

MEMORANDUM

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The Memorandum is issued daily, with the sole purpose to provide updated basic business and economic information on Africa, to more than 4,000 European Companies, as well as their business parties in Africa.

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SOUTH AFRICA AND US REACH VITAL DEAL ON MEAT IMPORTS AT LAST

SA and the US have finally reached an agreement on the terms and conditions for the import of US beef, pork and poultry into the local market, after months of prolonged and nail-biting negotiation.

The deal, which was reached in "extra time", will secure the continued enjoyment of tariff-free access to the US market for SA's agricultural exports under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (Agoa). Citrus, wine and macadamia nuts have been the major agricultural beneficiaries of this free access.

Veterinarians of both countries had a prolonged meeting on Wednesday to thrash out an agreement on the outstanding issues, which mainly related to how SA would deal with possible salmonella in US chicken imports.

Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies made the announcement of the agreement at a media conference on Thursday, which was also attended by Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Senzeni Zokwana.

He said that all the sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues had been concluded and agreements were signed by both parties. This means that the 65,000 tonnes of bone-in chicken portions from the US could enter the local market annually free of antidumping duties.

Mr. Davies said he was awaiting a signal from the US that all was in order and that SA would henceforth have full status under Agoa.

The agreement came six days after the December 31 deadline set by US President Barack Obama for SA to remove all obstacles to US exports of beef, pork and poultry, failing which he would order the selective withdrawal of tariff-free access for specified agricultural products under Agoa.

The obstacles mainly related to the sanitary and phyto-sanitary restrictions that SA applies to all meat imports, which the US found to be too restrictive.

Mr. Obama's deadline arose from the out-of-cycle review, which was conducted by the US administration into whether or not SA's policies were an obstacle to US trade and investment. (BD 07-01-2016)

AFDB DISBURSES OVER US\$11M FOR LESOTHO E-GOV'T PROJECT

The coordinator of the Lesotho e-Government Project Khiba Masiu says the African Development Bank (AfDB) has disbursed US\$7.20 million in the form of a grant and US\$4.05 million as a loan while the government contributed US\$1.59 million or 12 percent of the project cost.

Khiba said the objective of the project was to improve the country's public service delivery through establishment of core e-government infrastructure and services.

He said the project, which is scheduled to be completed by 2018, is expected to strengthen access to government shared services, including data centres and portals, and facilitation of access to e-applications for government. (APA 05-01-2016)

DROUGHT-STRICKEN ZIMBABWE MOBILISES US\$260M FOR FOOD IMPORTS

The Zimbabwean government has raised more than US\$260 million to be used to import grain to alleviate starvation in parts of the country affected by drought, a cabinet minister announced Monday.

Agriculture Minister Joseph Made said the funds would be used to import 700,000 metric tonnes of the staple maize and other grains during the next few months.

At least 1.5 million Zimbabweans are in need of food aid, according to the United Nations' World Food Programme and other aid agencies.

To alleviate hunger this year, the government has relaxed import regulations to allow individuals and private companies to import grain to supplement local supplies.

Once a major producer of maize, Zimbabwe has become a perennial importer of food following a slump in agricultural production blamed on President Robert Mugabe's land reforms, which saw the seizure of land from white commercial farmers for redistribution to landless blacks.

The government however blames the low yields on erratic rains during the 2014/15 farming season caused by climate change, along with a lack of fertilizer, seed and farming equipment.

South Africa, the region's breadbasket, was also last year hard hit by drought, recording a 31 percent decline in output during the 2014/15 farming season. (APA 04-01-2016)

THE CORPORATE COUNCIL ON AFRICA'S 2016 U.S.-AFRICA BUSINESS SUMMIT

The Corporate Council on Africa's 10th biennial U.S.-Africa Business Summit, hosted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia February 1-4, 2016, will bring together business representatives and government officials, entrepreneurs and investors, decision-makers and managers, from throughout Africa, the United States and beyond, to talk about what you really need to achieve your goals, forge new partnerships, expand your business and, ultimately, make it a success.

