



MEMORANDUM

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COMMISSIONER PIEBALGS TO ANNOUNCE NEW SUPPORT FOR BENIN DURING HIS VISIT TO THE COUNTRY

EU Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs is to announce tomorrow that EU support for Benin in 2014-2020 will amount to almost €450 million. This announcement will be made during his visit to Benin on 4 and 5 September 2014.

In addition to continuing to support the governance sector, the EU is to provide aid for the agricultural and energy sectors. Aid for the energy sector will focus on improving the population's access to energy, promoting renewable energies and energy efficiency.

The visit will confirm the EU's commitment to helping Benin in its development process. It will also provide an opportunity for an exchange of views between Commissioner Piebalgs and the Benin authorities on economic and development issues, the results achieved and the outlook for future cooperation between the EU and Benin.

Prior to his arrival in Benin, Commissioner Piebalgs declared, 'Our historic commitment to Benin is to be renewed and consolidated because we have taken note of the efforts the country has made to combat poverty. I applaud the commitment of the authorities to achieving the Millennium Development Goals'.

'We appreciate the scale of the challenges involved in improving living standards in Benin against a background of population growth, and we want to support the ambitious policy of the national authorities by targeting our aid on key sectors for the population, such as good governance, access to energy and the development of more sustainable agriculture.'

During Commissioner Piebalgs' visit, the EU and Benin will also sign four financing agreements for a total of €47 million (31 billion CFA francs). These concern the Economic Governance Support Project (€5 million), the 'Easier Access to Drinking Water for All' Water Sector Support Project (€19 million), the Justice Support Programme (€8 million) and the Benin/Niger Transport Programme (€15 million).

Commissioner's schedule

In the course of his visit to Benin, Commissioner Piebalgs will hold talks with President Boni Yayi. He will reaffirm the existing partnership between Benin and the EU and, in particular, express support for reforms to place the public finances on a sounder footing.

Commissioner Piebalgs will visit the Port of Cotonou with President Boni Yayi. He will also attend a working meeting at the offices of the West African Power Pool (WAPP), which is part-funded by the EU.

Description of the four Financing Agreements that the EU and Benin will sign during Commissioner Piebalgs' visit:

The 'Easier Access to Drinking Water for All' Water Sector Support Project (€19 million) is designed to significantly increase access to drinking water and to raise hygiene standards in rural areas. In the light of developments in drinking water coverage, there are still reasons to hope that Benin will achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the area of drinking water provision by 2015. The EU is pleased that the project will help to achieve this goal by supplying drinking water to almost 500 000 people.

The Economic Governance Support Project (€5 million) will help to make the management and information system for public finances, human resources and statistics more efficient.

The Benin/Niger Transport Programme (€15 million) will enable the Government of Benin to conduct additional studies (market study, logistical study, sectoral study) and will provide technical assistance to all the public and semi-public operators in the logistics chain.

Lastly, **the Justice Support Programme (€8 million)** is designed to:

- 1) Support improvements to administration, coordination and planning of justice at the central level of the Ministry of Justice, Legislation and Human Rights;
- 2) Enable provision of a high-quality service to individuals by the courts and the Ministry's decentralised departments;

3) Promote respect for human rights in prisons and the setting-up of social and vocational rehabilitation for prisoners, particularly minors in conflict with the law. (EC 04-09-2014)

EU/TUNISIA: €300 MILLION MACRO-FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PACKAGE SIGNED

The European Union and the Tunisian authorities have completed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the Loan Facility Agreement related to the €300 million Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) package for Tunisia. The documents were signed on behalf of the Republic of Tunisia by the Tunisian Minister of Finance, Mr. Hakim ben Hammouda, and by the Governor of the Central Bank of Tunisia, Dr. Chadly Ayari, and will now need to be ratified by the Tunisian Parliament. In July 2014, Siim Kallas, at the time Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro, had signed the MoU on behalf of the EU. In May the European Parliament and the Council of the EU approved the MFA for Tunisia.

The financial assistance, in the form of a medium-term loan, will be provided during the course of 2014 and 2015 in three equal instalments of €100 million each.

This assistance is part of the EU's and other international donors' efforts to help Tunisia overcome the severe economic difficulties caused by the combination of a weak external economic environment and the political transition process following the 2011 revolution. It will support the two-year comprehensive economic adjustment and reform programme agreed between Tunisia and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the context of the Stand-by Arrangement approved by the IMF in June 2013. The assistance is designed to help Tunisia move forward with its planned economic reforms while also underpinning its political reform efforts. Against this background the MFA is linked to the implementation of a number of economic policy measures as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.

The assistance complements the increased financial resources provided by the EU to Tunisia under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, and the EU SPRING programme to support partnership, reforms and inclusive growth in the EU's southern neighbourhood, among other forms of assistance.

