MEMORANDUM

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SUMMARY

EU PROVIDES NEW SUPPORT TO HELP MIGRANTS AND VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

EU Development Commissioner, Andris Piebalgs, has today announced a new project to promote and protect the rights of migrants moving between developing countries, worth over €10 million. The project focuses on two types of migrants: those who carry out domestic work in the recipient country (e.g. house-cleaning) and those who fall victim of human trafficking.

Currently, many developing countries without adequate migration or labour policy frameworks rely substantially on migrant labour force for their economic development. Migrants are vulnerable, and susceptible of being victims of forced labour, in particular in sectors such as domestic work, given the 'invisible' nature of their work. They also represent an easy target for human trafficking networks.

Commissioner Piebalgs said: **"This project proposes an innovative approach focusing on migration between developing countries. It shows the EU's genuine and firm commitment to address human trafficking and forced labour, some of the worst forms of modern slavery, and our will to improve migrants' rights more generally. And it's clear for us that we need to work with civil society to make sure that migrants' dignity is respected".**

Thanks to the project, direct social assistance and protection will be provided to the migrants and their families. This support will for instance include access to healthcare, legal assistance and reintegration measures like training, or interpretation services. These concrete measures will be adapted to the specific needs of each category of migrants targeted through this initiative.

The project also aims to help civil society organisations (CSOs) to better protect the rights of these migrants: for example, by creating a network where all the CSOs can share best practices. Promoting well-managed migration, labour and anti-trafficking policies and legislation, and supporting dialogue with public authorities, employers' associations and the private sector, are some other actions that will be pursued.

The project in funded under the Global Public Goods and Challenges programme – which is part of the Development and Cooperation Instrument. It will be implemented by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), targeting the following origin, transit and destination countries:

- Ethiopia and Zimbabwe in Africa
- Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Honduras in the Americas
- Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, Kazakhstan, Russia and Tajikistan in Asia
- Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco in Middle East and North Africa

The 'Rights of Migrants in Action' project was launched today at a joint event with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), during the Policy Forum on Development (being held in Brussels on 1-2 October). The two-day event brings together CSOs, local authorities from EU countries and partner countries with representatives of the EU Institutions to discuss, consult and exchange information and experiences. EU Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, delivered the opening address of the event on 1 October.

There are 232 million migrants worldwide, according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). Over half of these migrants reside in low- and middle income countries, and many developing countries are simultaneously countries of origin and destination of migrants. This increases regional and global mobility and creates opportunities for contributing for instance to poverty reduction and innovation. But it also requires effective governance in order to address challenges such as 'brain drain' (outward migration of educated people), migrant exploitation and the effects of migration on urbanisation.

Migration is a priority under the EU's development cooperation policy. Between 2004 and 2013, the Commission has committed over €1 billion to more than 400 migration-related projects. This support has focused on capacity building for migration management (e.g. sharing expertise, providing training) with an emphasis on maximising the development impact of migration.

DENMARK BOOSTS UGANDA TRADE CAPACITY

Importers and business people will soon get timely and efficient services at clearance points following a partnership deal that was signed between the Royal Danish Embassy, Uganda and TradeMark East Africa (TMEA).

This is in support of the National Electronic Single Window (NESW). Once implemented, NESW will improve availability and easy access to international trade documents and information leading to reduced transaction delays and costs. The Danish ambassador, Dan e Frederiksen said his government will provide TMEA with a grant of $5 million (which will be paid in phases. Each phase is supposed to take one year) in support of their efforts to reach the agreed objectives and outputs of the NSEW.

"I am particularly impresses with the custom reforms at the URA. The new system and advanced technology introduced will help in improving trade in Uganda and the rest of the world. We have confidence in the NSEW program because it's objectives are clear. We are grad to be partners with TMEA for this good cause,'' Ambassador Fredrick said.

Trademark East Africa Country Director, Allen Asiimwe said Uganda still lags behind compared to other East African countries in terms of how much they export.

She said this is caused by the long delays spent in securing documents. She said the single window will not only save time, but also money spent in securing all the documents needed for one to export goods.

