that the broadband adoption is set to rise. Ogunsanya disclosed that 47 million subscriptions are expected between December 2014 and December 2019. This is according to a report revealed by TelecomPaper.

In the report, Ogunsanya noted that strong growth is expected from mobile financial services over the forecast period. He said operators should ensure they are able to offer products to the large unbanked population of Nigeria, and predicted growing demand for mobile apps and e-commerce.

Ogunsanya also stated that Nigeria offers exciting opportunities for telecoms investors as a large population with rising incomes positions the country as one of the most attractive destinations for investment on the African continent.

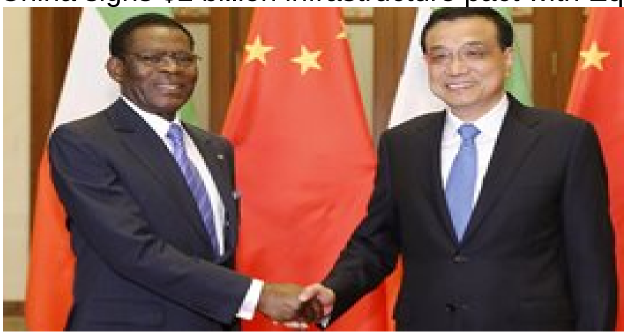
Ogunsanya added that Nigeria has massive bandwidth capacity from the four undersea cables, which has yet to be exploited. This will provide opportunities to domestic and international investors to take advantage of the growing broadband and data industry.

He said key issues must be urgently resolved, though, for the Nigerian telecoms industry to reach its full market potential. These include spectrum availability and adequacy, government commitment to the

National Broadband Plan, multiple taxation, reliable and cost-effective power supply, protection of infrastructure from vandalism, and mobile money restrictions.

Staff Writer

China signs $2 billion infrastructure pact with Equatorial Guinea



0 0 0 **APA- London (United Kingdom)** - China's biggest lender by assets, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, said on Wednesday it had signed an infrastructure pact worth $2 billion with the oil-rich Central African nation of Equatorial Guinea.

According to Reuters news agency, the agreement was signed on Tuesday following a meeting in Beijing between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Equatorial Guinea President Teodor Obiang Nguema, marking the latest Chinese investment in the continent and its resources.

The deal will include providing "financial support" to Equatorial Guinea's government as well as Chinese enterprises there, ICBC said in a statement.

China has sought to broaden financial support for its companies investing abroad as part of a policy drive known as "going out".

"There are growing numbers of cooperation areas between our two countries, and the prospects are very bright," Chinese Premier Li Keqiang told Obiang on Wednesday, according to a government statement.

The two countries should deepen their "traditional friendship", Li added.

ICBC called Africa the "strategic and developmental heart of 'going out'" for firms the bank supports.

"Equatorial Guinea is a central African country that has developed relatively well," the government said. "The government in recent years has supported expanded investment into infrastructure development, and the need for infrastructure projects is enormous."

Many Chinese development and aid projects have drawn condemnation from rights groups for their support of governments with poor rights records and lack of transparency, including Zimbabwe, Sudan and Angola.

China has said it will not follow the path of "Western colonialists" in Africa by sacrificing countries' long-term interests or environments.
Beijing says it follows a policy of non-interference in other countries' domestic politics that is welcomed in Africa.

Equatorial Guinea, a tiny Sub-Saharan African nation, boasts the highest GDP per capita in Africa, thanks to a hydrocarbon boom. But it is also notorious for corruption and ranked 144 of 187 states on the UN's 2014 Human Development Index.

A 2004 US Senate probe showed millions of dollars channeled by Obiang and relatives into the disgraced Riggs Bank.

Obiang, in power since 1979, is Africa's longest-serving head of state. Rights groups say he has enriched himself and his family while many of his people go hungry.

China is Africa's biggest trade partner, and has sought to tap the continent's rich resources to fuel its economic boom.