Macro-Financial Assistance is an exceptional EU crisis response instrument available to the EU's neighbouring partner countries. This operation is complementary to assistance provided by the IMF. MFA loans are financed through EU borrowing on capital markets. The funds are then on-lent with similar financial terms to the beneficiary countries.

The assistance package for Tunisia was proposed by the European Commission on 5 December 2013 and adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 15 May 2014 (EC 04-09-2014).

THE JUNCKER TEAM REVEALED

Although president-elect Jean-Claude Juncker is still interviewing candidates for Commissioners, EurActiv has seen a draft organigram prepared by his services and dated 2 September, in which every single commissioner is assigned a portfolio.

The document is clearly not a final version and subject to change. Juncker is currently wrapping up a series of face-to-face interviews with the 27 Commissioners-designate and is expected to announce his line up early next week.

But the document speaks for itself and is full of surprises:

- the internal market portfolio, currently held by Michel Barnier, has disappeared;
- the Digital Agenda portfolio, currently held by Neelie Kroes, is replaced by a Vice President position for digital and innovation and a Commissioner for 'internet and culture';
- there is no commissioner for enlargement;

- a new post of Vice President for 'better regulation' has appeared;
- a new post for Vice President for Energy Union has appeared (in addition to the commissioner for energy/climate);
- a Vice President for Growth, Economic and Monetary Union, European Semester & Social Dialogue has appeared;

There are six Vice Presidents in the proposed Commission:

- Poland's [Elżbieta Bieńkowska](#) (EPP), with Budget and Financial Control as assignment,
- Estonia's [Andrus Ansip](#) (ALDE) for Growth, EMU, European Semester and Social Dialogue,
- Latvia's [Valdis Dombrovkis](#) (EPP) for Energy Union,
- Slovenia's [Alenka Bratusek](#) for Digital and Innovation,
- the Netherlands [Frans Timmermans](#) for Better Regulation and as already decided by EU leaders,
- Italy's [Federica Mogherini](#) (S&D) as High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

In terms of political balance, the liberal ALDE family is not underrepresented as initially thought. To the contrary, it has five portfolios, including two Vice Presidents.

Overall, the new Commission appears quite balanced politically. The centre-right EPP group has twelve portfolios, including two Vice Presidents. The Socialists and Democrats (S&D) have eight portfolios, including two Vice Presidents.

Bad news for UK, France

The new post of Vice President for 'Better Regulation', assigned to the Netherlands, should please UK Prime Minister David Cameron, who has led a campaign for less red tape and regulation in EU policy-making.

It is less likely however that the British Premier will like the portfolio assigned to the [UK commissioner Jonathan Hill](#) (ECR), on Energy and Climate Change. [Cameron had asked for a super-commissioner](#), but in fact Hill is likely to be under the umbrella of Valdis Dombrovskis, the Vice President for Energy Union.

The same could be said regarding France's Pierre Moscovici, who gets the Competition portfolio. [Paris has sought the economic affairs portfolio](#), which according to the draft, will go to [Finland's Jyrki Katainen who already holds this portfolio](#) he inherited from Olli Rehn.

Financial services

There is no post for internal market commissioner on the leaked document.

Michel Barnier's DG was one of the most powerful, as it had joint responsibility for regulating financial services and the EU's single market.

But there was a growing feeling after the financial crisis that both jobs were too big for one DG. It was rumoured that, following the financial crisis, a new post only dealing with financial regulation would be created – "a financial services tsar".

This role of economic and monetary affairs commissioner appears to be this new position. Indeed, the European Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee has oversight of financial regulation.

The nominee for this post will be Finland's Jyrki Katainen, if the document is to be believed. France's Pierre Moscovici was tipped for the job and the UK lobbied hard for its Commissioner Jonathan Hill to get it.

But the document does not have any details of an internal market commissioner, which could mean the post will be abolished or combined with another portfolio.

There is some confusion in the document about audit, customs and anti-fraud, currently held by commissioner Algirdas Šemeta.

There is a vice-presidency for budget and financial control, a separate customs commissioner and a commissioner for justice and anti-fraud.

Anti-fraud has risen up the executive's agenda since the financial crisis made it vital member states access the revenue they are due.

Belgium gets punished

But the country that has got the worst deal is Belgium, which is assigned the portfolio for "Skills, Youth and Multilingualism". The name of the Belgian commissioner is not indicated in the organigram, as the country, which is struggling to form a government, will probably make its choice today (4 September).

The Belgian press reports that Marianne Thyssen, a Flemish centre-right MEP, will get the job, contradicting [earlier rumours saying Belgium would nominate outgoing Deputy Prime Minister Didier Reynders as its next Commissioner](#).