(Allafrica 24-09-2014)

EAST AFRICA: EAC FIVE SIGN EU TRADE DEAL

The East African Community has signed the Economic Partnership Agreement ahead of the October 1 deadline. Although the process was delayed due to varied positions by the five East African countries, Foreign Affairs Secretary, Amina Mohammed welcomed the ratification that will shelve huge taxes on import and export produces. EPA's as they are known govern the trade relations between African Countries and the European Union.

The signing, which is a renewal of the original contract that ends next month, was supposed to have been effected in July, but has been delayed due to inability by the states to forge a common stand.

Hailing the action that was operationalised on Saturday, Mohammed said failure by the countries to agree on a common position would have led to great loss of money through imposed levies."If negotiations had not succeeded, a lot of money would have been lost, especially by farmers who export flowers and horticultural goods to the European Union countries," Mohammed said. She was addressing the press in her office yesterday, a day after returning from Arusha, Tanzania where the state parties had converged to deliberate on common stand prior to renewing the contract.

"We have agreed as the East African Community and signed everything; we have a good deal," she said, adding that the move was a confirmation of exemption from taxes. Mohammed said the Kenyan delegation included among others, Agriculture and EAC Secretaries, Felix Koskei and Phylis Kandie. (Allafrica 22-09-2014)

EAST AFRICA SIGNS DRAFT EU TRADE PACT TO PREVENT TAX CHARGES

The East African Community negotiated a draft agreement to extend preferential trade access with the European Union, replacing an interim accord due to expire this month, according to Kenya's Foreign Ministry.

If the Economic Partnership Agreement is ratified by the EU, exporters from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi will maintain duty-free access to Europe, the ministry said yesterday on its Twitter account, citing a signing ceremony that took place in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha.

The accord follows more than a decade of negotiations, with export taxes and non-compliance provisions some of the main sticking points in the final stages of talks, EU Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht said last year.

The EAC common market signed an interim EPA in 2007 that gave the five African nations duty- and quota-free access to the EU in exchange for lifting restrictions on EU goods over 25 years. The EAC exported 2.2 billion euros ($2.8 billion) of goods to the EU last year, and imported 3.5 billion euros, representing about 0.2 percent of all EU trade, according to the European Commission Directorate-General for Trade.

In Kenya, East Africa's largest economy, the failure for an EPA to be enacted before the Oct. 1 deadline would result in the EU imposing taxes on the nation's agricultural shipments, excluding coffee beans, tea and carnations, the EU said today in a statement in the Nairobi-based Daily Nation newspaper.

The country would be subjected to tariffs under the Generalised System of Preferences, which are lower than normal EU charges. Under the GSP regime, taxes on Kenyan imports to the EU will include as much as 8.5 percent on fresh roses and cut flowers, 30.1 percent on processed vegetables, 6.4 percent on tobacco and 2.6 percent on roasted coffee, the EU said.

Europe buys about 40 percent of Kenya's fresh produce exports, according to the country's Foreign Ministry. The other four EAC members are considered least-developed nations and can send goods under the Everything But Arms regime, while Kenya is a developing nation, the EU said. (Business week 22-09-2014)

AFRICA PAYS THE PRICE OF LOW HARVESTS THANKS TO COSTLY FERTILISERS

Eherculano Thomas Rice, is pleased to have harvested 40 bags of white maize from his eight-hectare field in Chimoio, in Mozambique's Manica Province. But he knows that his productivity and yield would be higher if he had been able to afford to buy fertiliser to add to his crop.

Rice grows cowpea to boost soil fertility in his field and improve his productivity, only buying fertiliser when he can afford it.

According to local NGO Farm Inputs Promotions Africa (FIPS), which works with about 38,000 farmers in five districts in Manica Province, a 50kg bag of fertiliser costs about 33 dollars. And a farmer will need three bags per hectare of land.

Africa is paying the price of low productivity because of limited use of commercial fertilisers by smallholder farmers who produce the bulk of the continent's food.