The U.S.-Africa Business Summit will bring together more than 1,000 private sector and government representatives from the all parts of Africa, the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. The Summit is a unique opportunity to network with the preeminent decision makers and leaders in African investment, all in one place, at one time.

This year's Summit is all about you and your business needs. The multi-day conference will feature insightful plenary sessions, sector-focused panels, country-specific forums, peer-to-peer roundtables, site visits, exhibitions and networking opportunities – all focused on what you need to achieve your goals.

further reading at: <http://summit.africacncl.org/>

FUEL PRICES RISE IN ANGOLA AND FALL IN CABO VERDE

The introduction of the free price system in the sale of fuels in Angola has made the price of a litre of gasoline rise by 39 percent from 115 to 160 kwanzas and diesel by 80 percent from 75 to 135 kwanzas, according to a statement from state oil and gas company Sonangol.

The Ministry of Finance said the introduction of free pricing for most fuel was intended to eliminate the high cost of fuel subsidies provided by the state.

In Cabo Verde (Cape Verde), the Economic Regulation Agency lowered the price of most fuels due to the reduction from 15.5 percent to 15 percent of Value Added Tax (VAT/IVA) that was applied.

The State Budget (OGE) for 2015 determined the increase of the 15 percent VAT rate to 15.5 percent, with the revenue of this half a percentage point channeled into the reconstruction of settlements, infrastructure and economic activities on Fogo Island, affected by the volcanic eruption of 23 November, 2014.

This law was in force until 31 December and based on the legal obligation for IVA to return to a rate of 15 percent, the agency has revised prices, which led to a decrease for most fuels, according to Cape Verdean weekly newspaper A Semana. (05-01-2015)

ETHIOPIA'S INFLATION RATE REMAINS AT 10% IN DECEMBER

Ethiopia's year-on-year inflation remained unchanged at 10.0 % in December, the country's Central Statistical Agency (CSA) said on Monday in a statement.

The rate had dropped in November, from 11.8 percent in October, mainly due to a drop in food prices.

The year-on-year food inflation has increased by 12.1 percent in December 2015 as compared to the one observed in December 2014, the agency said.

There was a slight decline in prices of some cereals, pulses, vegetables and Spices (specially pepper whole) during the month under review.

The non-food inflation increased by 7.7 per cent in December 2015 as compared to the one observed in December 2014.

The rise in inflation in the non-food component is mainly due to rise in the prices of chat, clothing and footwear, construction materials, firewood and household goods and furnishings, the statement added.

Region-wise, Addis Ababa city administration showed relatively rapid rise in prices, the statement noted.(APA 04-01-2016)

ISRAEL : A NEW EU-FUNDED TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR ENTREPRENEURS

The [EU Delegation in Israel](#) announced the launch of the [SwitchMed](#). It is "New in Israel" : an EU-funded training programme currently mobilising entrepreneurs with an inspirational environmental vision.

Those selected for the project will be entrepreneurs with start-ups that have environmental, social and economic values in fields such as: water, energy, fair trade, green building, sharing economics, eco-tourism, education and more. As part of the training programme, the entrepreneurs will receive the tools and skills needed to turn their innovative concepts into successful and profitable green business models from experts who have undergone specific training with the European Union. Outstanding participants will also benefit from support in launching their green business.

In Israel, the initiative is taking place thanks to the EU's cooperation with the Maof network of the Agency for Small and Medium Sized Business at the Ministry of Economy, which was chosen to operate the programme.

In total, eight training workshops have been organised and others will take place over the coming months throughout Israel, with the participation of 160 entrepreneurs with ideas that contribute to the environment and to society.

SwitchMed is an EU initiative whose goal is to advance the green economy in the Mediterranean Basin. The programme, which also operates in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, shows not only that that environmental issues cut across borders, religions and political conflicts but also that they are increasingly relevant and are gaining momentum. (EC 06-01.2016)

INDIAN GROUP TATA STARTS OPERATING IN ANGOLA

Tata International, a trading and distribution company of Indian group Tata, plans to expand in Africa by entering the Angolan and Ethiopian markets, bringing its presence in Africa to a total of 14 countries, said a senior company executive.