Thyssen's nomination would bring the number of women in the new EU executive to nine, avoiding a political battle in the European Parliament.

Mixed fortunes for Eastern Europe

Romania, which lobbied to retain the agriculture portfolio currently held by Dacian Cioloș, is likely to obtain Humanitarian Aid for its candidate Corina Crețu (S&D). Surprisingly, the coveted agriculture portfolio is attributed to Ireland's Phil Hogan.

Bulgaria may consider itself a victim of the late arrival to the race of Poland's Bieńkowska. Kristalina Georgieva, the current Bulgarian commissioner responsible for humanitarian aid who was a strong candidate to replace Catherine Ashton as EU chief, [was poised to become budget commissioner in the Juncker team](#).

She has been replaced by the Polish candidate, who was seen in her country as a possible Prime Minister when Donald Tusk will leave for Brussels to take his European Council President job. So Georgieva gets the portfolio of Taxation and Fight against Fraud, and misses the Vice President title.

However it appears strange that a Pole would get the budget job in two successive commissions, as the current budget commissioner Janusz Lewandowski is also Polish.

Heavyweights get promoted

Some candidates who have held important positions in their countries have obtained "extras" in the Juncker organigram. Bratušek who still serves as Prime Minister of Slovenia gets a Vice President job, and so is Valdis Dombrovkis, a former Prime Minister of Latvia, and Estonia's Andrus Ansip, who was the longest-serving head of government in the EU (2005-2014).

No surprise for Germany

Günther Oettinger, the incumbent energy commissioner, will get the trade portfolio in the next EU executive, according to the organigram, [as Germany wanted](#). This means that Oettinger would also become chief negotiator for the controversial Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

The lucky ones

Croatia's Neven Mimica (S&D), the current commissioner for consumer protection, will get the coveted job of Regional Policy commissioner. Austria's Johannes Hahn (EPP) will get the neighbourhood portfolio, which has assumed geostrategic importance in the light of the Ukraine crisis. It is unclear if Hahn will also deal with EU enlargement, as this portfolio has disappeared from the organigram.

The logical choices

Malta's Karmenu Vella (S&D) will get the fisheries portfolio. Denmark's Margrethe Vestager (ALDE) will get Environment. Lithuania's Vytenis Andriukaitis, a physician by training, will be responsible for Health and Food Safety.

Downgrade, disappointment

Slovakia's current Commission Vice President and commissioner for inter-institutional relations and administration Maroš Šefčovič (S&D) is clearly downgraded to holder of the Development portfolio. Spain, who hoped to get an important portfolio for its candidate Miguel Arias Cañete (EPP), is likely to be disappointed by his attribution according to the organigram: Research and Innovation.

The Czech Republic's Věra Jourová (ALDE), a Regional Development Minister who was presented as a candidate for the portfolio of regional funds, is in fact assigned Transport and Space. Space hasn't appeared so far as a Commission attribution.

The remaining attributions are Customs for Hungary's [Tibor Navraczics](#) (EPP), Employment and Social Affairs for Portugal's Carlos Moedas (EPP) and Internet and Culture for Cyprus' Christos Stylianides (EPP). Greece's Dimitris Avramopoulos (EPP) gets Migration, Fundamental Rights and Home Affairs, rather surprisingly, given the fact that his country is frequently criticised for the bad treatment of asylum seekers.

How about clusters?

In theory, groupings of commissioners could be organised ad-hoc, and some degree of subordination could be established under the Vice Presidents and some of the commissioners. But nothing in the organigram indicates possible 'clusters' of commissioners.(EC 04-09-2014)

FRENCH VERSION:

La liste provisoire suggère la répartition suivante :

Luxembourg – Jean-Claude Juncker – Président (PPE)

Pologne – Elżbieta Bieńkowska – Vice Présidente, Budget et contrôle financier (PPE)

Estonie- Andrus Ansip – Vice Président, Croissance, Union économique et monétaire, (ALDE)

Lettonie – Valdis Dombrovkis – Vice Président, Union énergétique (PPE)

Slovénie – Alenka Bratušek, Vice Présidente, Numérique et Innovation (ADLE)

Pays-Bas – Frans Timmermans – Vice Président, Meilleure régulation (S&D)

Italie – Federica Mogherini – Vice Présidente, Haute représentante pour les Affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité (S&D)

Suède – Cecilia Malmström – Justice et Anti-fraude (ADLE)

Hongrie – Tibor Navracsics – douane (PPE)

Grèce – Dimitris Avramopoulos – Migration, Droits, Affaires intérieures (PPE)

Croatie – Neven Mimica – Politique régionale (S&D)

Bulgarie – Kristalina Georgieva – Taxation, lutte anti-fraude (PPE)