Critics, including some African leaders, have said Chinese projects bring little benefit to Africans, with materials and workers brought in from China.

ME/daj/APA 2015-04-30 12:38:48 - See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=822940#sthash.SZWv4uQx.dpuf

Refinery will take five years to complete

Friday, 1st May 2015 | Infrastructure

Repairs to the railway network operated by RVR in Kenya and Tanzania. Transport infrastructure remains a challenge as Uganda readies itself for oil production.

Uganda's planned crude oil refinery will take five years to complete, a representative of the firm that won the bid to build the multi-billion 60,000 barrels per day facility has revealed.

Andrey Kozenyashev, the Regional Representative of RT Global Resources in East Africa told an industry meeting convened by the Uganda Chamber of Mines and Petroleum in Kampala yesterday that the company anticipates to complete the project in 2020 at the earliest.

"After signing the agreement, it will take one and a half years to do the designs and then three years for construction of the facility," Kozenyashev said.

The RT-Global Resources-led consortium beat off a challenge from another consortium led by South Korea's SK Group to win the $2.5 billion project that will involve development of a refinery and product storage facilities in Hoima, Western Uganda, as well as a 205 kilometer product pipeline to a terminal near the capital, Kampala.

The other companies in the consortium are GS Engineering Construction Corporation from South Korea; Capital Plc a subsidiary of VTB, the second largest Russian-owned bank; Telconet Capital Ltd Partnership, a Cayman-based Russian company and Tafnet JSC a Russian oil company.

According to a statement from RT Global Resources, the company estimates to invest about one billion dollars into the refinery's first 30,000 barrels per day phase.
Inadequate transport infrastructure will remain a huge challenge for the contractor however and could slow down the development of the project.

Report by Flavia Nalubega
editor@oilinuganda.org

Brussels considers withdrawing draft EU law on air travellers' rights

Published: 30/04/2015 - 08:56

Flight missing. Sleeping it off, at Heathrow. [Cary Bass-Deschenes/Flickr]

The European Commission is considering "all possible options" regarding a stalled proposal to bolster the rights of stranded air passengers, which could ultimately lead to the withdrawal of the package, officials say.

The Commission proposed rules two years ago to make it easier for stranded passengers to claim compensation by limiting the extraordinary circumstances under which airlines can refuse compensation for delayed or cancelled flights.

But talks among European Union member states have progressed slowly, and disagreements remain over issues such as the thresholds for compensation in case of delays and missed connecting flights.

In addition, the British-Spanish territorial dispute over Gibraltar has stalled the implementation of all EU aviation legislation since 2012, meaning any eventual agreement on the air passenger rights proposal would be put on hold until the issue is solved bilaterally.

With British elections looming next week and Spanish ones later this year, EU diplomats say there is little chance of that happening soon.

"The Commission is considering all options in order to achieve the best possible outcome," said Jakub Adamowicz, spokesman for the European Commission.

"Both passengers and industry need certainty and that is what we hope to achieve with this revision of air passenger rights."

An EU official said withdrawing the proposal was one of the options, especially "in light of the current situation".

The executive will decide after the 28 EU transport ministers meet in June to take stock of progress.

An EU diplomat also said the Commission was thinking of withdrawing the proposal.

"Nobody wants to go for a compromise until that's solved," the person said, referring to Gibraltar.

Britain and Spain are at odds over the sovereignty of the isthmus that connects the British territory of Gibraltar to Spain.

Spain wants Gibraltar airport, which sits on the disputed land, to be excluded from EU aviation law until the debate is resolved.

Britain says that under the 2006 Cordoba agreement between London, Madrid and the Gibraltarian government, Spain agreed to stop seeking the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from EU aviation measures.