"For now I intercrop my maize with pigeon pea, to increase soil fertility and it works. But fertiliser could boost my productivity," Rice tells IPS, during a walk around his farm as he points to the mature pigeon pea plants.

"Farmers need awareness on how fertiliser can improve their production for them so that they can save and buy it easily. Farmers are discouraged by having to travel long distances to buy inputs, often a high cost."

Low fertiliser use by smallholder farmers like Rice is a common narrative in sub-Saharan Africa — a continent which currently uses about eight kg/ha of fertiliser. It is a figure that pales against the global average of 93kg/ha and 100-200kg/ha in Asia, according to the Montpelier Panel's 2013 report, *Sustainable Intensification: A New Paradigm for African Agriculture*.

Rice, who was trained by FIPS as a village inputs promotion agent, runs demonstration plots teaching farmers how to use improved inputs. Farmers are given input kits of improved seed and fertilisers as an incentive for them to buy them themselves.

Agriculture currently contributes about 25 percent of Mozambique's GDP and a 2004 Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development evaluation report indicates that improved seeds, fertilisers and pesticides are capable of raising productivity by up to 576 percent.

Charles Ogang, the president of the Uganda National Farmers Federation, tells IPS via email that food security in Africa is compromised because farmers are not using enough agricultural inputs, in particular fertilisers.

"There are many reasons why farmers in Africa are still hardly making a living of agriculture. One of them is the lack of access to key tools and knowledge," Ogang says.

“Fertilisers are often not even available for purchase for farmers who live remotely. I believe that the lack of rural infrastructure, storage and blending facilities, the lack of credit and limited knowledge of farmers of how to use fertilisers are the key constraints for an increased use.”

According to the First Resolution of the Abuja Declaration on fertiliser, African governments have to increase fertiliser use from the average of eight kg of nutrients per hectare to 50 kg of nutrients per hectare by 2015.

“Although no country in sub-Saharan Africa has achieved this target, there are some signs of improvement in the implementation of the Abuja Declaration on Fertiliser by the countries and Regional Economic Communities since June 2006,” says Richard Mkandawire, vice president of the African Fertiliser and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP). He says that Malawi has increased its fertiliser use from an average of 10kg/ha in the 90s, to a current 33kg/ha, and shows the commitment of countries to reach the target of 50kg/ha.

Mkandawire tells IPS that the partnership is undertaking technical research to advance appropriate soil management practices, including the facilitation of soil mapping. It is also testing soil to ensure that smallholder farmers are able to access fertiliser blends that are suitable for their land.

Mkandawire acknowledges that there is no silver bullet to lowering the cost of fertiliser for smallholder farmers. But he says AFAP has employed several types of financial mechanisms to help lower the cost. The mechanisms include facilitating guarantees to fertiliser distributors for retailer credit, financing assistance to importers or blenders to improve facilities, training, financial and technical assistance to warehouses at ports.

In August, AFAP in collaboration with the International Fertiliser Industry Association (IFA) launched a multi-media campaign in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to push African governments to invest in agriculture productivity.

According to the campaign, African governments should ensure farmers have access to adequate and improved inputs especially fertiliser for agriculture transformation and economic development.

In June, African heads of state committed themselves to use agriculture growth to double food productivity, halve poverty and eliminate child under nutrition by 2025 when they came up with the Malabo Declaration following a meeting in Equatorial Guinea.

Charlotte Hebebrand, IFA director general, says Africa’s fertiliser demand is less than three percent of the global market. The continent’s production continues to be low and a significant share of the local production is exported as raw materials.

“Our estimates are that demand will increase over the course of the next three to five years in countries that are stable politically, committed to allocate at least 10 percent of their budget to agriculture, and those that have established sound fertiliser subsidy schemes,” Hebebrand tells IPS.

“Equipped with the right inputs and the knowledge to use these inputs, yields can increase tremendously. For every one kilogram of nutrient applied, farmers obtain five to 30 kg of additional product.”

Poor supply chains for fertilisers where farmers often have to travel long distances to buy a bag of fertiliser, are a primary cause of low fertiliser use in Africa. Poor farming practises are also worsening soil health in Africa.