Irlande – Phil Hogan – Agriculture (PPE)

Malte – Karmenu Vella – Pêche (S&D)

Allemagne – Günther Oettinger – Commerce (PPE)

France – Pierre Moscovici – Concurrence (S&D)

Finlande – Jyrki Katainen – Économie et Affaires monétaires (PPE)

Danemark – Margrethe Vetager – Environment (ADLE)

Portugal – Carlos Moedas – Emploi et Affaires sociales (PPE)

Royaume-Uni – Jonathan Hill – Énergie et Changement climatique (ECR)

Espagne – Miguel Arias Cañete – Recherche et innovation – (PPE)

République Tchèque- Věra Jourová – Transport et Espace– (ADLE)

Chypre – Christos Stylianides – Internet et Culture (EPP)

Roumanie – Corina Crețu – aide humanitaire (S&D)

Belgique – Marianne Thyssen (?) – Compétences, Jeunesse et multilinguisme (PPE)

Slovaquie – Maroš Šefčovič – Développement (S&D)

Autriche – Johannes Hahn – Voisinage (PPE)

Lithuanie – Vytenis Andriukaitis – Santé et sécurité alimentaire (S&D)

CHINA TO HELP ZIMBABWE BUILD SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

China will help Zimbabwe build special economic zones and industrial parks to jump start exports and a struggling economy, its ambassador to Harare said on Thursday, as a Chinese firm started expanding the country's largest hydropower plant.

The pledge by Beijing's top envoy to Zimbabwe, Lin Lin, comes days after 90-year-old President Robert Mugabe returned from a trip to China during which he sought financial help and investment from the world's number two economy.

Mr Lin told Mr Mugabe during a ceremony to mark the start of work to expand Kariba hydropower station, 400km northwest of Harare, that Beijing was ready to deepen bilateral relations.

Investors in the zones would benefit from special tax breaks and officials said they would not have to comply with black economic empowerment laws that force foreign companies to sell majority shares to black Zimbabweans.

"China is ready to take part in the construction of Zimbabwe's special economic zones and industrial parks, lead the co-operation in infrastructure construction, mining industry, manufacturing industry and other fields, and encourage more Chinese companies to invest in Zimbabwe," Mr Lin said.

Shunned by Western countries since 2000 over charges of human rights abuses and election rigging, Mr Mugabe has increasingly embraced a "Look East" policy.

However, during Wednesday's session of parliament, Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa dismissed suggestions Mr Mugabe had gone to Beijing to beg for loans backed up by promises of shares in future mineral resources.

In January China's Exim Bank agreed to lend Zimbabwe \$319m to add 300MW to the Kariba hydropower plant, an upgrade that is expected to ease daily power shortages in the southern African country. (Reuters 04-09-2014)

DENMARK PAYS FOR POWER TRANSMISSION LINE IN MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambican state electricity company EdM is building a new power transmission line linking the administrative post of Ressano Garcia, in Maputo province, to the district of Macia, in Gaza province, said the company's chairman.

Augusto Sousa Fernando told Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias, that the work, costing US\$70 million funded by the Danish International Development Agency (Danida), "will surely improve the quality of power in Gaza and Inhambane provinces. "

According to the chairman of EdM this line is already one of the benefits arising from construction of the Ressano Garcia Power Plant fired by natural gas from the Pande and Temane gas fields.

The choice of Ressano Garcia for the installation of the new power plant was due to the proximity of the gas line that links the Pande and Temane region with South Africa as well as the fact that Ressano Garcia is close to the power grid.

The new power plant diversifies energy sources in Mozambique, which to date has been 99 percent dependent on electricity generated by hydroelectric facilities, 94 percent of which from the Cahora Bassa dam.

Fernando Sousa also told the newspaper that the new line linking Ressano Garcia to Macia is expected to be operational in 2016 (04-09-2014)

AFRICAN FARMERS' WOES MOTIVATE AU PUSH FOR GREEN REVOLUTION

The fate of farmers affected by climate change and unable to feed Africans dominated Tuesday's opening of the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF), which has attracted 1,000 delegates from 80 countries around the world.

Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the African Union Commission Chairperson, said lowering the cost of producing food for the African population and making Africa a leading exporter of food to the rest of the world is one of the key priorities of the AU vision of a progressive Africa.

"We want agriculture that is modern and anchored on modern science," Dlamini-Zuma said at the opening of the AGRF, holding against a backdrop of challenges to food production and climate change.

The AU is gearing for the modernization of agriculture to grow the sector at the rate of 50 percent by 2025. The sector's growth objectives were part of pledges made by African leaders at the Summit in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, where 2025 was agreed upon as the deadline to end hunger.