The Commission has said it will come forward with a new strategy to bolster the competitiveness of its aviation sector later this year, meaning it would be able to tackle the issue of passenger rights again. (EurActiv

External links:

European Commission

Nigerian press headlines disarray in ruling party **APA-Abuja (Nigeria)** The official planned prosecution of electoral offenders in the 2015 general elections, disarray in the ruling People's Democratic Party after losing elections, and lobby for AfDB's presidency were major items in Nigerian newspapers on Sunday.

Vanguard reported that the Independent National Electoral Commission would set up a tribunal where electoral offenders will be prosecuted.

This Day said as it is with a high scale earthquake, the round defeat of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2015 general elections is still sending seismic waves through the crust of the erstwhile biggest political party in Africa.

The Punch reported that the Nigerian military on Saturday formally handed over 275 women and children rescued from the terroristsâ€™ stronghold of Sambisa forestâ€“ to officials of the National Emergency Management Agency for rehabilitation.

Leadership newspaper reported that President-elect, Muhammadu Buhari has intensified lobbying for the candidacy of the Minister of Agriculture, Akinwumi Adesina, as President of the African Development Bank (AfDB).

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Egypt records 2.15m tourists in first quarter-Official

0 0 0 **APA- Cairo (Egypt)** Egypt's tourism minister Khaled Ramy said on Monday that about 2.15 million tourists visited the country in the first quarter, up 6.9 percent from a year ago.

According to Ramy, Egypt will attract about 20 percent more visitors this year compared with 2014 as the holiday sector recovers after four years of political upheaval, violence and street protests.

He said advance bookings indicate the full-year total would be around 12 million, below 2010's peak of 14.7 million but above 2014's 9.9 million.

Ramy told reporters during a news conference in Dubai that in the next four-and-a-half years, Egypt has to increase by double-digit percentage every year.

Egypt's tourism revenue reached a peak at $12.5 billion a year in 2010, but was less than half that in 2013 as turmoil in the run up to the army's toppling of Islamist President Mohamed Mursi deterred visitors.

â€œRevenue last year was $7.3 billion. We would like to reach $26 billion by 2020," he said.

The number of forward bookings for this summer and winter are 15-20 percent higher than a year ago and visitor numbers in the first two weeks of April rose 19 percent year-on-year, he added.

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- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=823173#sthash.MfPnGs2o.dpuf

Senegal: Economic activity up by 14% in March 2015 **APA-Dakar (Senegal)** Economic activity (excluding agriculture and forestry) in Senegal rose by 14 percent month-on-month in March 2015 compared to the previous month when it fall by 0.5 percent, according to the Directorate of Forecasting and Economic Studies on Monday.

This is due to a good evolution of both primary (over 9.8 percent), secondary (over 10.5 percent) and tertiary industries (over 14.1 percent), the DPEE explained.

Compared to the same period last year, economic activity increased by 7.1 percent in March 2015, driven mainly by the secondary (over 4.2 percent) and tertiary sector (over 7.3 percent)

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Comments

- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=823154#sthash.mEvDRGrW.dpuf

AfDB backs Botswana’s economic transformation 0

0 0 **APA-Abidjan-(Botswana)** The African Development Bank (AfDB) has endorsed the Bank’s Botswana Country Strategy Paper (CSP) 2015-2019, the pan-African lender said in a statement on Monday in the Ivorian capital Abijan.

According to the statement, CSP 2015-2019 provides a framework for the Bank support to Botswana during the period to enable the country achieve inclusive sustainable growth.

It said the support will focus on two pillars â€“ infrastructure development; and private sector development.

Discussing the CSP at their regular meeting in Abidjan, Board members observed that infrastructure project-driven productivity would provide opportunities for Botswanaâ€™s private sector development.

According to the CSP, Botswana is at a critical juncture in its development noting that the 2009 global financial crisis exposed the countryâ€™s vulnerability to external shocks due to its reliance on one commodity.

Real Gross Domestic Product contracted by 7.8 percent from an annual average growth of 10 percent experienced over the previous four decades.
In addition, Botswanaâ€™s economy will face a difficult challenge in the medium term with the depletion of its diamond resources.