An analysis of soil health in Africa by the Nairobi-based Alliance for a Green Revolution (AGRA) shows that croplands across sub-Saharan Africa lose 30 to 80 kgs per hectare of essential plant nutrients like phosphorous and nitrogen annually as a result of unsustainable farming practices, which the report warns will “kill Africa’s hopes for a food-secure future.”

AGRA’s Soil Health Programme is working on solving the problem by supporting an extensive network of partnerships in 13 countries in which three million farmers have been trained in using organic matter, applying small amounts of mineral fertilisers, and planting legume crops like cowpea, soybean and pigeon pea. (IPS 25-09-2014)

POLL FINDS 91% OF MOROCCANS FEEL THEIR COUNTRY HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE EU

An overwhelming majority of Moroccans feel the European Union has good relations with their country, with 84% believing the EU is an important partner of Morocco, more than in other Maghreb countries, and more than in the same poll six months earlier. This is one of the key findings of the recently released Spring 2014 EU Neighbourhood Barometer for Morocco, conducted in the framework of an EU-funded opinion polling project for the Neighbourhood.

The survey, based on 1,000 interviews conducted in May-June 2014, finds that 91% per cent of respondents felt the EU had good relations with Morocco, compared to 87% six months earlier, and to an average of 78% in the Maghreb region.

Eighty-four per cent of Moroccans (up from 72% in the last survey) feel the EU is an important partner, with 80% (up from 71%) believing the EU and Morocco share sufficient common values to be able to cooperate – both higher than the average for the Maghreb region (75% and 69% respectively).

Four out of five (80%) of those asked feel EU support contributes a lot to the development of their country, while 74% felt the EU brought peace and stability to the region (compared to figures for the Maghreb region of 67% and 56% respectively).

A large majority of respondents (77%) saw the EU in a positive light. Indeed, the poll found that more than three-quarters (76%) of Moroccans trusted the EU, more than they did other international institutions, like the Arab League (38%) or the UN (42%).

The vast majority of Moroccans questioned in the poll were generally content – more so than other countries in the region – with 83% satisfied with the life they lead.

They were also more optimistic than other countries in the Maghreb region regarding the direction in which the country was going, with 54% of those asked who felt Morocco was going in the right direction, against 30% who felt it was heading the wrong way; 65% said the economic situation was good, with 52% confident it would get better; 71% of those asked were satisfied with the way democracy works in Morocco, above the 62% who were satisfied across the Maghreb region.

A considerable 70% of those asked agreed enough information was available about the EU, while 65% agreed it was easy to understand, well above the regional average (52% and 46% respectively), and the figures from the previous poll (67% and 56%).

The EU Neighbourhood Barometer (opinion polling and media monitoring) is part of the EU-funded Regional Communication Programme, and aims at assessing knowledge and perception of the EU Neighbourhood Policy and its cooperation activities and programmes. (EU Neighbourhood 29-09-2010)

MIXED PICTURE EMERGES OF GOVERNANCE STANDARDS IN AFRICA

African governance standards are gradually improving but there are warning signs of backsliding, an annual index on the way countries are governed showed on Monday.
The Ibrahim Index of African Governance ranked Somalia lowest, coming bottom in all four categories: safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity and human development.
Mauritius kept the top spot, followed by Cape Verde, Botswana, SA and the Seychelles, all of which were in the top five last year.
Mo Ibrahim, the Sudanese telecoms tycoon who founded the index, welcomed the fact that 13 of the 52 countries had improved in overall governance as well as political, social and economic governance over the past five years.
"The picture is mixed," Mr Ibrahim told a news conference.

"Governance has improved across Africa but we need to remain vigilant and not get complacent."

Sustainable economic opportunity, a measure of how governments deliver policies conducive to growth, declined in the past five years, following improvements from 2005 to 2009.

Former president of Botswana Festus Mogae said this was a big challenge for Africa.