Dlamini-Zuma said there is need to deepen the food markets and effectively link the farmers to the market for their commodities.

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said a real transformation of the African agriculture was important but would be achieved only if the leaders of Africa stuck to the implementation of pledges.

“African leaders must be held accountable to the promises they make to improve agriculture,” Annan said. “Africa’s collective and real revolution will be critical for our future.”

At the Forum, agricultural experts said improving agriculture in Africa requires additional investments in other sectors, including roads, to enable the farmers to transport their goods to the market.

But transparency and access to the right information for farmers still remain an issue.

Eleni-Gebremedhin, founder of the Ethiopian Commodities Exchange (ECX) said despite the efforts to create commodity exchanges to improve on the value of farm produce, farmers were still being cheated.

“There are challenges in ensuring the transparency in agriculture through the agricultural commodity exchanges. There are institutions inside and outside of Ethiopia, who are against this model locally and internationally,” Eleni said.

Food security experts at the AGRF said although African small-scale farmers were blamed for poor production of food crops, they were not properly supported to ensure they effectively produce.

Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, said the AU declared 2014 as the year of agriculture to ensure the effective follow-up of the commitments to improve agriculture.

Tumusiime said the challenge was to avail seeds to farmers and create systems to follow up on the progress of the commitments made by African leaders to improve the welfare of farmers.

“The African Union will work to catalyse these commitments. We want to see an Africa with modern agriculture. We need science to move the agriculture agenda. We need seeds modified to ensure the products are available at every stage,” Tumusiime said. (Pana 03/09/2014)

AFDB PROVIDES GRANTS FOR AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS IN MOZAMBIQUE

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has approved two grants worth a total of US\$ 1.223 million dollars for preparation of projects in the agricultural sector in Mozambique, the bank said in a statement. Approved as part of the Agricultural Fast Track Fund, the two grant recipients are Odebrecht and EcoFarm Moçambique, private sector entities that work in the areas of infrastructure and agriculture, respectively.

According to the statement, the purpose of the grants is to fund project preparation activities, including feasibility studies and environmental and social impact assessment.

The grant provided to Odebrecht Mozambique will be used to fund investments related to development of a value chain for chicken production, including designing an aviary, as well as processing and distribution of chicken meat in Mozambique.

This project will be carried out in the districts of Lugela and Mocuba, Zambezia province, in an area of 6,000 hectares.

For the case of Mozambique Ecofarm, the donation will fund preparation of a sugar cane production project, including an environmental recovery plan and a social impact assessment, design of an irrigation system and an electrification project for the sugar cane processing plant.

This project will be carried out in Chemba, in Mozambique’s Sofala province, in an area of 3,500 hectares. (04-09-2014)

HIGH POVERTY LEVELS IN ZAMBIA WORRY CIVIL SOCIETY

The Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) here has called on government to embrace joint action plan which was developed by government itself and the organization to address extreme poverty in the country.

CSPR Board Chairperson, John Lijimu, on Tuesday challenged government to engage in meaningful multi-sectoral dialogue with relevant stakeholders in finding workable, practical and lasting interventions to deal with extreme poverty.

Lijimu expressed concern that poverty continues to remain high in the country despite government implementing interventions meant to reduce it.

“The Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR), through the Ministry of Finance, challenges government and any other stakeholders to find opportunities to engage in meaningful multi-sectoral dialogue with all other relevant stakeholders in finding workable, practical and lasting interventions to deal with extreme poverty in Zambia,” Lijimu stated Tuesday.

He said there is need to discuss and agree on current governance issues negatively impacting eradication of extreme poverty and also build consensus on social sector reforms needed for eradication of extreme poverty.

Lijimu also expressed concern that the country has continued to record an increase in income inequality.

“In the period 2006 to 2010, the Fifth National Development plan was implemented. However, strategies implemented did not significantly reduce extreme poverty across the provinces in Zambia.”

He cited the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey “LCMS “ of 2010 which indicated that rural extreme poverty stood at 57.7 in 2010 compared to 58.5 percent in 2006, this only marks 0.8 percentage points reduction in five years of employing poverty reduction measures as a country.

“In the same period, Zambia has recorded an increase in income inequality overallly from 60 to 65%. In the rural areas, the income inequality has risen from 54 to 60%. This can be further validated by Zambia’s Gini co-efficient which currently stands at 0.65. On the human development index, Zambia is ranked 164 out of 187,” Lijimu added. (Pana 03/09/2014)

MOZAMBIQUE COMBATS ILLEGAL FISHING BY RATIFYING INTERNATIONAL TREATY

The government of Mozambique recently ratified a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) agreement on port measures to combat, prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Following Gabon and the Seychelles, Mozambique is the third African country to sign the treaty (FAO Port State Measures Agreement – PSMA), which, in addition to the European Union, has now been ratified by New Zealand, Oman, Uruguay, Chile, Norway, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

Although 92 countries approved the creation of the PSMA in 2009, the application of the treaty depends on its approval by at least 25 countries. Mozambique’s ratification is therefore seen as a positive step towards the agreement’s implementation by environmental organisations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

In Mozambique, the annual impacts of illegal fishing are estimated at about US\$35 million, and fishing without a license, reporting false catch quotas and catching juveniles or protected species are the biggest concerns for the authorities.