Ajay Mehra, Executive Director of Tata Africa Holdings (Tanzania) and director of non-automotive distribution of Tata International, told the Press Trust of India (PTI) that the group's presence in Africa was mainly in the eastern region, "as it is the most politically stable."

In Angola and Ethiopia, Tata International plans to start business with trading of both imported and exported agricultural products.

Incorporated in 1962, Tata International's main businesses are selling leather and leather products, the purchase and sale of metals and minerals, the sale of cars and spare parts, trade in agricultural products, industrial chemicals, drugs and medical equipment.

Kenya is the company's main market in Africa, followed by Tanzania and South Africa, where it has an assembly line and where it primarily sells commercial vehicles and small pickup trucks. (06-01-2016)

SENEGAL RANKS 4TH IN AFRICAN DEMOCRACY INDEX

Senegal is ranked 4th in the African democracy index, after Mauritius, Ghana and Namibia respectively which are ranked 39th, 49th and 56th in the global ranking, according to the December 2015 report entitled "Global democracy ranking", by the Austrian NGO "The Democracy Ranking Association".

The report, which covers the 2013-2014 period also ranks Senegal 64th democracy in the world, out of the 113 countries surveyed.

In a previous classification established for the period 2010-2011, Senegal ranked 79th.

At the top of this classification, we respectively find Norway (1st), Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Holland, Germany, New Zealand, Ireland and Belgium in that order.

At the other side of the scale, there are Mali (104th), Guinea Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, China, Nigeria, Egypt, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Pakistan, Syria and Yemen (113th).

To establish its ranking, "The Democracy Ranking Association" based its survey on the following criteria: political rights, civil liberties, gender equality, freedom of the press and the Corruption Perceptions Index.

The report also takes into account the number of leadership changes over the last 13 years and the democratic transition of the head of government over the last 13 years.(APA 04-01-2016)

ANNA LINDH FOUNDATION, MEDAC AGREE LONG-TERM PROGRAMME FOR EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION

[The Anna Lindh Foundation \(ALF\)](#) announced on December 6, the signature in Valetta (Malta), of a memorandum of understanding with the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies ([MEDAC](#)), as the basis for a long-term programme of activity for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

The Malta-based Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies ([MEDAC](#)) is an higher education institute with a unique focus on the Mediterranean region.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which builds on the existing partnership between the two Mediterranean institutions, focuses on reinforcing the central role of intercultural dialogue and cultural diplomacy as part of the renewed [Euro-Med cooperation framework and EU Neighbourhood Policy](#).

Specific areas of action include an annual joint activity, promotion of joint research activities and publications, and collaborative initiatives related to the Anna Lindh Foundation's mission.

MEDAC will also play a central role in the preparation of the 3rd Anna Lindh Mediterranean Forum which will take in Valetta on 24-25 October 2016, on the eve of the Maltese Presidency of the European Council. (ALF 06-01-2016)

CAHORA BASSA DAM, MOZAMBIQUE, SEES RECORD POWER PRODUCTION IN 2015

The Cahora Bassa hydroelectric facility in Mozambique's Tete province, in 2015 reached a new record of electricity production of 16,978 gigawatt/hours, an annual increase of 2.44 percent, the facility's management company said.

The previous record was achieved in 2009, the year production reached 16,574 gigawatt/hours. The new record in 2015 came after significant investments in the Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric Dam (HCB) with the implementation of its Engineering Plan.

Following this record production, HCB recorded sales of 12.201 billion meticaais (US\$258 million dollars), with operating income for the year reaching 6.135 billion meticaais (US\$130 million), according to Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias.

HCB has plans to build the North Plant, as part of the second phase of its expansion project, which will increase current power production of 2,075 megawatts by almost half. (06-01-2016)

SEIZURE OF CHINESE ASSETS, RULING PARTY DEFEAT DOMINATE LIBERIAN PRESS

The seizure of a Chinese company's assets and the reasons for the ruling Unity Party candidate's defeat in the just-ended representative by-election captured the headlines in the Tuesday editions of Liberian newspapers.