"It's a great worry because it has resulted in high unemployment, especially among our youth," Mr Mogae told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"African governments must think of how they can grow their economies so that there are acceptable levels of employment."

More and more Africans are going to school and university, he said, but job creation had not been keeping up with the supply of skilled labour.

Mr Ibrahim cautioned that even the highest performers had deteriorated in at least one index category, a sign that they had to stay committed to the governance agenda to maintain hard-won gains.

"Africa is rising but it's rising slowly," he said.

Mauritius, SA and the Seychelles slipped in the safety and rule of law category, Cape Verde in human development and Botswana in sustainable economic development.

SA also deteriorated on human rights.

Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Zimbabwe and Senegal improved most in overall governance, while Egypt, Libya, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic and Mali deteriorated most.

Southern Africa scored the highest regional average, with Namibia and Lesotho joining Mauritius, Botswana and SA in the top 10.

Central Africa got the lowest regional average, with Central African Republic coming in just ahead of Somalia in the overall ranking, and Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Republic of Congo also among the 10 bottom-ranked countries.

The index is based on more than 100 indicators from more than 30 independent African and international sources. (Reuters 30-09-2014)

MUCH TO BE DONE TO ARREST DECLINE IN ZIMBABWE

A year after Zanu (PF)'s election victory and the formation of a new government, Zimbabwe's politics and economy are increasingly precarious. Immediate prospects for a sustained recovery remain bleak, made worse by dire economic decline, endemic governance failures and tension over ruling-party succession.

The 2008 Global Political Agreement (GPA) was intended to provide space to lay foundations for the country's revitalisation. Key elements of the GPA framework, however, were left undone and what was started by the previous government of national unity has not been consolidated by the new administration. Without major political and economic reforms, the country could slide into a failed state.

Rather than addressing the corroding social and economic fabric, both the ruling party and opposition are embroiled in internal power struggles. Zanu (PF) continues to wheel out an increasingly threadbare explanation that western sanctions bear primary responsibility for its predicament, and that its economic future relies on developing relations with allies such as China and Russia. At the same time, it continues efforts to resuscitate relations with international financial institutions, as its desperate quest to alleviate liquidity constraints continues.

It is, of course, not an "either/or" situation, and Zimbabwe's recovery requires constructive engagement on all fronts. Ironically, it is western support over the past 15 years that has averted a major humanitarian disaster.

Zimbabwe still has the capacity to reform and prevent further deterioration, but has failed to demonstrate the political will to do so. It will continue struggling without actively building confidence on a range of fronts, including tangible commitments to greater policy coherence, improved governance, adherence to the rule of law, accountability and clarity on the leadership succession in Zanu (PF).

Political and economic insecurity is worsened by mounting tension over the succession imbroglio, which has been further complicated by the entry of the first lady, Grace Mugabe, into the political arena. Declaring President Robert Mugabe as the party's candidate for the 2018 elections, when he will be 94 years old, will do little to allay concerns and Zanu (PF) should use its December congress to decide who will replace him were he to be incapacitated or decide not to seek re-election in 2018.

Questions remain about Mugabe's 2013 election victory, which did not secure broad-based legitimacy for the new government. Key process and institutional concerns must be addressed to avoid a rerun of such concerns in 2018. An unambiguous and tangible response to the issues raised by Southern African Development Community and the African Union observer missions is necessary. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission's recent report on the polls and the body's failure to make available an electronic copy of the voters' roll simply reinforces perceptions of institutional bias. Such concerns cannot be simply wished away.

Zanu (PF) holds primary responsibility for investing in efforts to rebuild trust and collaboration with domestic and international constituencies. The challenge needs a collective effort underpinned by an inclusive national dialogue with the opposition and civil society on political, social and economic reform priorities; and clarifying and acting on key policy areas, including indigenisation, land reform, rule of law and fighting corruption.

Opposition to Zanu (PF) has been weakened; the Movement for Democratic Change and other opposition parties are sidelined, their cachet with international players as conduits for recovery severely damaged, and prospects for a common opposition agenda remote. Their inclusion in mapping the way forward is, however, vital, although Zanu (PF) has shown little inclination to engage.