Billed as being low-cost but high-impact, the initiative also aims to ensure multilateral intervention to detect vessels suspected of illegal activities and prohibit their entry to ports of the signatory countries, as well as banning the purchase of the fish they carry. (04-09-2014)

EU TO OBSERVE TUNISIAN LEGISLATIVE AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Following an invitation from the Tunisian authorities, the European Union is deploying an Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) for the legislative and presidential elections in Tunisia, scheduled for 26 October and 23 November 2014 respectively. A memorandum of understanding on the mission was signed yesterday between the EU Delegation to Tunisia and the Higher Independent Authority for the Elections (ISIE).

The mission will be led by a member of the European Parliament and will include observers from the 28 EU member states, as well as Norway, Switzerland and Canada.

EU EOMs are mandated to present a precise, detailed and strictly impartial assessment of the electoral processes in line with the national legal framework as well as with international standards and treaties. Moreover, the EOM will be in charge of analysing the whole electoral process, including the pre-campaign phase and the electoral campaign, voters' awareness, logistical preparations, the voting process, vote counting, and pre- and post-electoral disputes.

The Mission will issue a preliminary statement within 48 hours after Election Day. A comprehensive assessment will be handed over to ISIE within 2 months after the end of the elections.

During the last months, the EU has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ISIE and HAICA (the High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication) and provided technical expertise to support ISIE in its institutional and operational capacities and HAICA in the creation of a Media component in the electoral process. The EU also supports civil society in its local observation activities for the coming elections. In 2011, the EU deployed an EOM to support the follow-up of the different phases of the Constituent Assembly elections. (Neighbourhood Info 03-09-2014)

ANGOLA SOVEREIGN FUND RECEIVES US\$5 BILLION

The transfer of US\$1.35 billion in June completed the initial allocation of US\$5 billion to the Angola Sovereign Fund (Fsdea), according to the audit report on the accounts for 2013.

The audit conducted by Deloitte & Touche, published Wednesday, noted that in 2013 the existing funds were applied in currencies and cash equivalent financial instruments.

With the initial capital now completely transferred, Fsdea is focused on development of its investment portfolio in line with the policy established by the government, aimed at preserving capital, maximising long-term returns and development of commercial infrastructure.

Thus, in addition to investments in traditional assets based in more developed markets, the portfolio will be increasingly applied in alternative investments in the sectors of infrastructure, agriculture, mining and real estate, in sub-Saharan African markets, said the statement published on the Ministry of Finance website.

Last August, the Angola Sovereign Fund announced it was sending students to the School of Management and Law at Zurich University of Applied Sciences as part of a scholarship programme called "Future Leaders in Angola."

"This initiative will offer young Angolan graduates the opportunity to access a unique and intensive course focused on international business management, investment banking and finance," according to the statement. (04-08-2014)

MEDIA NEIGHBOURHOOD TRAINING ON INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES FOR ALGERIAN JOURNALISTS

The EU-funded Media Neighbourhood project has invited journalists from Algeria to take part in a two-day workshop on 'Reporting the EU – Interviewing techniques', to be held in Algiers on 25-26 November 2014. The deadline for applications is 30 September.

The two-day training event will cover the following areas:

- Examining different types of interviews
- How to research and prepare for the interview
- How to treat, and not cheat, the interviewee
- How to phrase the questions
- When and how to interrupt
- How to write up/edit the interview

The journalists are required to have worked in any established outlet of any media platform for at least two years as a reporter or editor, and to have interest in covering international news, especially concerning the EU and related subjects.

The training will be delivered interactively, with practical exercises focused on examples of the country's relations with the EU.

Applicants are invited to send a CV and a letter outlining their experience and suitability to (in English, French or Arabic) to aymen.abderahmen@bbcmediaaction.org by September 30, 2014.

Media Neighbourhood is a three-year training programme for journalists, editors and managers from broadcast, print and online. It is funded by the European Union and delivered by a consortium led by BBC Media Action.