The Commercial Court at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia has seized the properties of a Chinese sand mining company, LICHI, for its failure to settle its indebtedness to its employees in the amount of US\$76,000. The Daily Observer published this story as its front page banner headline under the caption: "Chinese Company's Assets Seized".

Reports from Lofa County where the candidate of the ruling Unity Party was defeated in the just-ended Representative By-election attribute the defeat to protest votes in Vahun District, the home of the late Fofa Sahr Baimba. An independent candidate, Julia Fatuma Weah, was elected to replace Representative Baimba.

The Heritage newspaper published this story as its front page banner headline under the caption: "In Lofa County By-election: Unity Party's Defeat Blamed On Protest Vote."

Other headlines in the Tuesday editions of Liberian newspapers include: "Man Dies from Hunger in Brewerville" (Heritage); "Ellen, Boakai Extol Police On Agriculture Initiative" (Heritage); "Episcopal Priest Marries Gay Partner" (The News); "I'll Be Active Internationally...Ellen On Life After Presidency" (The News); "VP Boakai's Office Gets US\$1,495 Grant" (The News); "Senate More Peaceful and Effective...Pro-Temp Jallah" (Daily Observer); "Several Confess to Witchcraft in Ganta" (Daily Observer). (APA 05-01-2016)

EBRD : PROMOTION OF JORDANIAN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ECONOMIC PROJECTS

The EBRD presented a [video](#) on its work to promote women entrepreneurs in Jordan on December 29. The Bank is working with the “Jordanian Microfund for Women” to provide finance to women entrepreneurs and to encourage more women to become an active part of Jordan's growing economy. The video cites the example of Raeda Jaryan, who has benefited from the support of the Multi-Donor Account South and East Mediterranean (SEMED) Media Microfund for Women, which is an EBRD programme.

The empowerment of women is a very important part of Raeda Jaryan's life. Her daughters go to university and she supports them. She also feels obliged to support women in her local community.

Ms Jaryan makes a living from weaving baskets out of the dried leaves of banana plants that grow in the Jordan Valley. With the EBRD's support, her hobby has turned into a business. An initial loan of only JOD 400 (approximately US\$ 550) helped her to buy supplies, set up her business and take her economic future into her own hands. (EBRD 06-01-2016)

STAGNATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION MARKET IN ANGOLA AND PORTUGAL LEADS TO REDUNDANCIES

The stagnation of the construction market in Angola and in Portugal is the basis of collective dismissal of 500 workers at construction company Soares da Costa, according to a document signed by the CEO of the company.

In this document, cited by Portuguese news agency Lusa, Joaquim Tapes noted the “negative impact” on the company of the crisis and the “stagnation of the construction market” in Portugal and Angola, its main market, a situation that makes “downsizing and restructuring of the company inevitable.”

“This collective redundancy is necessary for the company to retain more than 80 percent of its jobs,” said the chief executive of Soares da Costa, a company that posted annual losses in excess of 60 million euros and saw turnover fall by 30 percent.

Soares da Costa is 66.7-percent owned by GAM Holdings, owned by Angolan entrepreneur António Mosquito, which took a stake in the construction company at the end of 2013 through a capital increase costing 70 million euros in cash and the remaining 33.3 percent of the group is owned by SDC – Investimentos (formerly Grupo Soares da Costa). (06-01-2016)

BANK OF AFRICA TO BEGIN OPERATIONS IN CAMEROON

The Pan-African banking group, Bank of Africa (BOA) could begin operations in Cameroon in the next few weeks, its application for authorization to open a subsidiary in the largest economy of Central Africa being on the “right track”, the Cameroonian Ministry of Finance announced on Tuesday.

This will be so, the successful development of an application for authorization submitted in 2014 to the national monetary authority and the Central African Banking Commission (COBAC) as well, which is the regulator of the banking sector in this part of the continent.

According to reliable sources, this is a step by BOA in creating a new bank with a capital of 10 billion CFA francs, in which it will be the major shareholder with 76 percent, as the other remaining 24 percent being open to partners who include Cameroonian investors.