Zimbabwe is an insolvent and failing state, its politics zero-sum, its institutions hollowing out and its once vibrant economy moribund. A major culture change is needed among political elites, as well as a commitment to national over partisan and personal interests. The international community, East and West, must explore common ground to nurture a climate for economic recovery and policy coherence. The government must show it is a reliable partner. The situation is not sustainable and the toxic residue of Zimbabwe's decay permeates the region, further stymieing integration and development. (BD 30-09-2014)

SOUTH AFRICAN EXPRESS AIRWAYS IN 'EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FINANCIAL POSITION'

State-owned airline South African Express Airways (SAX) is in an "extremely difficult financial position" and requires government financial assistance to prepare its 2013-14 annual financial statements on a going concern basis, Public Enterprises Minister Lynne Brown told Parliament on Tuesday.

She said discussions were under way with Treasury about granting the airline a guarantee to allow it to continue its operations. Treasury was also considering an application by South African Airways for an additional going concern guarantee. Government guarantees to various state-owned companies and other contingencies already exceed R450bn and is of concern to Treasury.

In letters to National Assembly speaker Baleka Mbete, Ms Brown explained why the two state-owned airlines were not able to table their financial statements by the end of September as required by the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

With regards to South African Express Airways, the minister said that in terms of the Companies Act the airline was required to be able to continue operating on a going concern basis for a period of at least 12 months after the signing of the annual financial statements. It had to satisfy the act's solvency and liquidity tests to do so.

"SA Express is currently unable to demonstrate such ability without government financial support. The airline has applied for a going concern guarantee and this is being assessed by government. In this regard, my department and National Treasury are in discussions to find a solution to the financial challenges of the airline," Ms Brown said.

In these circumstances the airline's annual report, financial statements and audit report could not be tabled by the end-September deadline, which is six months after the financial year-end in March as required by the PFMA. Ms Brown said the tabling of the report would be made once the request for the going concern guarantee was finalised.

Ms Brown said she had had to postpone the annual general meeting of South African Airways (SAA) because the airline had not been able to submit its annual financial statements and integrated statement to her before end-August. She could therefore also not table the annual report by the end-September deadline. Neither could Broadband Infraco's 2014 integrated report be tabled in time because it was being transferred from the Department of Public Enterprises to the newly created Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services and was not able to hold its annual general meeting in time to meet the deadline. (BD 30-09-2014)

KENYA URGES SPEEDY CONCLUSION OF EURO EPA

Kenya's Foreign Affairs Cabinet Secretary, Amina Mohamed, has called for the speedy conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). Speaking during a meeting with the European Union Managing Director for Africa, Nick Westcott, at the UN Headquarters in New York, Amb. Mohamed underlined the need to conclude negotiations on outstanding issues ahead of the 1 October, 2014, deadline, Kenya's foreign ministry said in a news dispatch from New York.

"A meeting of senior officials should be held as soon as possible, preferably next week, to finalize negotiations on outstanding issues," said Mohamed.

During the meeting, the Mohamed and Westcott agreed that the next round of negotiations should be based on the understanding and text that was reached during discussions held in Brussels on 15 September, 2014.

Endorsing the need to finalize negotiations before the deadline, Mr. Westcott said the East African Community should have a common position based on the outcome in Brussels, adding that he is committed to working towards a mutually-beneficial agreement.

Currently, Kenya enjoys duty free, quota free access to the European Union market but this is set to change if an Economic Partnership Agreement is not in place by 1st October this year.

The present arrangement between EU and EAC is against World Trade Organization (WTO) regulations and the negotiations for EPA are intended to make trade relations between EU and Kenya, and the East African Community in general, WTO compliant.

At the expiry of the 1st October which is set in a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, EAC exports will fall under the EU's Generalized Scheme of Preferences. (Pana 30/09/2014)

LE MALI SORT PROGRESSIVEMENT DE LA CRISE GRACE A L'AIDE INTERNATIONALE

Les 3,3 milliards d'euros promis par la communauté internationale pour la reconstruction du Mali en mai 2013 ont été en partie débloqués, malgré quelques accidents de parcours.