The programme has two main aims:

- To strengthen the professional capacity of journalists, particularly in the areas of media independence and online media.
- To improve the reporting of EU social, economic and political policies within the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Caucasus. (Neighbourhood Info 03-09-2014)

BAUXITE ANGOLA PLANS TO RESUME MINING IN GUINEA-BISSAU

The Bauxite Angola Company plans to invest more than US\$500 million in Guinea-Bissau, when it re-launches bauxite mining in Madina Boe, in the Gabu region of the east of the country, the chairman of the company said Wednesday in Bissau.

The company suspended its operations in Guinea-Bissau due to the coup of 12 April, 2012, which deposed the government at the time led by Carlos Gomes Junior.

Bernardo Campos was received Tuesday by Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira and, according to the Portuguese News Network, said "we expect investments in the port, in railways, in the road and mine itself could exceed US\$500 million. "

"The port of Buba, in the region of Quinara, in the south, instead of just being a mining port is expected to have a terminal for commercial exploration, able to meet the needs of other countries like Mali, which has no direct access to the sea."

The chairman of Bauxite Angola said plans were also underway for other mining projects near the bauxite mines, specifically next to the border with Guinea Conakry. (04-09-2014)

BOOSTING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EURO-MED REGION: UfM SECRETARIAT HOLDS TALKS WITH BARCELONA UNIVERSITIES

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) this week hosted a meeting gathering Rectors and Vice Rectors for international affairs of the universities of Barcelona. The objective was to explore opportunities for collaboration, with the purpose of strengthening links and increasing the involvement of universities in UfM initiatives in the Euro-Mediterranean Region.

Recalling the role of the Secretariat as an operational platform promoting regional cooperation projects and fostering dialogue and synergies with universities, civil society and governments, UfM Secretary General Fathallah Sijilmassi stressed the importance of boosting knowledge transfer and student mobility for a greater integration in the region.

The Secretariat presented some of its flagship projects in the field of Higher Education and Research, namely the construction of the Euro-Mediterranean University of Fez or the development of Higher Education programmes on Food Security and Rural Development, and invited participants to present new proposals related to the current needs in the Mediterranean region (quality assurance, mobility, employment, knowledge transfer etc.) and whereby the support of the UfM could bring an added value.

An open discussion followed, allowing participants to highlight their activities in the Euro-Mediterranean region (double degrees, exchange programmes, cooperation in research, etc.), which are of particular interest to the Union for the Mediterranean. The UfM Secretariat also introduced future initiatives that could be jointly carried out with universities throughout the academic year, such UfM open days, talks, internship agreements etc.

The meeting was held following the Secretariat's strategy to reinforce ties and further operational collaboration with Euro-Mediterranean universities. (Neighbourhood Info 04-09-2014)

LESOTHO PRIME MINISTER RETURNS HOME TO PICK UP PIECES

Lesotho's Prime Minister Thomas Thabane returned to state house in the capital Maseru on Wednesday, four days after he fled to neighbouring South Africa following an apparent bid by the military to oust him, an aide said.

Mr Thabane met with South Africa's President Jacob Zuma and security chiefs from regional countries this week in an effort to end a political crisis in the kingdom.

South African police had escorted him home afterwards, Thabane's adviser Samonyane Ntsekele said. "He's in State House. He's the one in charge. South African police are with him and he is well secured. He saw the king today and we hope they will work together as a team. I don't know what has been agreed," he said.

Lesotho, a mountainous state of 2-million people, has a parliamentary democratic government and the king serves a largely ceremonial role.

Mr Thabane fled to South Africa early on Saturday, hours before the army surrounded his residence and overran police stations in Maseru, in what the prime minister called a coup. Lesotho's army said that it had not tried to oust the prime minister but had rather moved against police suspected of planning to arm a political faction. One policeman was shot dead and four others wounded.

Power struggle

The unrest stems from a power struggle between Mr Thabane, who is supported by the police, and Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing, who has the loyalty of the army, diplomats said.

Tension has risen since Mr Thabane, who has accused Mr Metsing of orchestrating the coup, suspended parliament in June amid feuding in the two-year-old governing coalition.

Mr Thabane told Reuters at the weekend he had fired the army commander, Lt-Gen Kennedy Tlali Kamoli, and appointed Brig Maaparankoe Mahao to replace him. But Lt-Gen Kamoli has not said publicly he will stand down.

Lesotho has suffered several coups since independence from Britain in 1966. At least 58 locals and eight South African soldiers died during a political stand-off and subsequent fighting in 1998, when Pretoria sent in troops.

Besides textile exports and a slice of regional customs receipts, Lesotho's other big earner is hydropower and water, both of which it supplies to South Africa. (Reuters 04-09-2014)

DAMS WILL NOT SOLVE ALL AFRICA'S ENERGY PROBLEMS

The world's water experts convene in Stockholm on Thursday where King Carl Gustav will present the city's Water Prize to John Briscoe, a Harvard professor and former water manager at the World Bank. After many years spent in the international water bureaucracy, Briscoe says he is "controversial and proud of it". Indeed, the jury's choice raises contentious questions about how best to manage water resources for the shared benefit of all.