Upon registration in the commercial register and BOA West Africa property lending, the holding company

which controls the operation said it had purchased 760,000 shares with a par value of 10,000 francs CFA in the new institution under construction, through the reclassification to the position of equity securities and the payment of the capital of Cameroon BOA.

With this initiative, the group controlled by the Moroccan Bank Group of Foreign Trade (BMCE), intends to get a foothold in central Africa from Cameroon.

This will be the third Moroccan banking group to settle in Cameroon, after Attijariwafa Bank which has as a local subsidiary, Société commerciale de banque (SCB) and Banque Centrale Populaire, owner of Atlantic Bank. (APA 05-01-2016)

KENYA'S HYDROPOWER DAMS FUEL MALARIA RISK FOR VILLAGERS

Alfred Nyaga irrigates his acre of khat, a mild stimulant, in Kaloki village by pumping water with a diesel-powered engine directly from Kamburu Dam in central Kenya.

Each morning, he takes the khat he has harvested at night to sell at Kiritiri market, some 30km (18.64 miles) from the village on a shrub-covered slope stretching to the hydropower dam's banks.

Being so close to the reservoir means Mr Nyaga and his four workers are often bitten by mosquitoes as they toil. "We have no other option because we have to work on our farms and we need the dam water," said Mr. Nyaga.

The dam provides an ideal breeding environment for the Anopheles mosquito, which carries the malaria parasite, putting local farmers and their families at risk of infection.

Bed nets are essential to keep the insects off people while they sleep in the mud and tin-roofed houses that dot the landscape.

Kenya's hydropower dams benefit communities living on their banks by providing a plentiful source of water to irrigate crops.

But the large reservoirs that feed them are also a habitat for mosquitoes, which thrive especially well in the shallow puddles that often form along their shorelines.

African governments and the World Bank argue that the continent needs hydropower dams to boost inadequate electricity supplies with a clean, renewable source of energy. Sub-Saharan Africa already has over 2,000 dams.

But a study published last September in Malaria Journal warned that over 1-million people in sub-Saharan Africa would contract malaria in 2015 because they lived near a large dam.

The researchers, including experts from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), found that construction of an expected 78 major new dams in the region over the next few years would lead to an additional 56,000 malaria cases annually.

Malaria impacts must be tackled so they do not undermine the sustainability of Africa's drive for development, the study warned.

It recommended distributing bed nets to people living within 5km of dams. It also proposed operating schedules that dry out reservoir shoreline areas where mosquitoes breed at critical times, and introducing fish that eat mosquito larvae.

Corporate responsibility?

In Kenya, the state-run Kenya Electricity Generating Company Limited (KenGen) is aware of the problem, but has yet to act.

KenGen, which manages the Kamburu Dam straddling Embu and Machakos counties, says it has not intervened to prevent malaria here or around its other dams, even in high-risk areas.

KenGen operates 14 dams across Kenya, with total power generation capacity of 819 megawatts. They produce more than half the power consumed in the country.

Embu and Machakos have been categorised as low-risk malaria zones despite having the highest concentration of large dams, totalling five between them along the Tana River.

More broadly, malaria is a major health challenge in Kenya, with some 25-million people at risk of the disease, according to 2009 data from the Kenya Medical Research Institute. Malaria accounts for 30% to 50% of all outpatient attendance and 20% of admissions to health facilities in the country.

Peter Esekon, a clinical officer at KenGen, said the company undertakes weekly surveillance, and so far has not observed a substantive increase in malaria at any of its dam sites. Yet while KenGen is not planning action to curb malaria near its dams for now, it is open to suggestions such as those in the recent study, he added.

County efforts

Meanwhile, county governments are undertaking wider anti-malaria efforts that are helping keep people protected. Health education among communities living near dams has helped create awareness and reduce malaria cases, officials say.

The government also provides bed nets to pregnant mothers and children younger than five in all counties.

Winfred Murigu, a nursing officer at the Machanga health centre near Kamburu Dam, said that besides educating patients at clinics, community health workers visit residents to talk about various issues including malaria. Public health officers also visit homes when spraying places where mosquitoes breed, she said.