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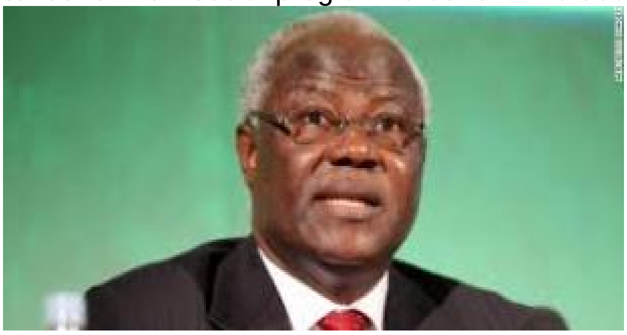
- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=823153#sthash.2yKpnOdd.dpuf

S/Leone: New social program to benefit 126 000 people



0 0 0 **APA-Freetown-(Sierra Leone)** Sierra Leone in collaboration with the World Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had established a Social Protection Policy in 2011 which has culminated into a Social Safety Net programme.

According to a statement issued on Monday by the World Bank, the programme, which is aimed at supporting extremely poor households and vulnerable communities throughout the Ebola-hit country, was launched Monday by President Ernest Bai Koroma, in Magburaka, the headquarter town of Tonkolili - one of the countryâ€™s poorest districts.

It is financed by a $7 million grant from the World Bank a $300,000 grant from UNICEF, and $1 million from the Government of Sierra Leone, the communiquÃ© reads in part.

â€œThis new Social Safety Net program builds on the countryâ€™s Agenda for Prosperity whose core objective is to achieve middle income status by 2035 by reducing the number of Sierra Leoneans below the poverty line, said Saidu Conton Sesay, Chief of Staff in the Office of the President.

â€œIt will strengthen coordination and implementation of social protection programs that improve nutrition and health services, and access to education, in order to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty,â€ Sesay added .

Kaifala Marah, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development said, â€œThis Social Safety Net program was developed in line with Sierra Leoneâ€™s development agenda, institutional and financial conditions and capabilities, and we hope that it will create a sustainable system to address the biting problems of poverty and inequity in the country.â€

â€œThe country has come a long way in moving from an uncoordinated approach toward building a coherent social safety net system capable of protecting the poorest and most vulnerable, including from shocks such as Ebola,â€ said Franci

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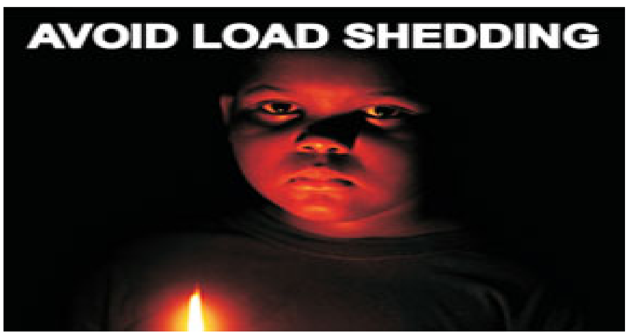

Botswana energy supplier warns of electricity outages

0 0 0 **APA-Gaborone (Botswana)** The Botswana Power Corporation (BCP) has warned on Monday that the electricity supply system remains vulnerable this week due to low generation capacity.

In a statement issued here Monday, BPC said an initiative to alleviate power supply challenges; a Demand Side Management program will be fully implemented from Monday for four hours until further notice.

â€œWhile this program was planned to commence last week on the 28th April, customers are reminded that its implementation is only done when there is a supply challenge,â€ said the statement.

The statement adds that the program is intended to keep load shedding as minimal as possible during peak demand as well as creating equity in the conservation of electricity.

It urged customers to use minimal electrical appliances during the peak times to avoid their households or small businesses being disconnected.

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- See more at: http://www.apanews.net/news/en/article.php?id=823131#sthash.sa6MdTGK.dpuf

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