Since the turn of the century, Briscoe has been the world's pre-eminent crusader for large dams in Africa and other continents. In the 20th century, Europe developed about 80% of its hydropower potential, while Africa has still exploited only 8% of its own.

It would be hypocritical, Briscoe contends, to withhold funds for more dam building in Africa now.

Africa has tried to follow Europe's path to industrial development before. With funding and advice from the World Bank and other institutions, newly independent governments built large dams that were supposed to industrialise and modernise their countries in the 1960s and 1970s. The Kariba Dam on the Zambezi, the Akosombo Dam on the Volta and the Inga 1 and Inga 2 dams on the Congo River are the most prominent examples of this approach.

Mega-dams have not turned out to be a silver bullet, but a big albatross on Africa's development. Their costs spiralled out of control, creating huge debt burdens, while their performance did not live up to the expectations. Their benefits were concentrated on mining companies and the urban middle classes, while the rural population has been left high and dry. Africa has become the world region that is most dependent on hydropower. As rainfalls are becoming less and less reliable, this has made the continent highly vulnerable to climate change.

In 2008, mining companies consumed more electricity than the whole population in sub-Saharan Africa. After tens of billions of dollars in foreign aid have been spent on energy projects, 69% of the continent's population continues to live in the dark. Prioritising the needs of mining companies and big cities over the rural populations, the World Bank's latest dam projects in Africa will further entrench this energy apartheid.

Meanwhile, the communities that were displaced by the Kariba and Inga dams continue to struggle for just compensation decades after the projects were built. Because poor people pay the price but don't reap the benefits of these investments, the independent World Commission on Dams has found that dams "can effectively take a resource from one group and allocate it to another". The Tonga people, who were displaced by the Kariba Dam and suffered starvation as a consequence, have to this date remained without clean water or electricity, despite the huge reservoir on their doorsteps.

Luckily, solutions that do not sacrifice one group of people for the benefit of another are available today. Wind, solar and geothermal energy have become competitive with hydropower. Unlike large dams, these energy sources don't depend on centralised electric grids, but can serve the needs of the rural populations wherever they live. This is why the International Energy Agency recommends that the bulk of foreign energy aid be devoted to decentralised, renewable energy sources if the goal of sustainable energy for all by 2030 is to be met. A diverse, decentralised portfolio of renewable-energy projects will also make African countries more resilient to climate change than putting all eggs into the basket of a few mega-dams.

Just because Europe developed with large dams in the 20th century does not mean Africa has to do the same today. In the telecom sector, Africa has successfully leapfrogged Europe's landline model and relied on cellphone companies to provide access to the majority of the population.

Like cellphone towers, wind, solar and micro-hydropower projects can be built quickly, close to where people need them, and without major effects on the environment.

Large dams may still make sense in specific situations, but Africa's future is lit by the sun. We appreciate that Briscoe has reinvigorated an important debate about large dams. But we hope that in the coming years, the Stockholm Water Prize will celebrate the solutions of the future rather than the past. (BD 04-09-2014)



EBCAM NEWS



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Strategic Partner



We are pleased to inform you that this year's **2nd Africa Finance** will be held on November 3rd in Frankfurt.

The Afrika-Verein der deutschen Wirtschaft (German-African Business Association) is initiating this conference with the European Investment Bank as the strategic partner and in cooperation with the Association of German Banks. It will be held at the **Hotel Le Méridien** in Frankfurt.

Africa's economies are growing and we believe strongly in the potential of the markets. The Afrika-Verein promotes economic cooperation which will be of mutual benefit for African and German companies.

Financing their business in Africa is often an issue for German companies. Therefore we will show different options of long and short term finance, private equity participation and governmental instruments and insurances. Interested institutions are offered to organize Working Sessions to discuss their solutions.

Many German companies are not yet aware of the possibilities the cooperation with African banks might offer. During our conference we would like to enhance the understanding and offer personal contacts to African Financing Institutions such as yours. Therefore we would like to invite you to participate in our conference and possibly host a Working Session for the participants from Germany and Europe.



Venue

HypoVereinsbank AG
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"Somebody was asked how he would operate in government and the person said he would face only two things — infrastructure and education. With infrastructure, other things will follow."

Aliko Dangote, Nigerian Investor and Richest Man in Africa

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- Transport infrastructure and logistics
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The program of the **2nd German-African Infrastructure Forum** also provides:

- Presentations of current projects and German-African Cooperation in the fields of transport, infrastructure and logistics, construction and urban development
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- Presentation opportunities for your products and solutions

Fernando Matos Rosa
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