Mr Nyaga has seen community health workers a few times in his area. "They told me about using a bed net and clearing bushes around here to keep away mosquitoes," he said.

His sister-in-law Mercy Ndeki, 45, who lives nearby, had her compound fumigated by officials from Machanga and then the mosquitoes disappeared for a while. The family also uses bed nets bought at the local shopping centre.

Anthony Mwaniki, the nursing officer in charge of Riaciina dispensary near Kindaruma Dam in Embu, said there had been a drop in malaria prevalence thanks to higher awareness. "At times we receive up to 70 patients with malaria in a month, but this has gone down in the past few months due to the health education we give to patients," he said.

Most malaria patients treated at the Riaciina and Machanga dispensaries live within 5km of the two dams.

Mr. Nyaga, who has another homestead about 8km from Kamburu, said there were no mosquitoes there compared with his house on the banks of the dam.

KenGen's Mr. Esekon said transmission is low around its dams in this area because local people do not travel much, reducing the risk of the parasite being brought into the area.

But KenGen operates hydroelectric plants in other parts of the country that are reported to have high malaria prevalence, such as Sondu Miriu Dam in Nyanza, a malaria-endemic zone in Kisumu county.

In some high-risk zones like Kisumu, the government offers everyone free bed nets.

The IWMI study noted that further research is needed to investigate the potential impact of climate change on malaria around both existing and planned dams in sub-Saharan Africa, including areas that are currently free of the disease. (Reuters 07-01-2016)

ANGOLA LAUNCHES TENDER RESERVED FOR CHINESE COMPANIES

The government of Angola this month plans to launch a tender exclusively for Chinese companies for the execution of contracts in seven industrial development hubs, according to an official notice published in state-owned newspaper Jornal de Angola.

The announcement from the Secretariat for Public Procurement Affairs of the President's Civil House, reported that the contracts involved completion of infrastructure of the development hubs of Menongue (Kwando Kubango), Malanje, Dondo (Kwanza Norte), Soyo (Zaire), Caála (Huambo), Negage (Uíge) and Porto Amboim (Kwanza Sul).

The execution of those contracts is set out in the Macro Framework Agreement on Financial Cooperation signed between Angola and China, to finance the projects of priority public investments covered by a credit line from China.

Competitors must be Chinese companies included on a list issued by the Chinese government and will subcontract Angolan companies to incorporate local content of no less than 20 percent of the contract value, the notice said.

The Angolan Ministry of Industry plans to build, in stages, 22 Industrial Development Hubs in the country, covering an estimated area of about 36,000 hectares. (07-01-2016)

UNDP TO SUPPORT ETHIOPIA'S FIVE-YEAR ECONOMIC PLAN

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on Tuesday announced that it will support sustainable economic growth, risk reduction, basic social services, job creation and capacity development in Ethiopia.

During discussions with the Ethiopian President on Tuesday, the UNDP Resident Representative Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie expressed desire to engage in Ethiopia's five Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) through the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) through providing direct financial, advisory, technical, organizational, and management support.

According to Ms Eziakonwa-Onochie, the UN is willing to support the Ethiopian government in order to maintain the developmental agenda, especially in areas of education, water, entrepreneurship, and other priority areas.

Eziakonwa-Onochie noted that Ethiopia is a fast-growing country in all areas and all sectors of its economy, adding that "our collaboration will provide a strong foundation for the transformation of Ethiopia in the coming few years."

The UN system in Ethiopia is working in a truly coordinated way to help Ethiopia enhance capacity to develop and implement programs that meet international standards, she pointed out.

We hope to continue with this successful partnership long into the future to promote sustainable development, job creation, and education as well as improved quality of life for all Ethiopians, the Resident Representative stressed.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Ethiopia is the largest in Africa, and taken as a single entity, one of the major development partners of the country.(APA 05-01-2016)

The Memorandum is supported by the Chamber of Commerce Tenerife, ELO - Portuguese Association for Economic Development and Cooperation, Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development, NABA - Norwegian-African Business Association and other organisations.

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