Le Mali se remet pas à pas de la crise de 2012, en partie grâce à l'aide internationale de pays et organisations internationales, décidées un an après le coup d'État militaire qui avait plongé le pays dans le chaos.

« Sur les 3,3 milliards d'euros annoncés, les trois quarts ont déjà été engagés et la moitié a été effectivement versée » a annoncé la secrétaire d'État au développement et à la Francophonie, Annick Girardin à l'occasion de la quatrième réunion de suivi de la Conférence de Bruxelles « Ensemble pour le renouveau du Mali » qui s'est tenue à Paris le 30 septembre.

Un rythme de décaissement jugé satisfaisant par Moussa Mara, premier ministre de la République du Mali. «La note positive est que le Mali est en train de sortir de la crise en partie grâce au soutien international » s'est félicité le premier ministre à l'issue de la réunion.

Du côté français, sur les 280 millions d'euros promis sur 2013-2014 en faveur de la reconstruction au Mali, « 200 ont été engagés et 70 décaissés » a détaillé Annick Girardin. La Commission européenne, un des donateurs principaux à l'aide d'urgence pour le Mali a également décaissé un partie importante des sommes promises. « Plus de la moitié des 523 millions d'euros promis par la Commission européenne lors de la conférence de 2013 a déjà été payée, permettant par exemple l'organisation des élections et la production de milliers de tonnes de denrées alimentaires » a expliqué à *EurActiv* le porte-parole de l'institution pour le développement.

Lors de la conférence internationale « Ensemble pour le renouveau du Mali » pour la reconstruction du pays qui s'est tenue en mai 2013, un an après le début du conflit, près de 3,3 milliards d'euros pour la période 2013-2014 ont été promis au pays par des bailleurs de fonds réunis à Bruxelles. La Commission européenne et les 27 États membres s'étaient engagés à fournir 1,35 milliard d'euros au Mali d'ici 2014, soit un tiers de la promesse internationale, dont 280 millions provenaient de la France.

Mais les fonds annoncés ont dû attendre la stabilisation politique du pays – et notamment l'élection présidentielle de septembre, pour pouvoir être débloqués. Près d'un an et demi après les annonces, les engagements et les versements sont donc en bonne route.

Une bonne nouvelle pour le Mali, qui a du faire ses preuves pour que les fonds promis soient effectivement décaissés, notamment en appliquant la feuille de route de stabilisation politique, décidée lors de la conférence de Bruxelles.

« Nous entamons maintenant la dernière phase du processus: nous espérons que lors de la prochaine rencontre prévue le 5 février à Bamako, le décaissement de l'aide de la conférence de Bruxelles soit achevé » a expliqué le premier ministre de la République du Mali.

Retards

Pour autant, le processus n'a pas été sans heurts. En effet, le versement des fonds a un temps été suspendu, lorsque le Fonds Monétaire International (FMI) a dénoncé une mauvaise gestion des fonds publics en mai 2014, mettant notamment en cause l'achat de l'avion présidentiel et un contrat passé par le ministère de la Défense. Le FMI avait alors suspendu ses versements, suivi par les autres bailleurs.

« Les décaissements ont effectivement été interrompus suite à lors du désaccord avec le FMI » a confirmé a EurActiv Michel Reveyrand de Menthon, représentant spécial de l'UE pour le Sahel.

Reprise de l'économie

Une mission du Fonds monétaire international (FMI) qui s'est achevée le 25 septembre a finalement mis fin à l'embargo sur les versements: La mission a par ailleurs noté une amélioration de l'économie malienne. « En 2014, l'économie malienne renoue avec sa trajectoire de croissance normale, avec un produit intérieur brut (PIB) réel qui progresse de 5.8 %. En 2012, le taux de croissance avait été nul en raison de la crise sécuritaire et en 2013 il n'avait été que de 1,7 % par suite des mauvaises récoltes » a souligné Christian Josz, directeur de la mission.

Cette trajectoire devrait normalement se poursuivre en 2015, avec une « croissance réelle qui devrait se maintenir aux alentours de 5.5 % ».

Cependant la relance économique du pays est loin d'être achevée. « Il faut maintenant entamer un seconde phase, celle de la relance économique. C'est la priorité absolue » a soutenu le premier ministre du Mali.

Malgré les bons résultats du processus entamé à Bruxelles, certains doutes subsistent du côté des ONG sur l'engagement réel des donateurs. Lors de l'annonce de la conférence des donateurs, l'ONG Oxfam s'était alarmée de la participation française. « Il apparaît que les autorités françaises s'apprêtent à faire notamment passer pour contribution une enveloppe de 150 millions d'euros destinés au Mali, constitués des fonds déjà engagés et gelés suite au coup d'État de mars 2012 » relevait l'ONG dans un communiqué.

Autre critique, l'enveloppe française serait constituée au deux tiers de prêts, et seulement un tiers de dons.

« J'ai toujours de sérieux doutes sur la réalité et l'additionalité de cet argent promis par la France » explique Christian Reboul, en charge du financement du développement chez Oxfam France. « C'est un grand classique de la part de la France de surévaluer sa participation » poursuit-il.

Une situation récurrente

Et les exemples ne manquent pas. Après le séisme d'Haïti en 2010, l'État français avait annoncé une aide publique d'urgence et de reconstruction de 325 millions d'euros. Mais selon un rapport de la Cour des comptes intitulé « L'aide française à Haïti après le séisme du 12 janvier 2010 », le montant réel de l'aide supplémentaire n'a en fait été que de 152,5 millions d'euros.

« Mais par rapport au processus habituel de la conférence de donateurs, le processus avec le Mali a été exemplaire» soutient Michel Reveyrand de Menthon. (EurActiv 01-10-2014)

US-KENYA: PRESIDENT KENYATTA NEGOTIATES DIRECT FLIGHTS TO US

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta, has personally taken up the negotiations for direct flights to United states of America, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has said. This arrangement will see Kenya Airways and Amercia's Delta fly directly between the two countries, the ministry said in a press statement from New York.

Kenyatta was speaking to members of the Business council for international understanding during a luncheon hosted in his honour.

Kenyatta attended the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

Kenyatta revealed that he had raised the matter with US Secretary of State, John Kerry, and is optimistic this latest effort will yield results faster than what has been achieved until now.

"We are keen to see the two countries exchange direct flights and I have personally taken it up and raised the issue with top US officials latest being in a meeting with John Kerry yesterday," he said.

He was responding to a question on what the government was doing to facilitate direct air link that will help increase connectivity for people and business between the two countries.

In addition, the President revealed that Boeing Company were also seriously lobbying the US government on the same issue of direct flights.

President Kenyatta said his government is working hard to create a conducive business environment and urged American investors to take advantage of this.

He said opportunities in telecommunications were enormous and cited the mobile payments model – M-Pesa – that had become hugely successful in Kenya.

He said: "The area of telecommunication provides enormous opportunities that some of you can consider investing in.

'we are on the tail end of preparing to launch one seamless network in East Africa where calling from one end to the other will not attract roaming charges.”

He reminded investors that East Africa was one huge market of 150 million people.

East Africa at the same time, he said, remains a tourist destination of choice and that is why a single tourist visa has been introduced.

Already, Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda have entered into agreement on this and the rest are expected to join soon. (Pana 30/09/2014)

'ZIMBABWE STUCK IN ECONOMIC HARDSHIP, DESPITE REDOUBLED EFFORTS'

Though the Zimbabwe government has redoubled its efforts to re-balance policies toward a stable macroeconomic environment conducive to private sector-led growth, economic conditions in the southern African country remain difficult, according to a latest assessment by staff of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

'Growth has slowed down because of inadequate financial flows, despite a very favourable agricultural season,' said Domenico Fanizza, leader of the IMF mission that has been on a visit to Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, from 17 Sept. and will be there through 1 Oct.

In a statement released Tuesday about the mission, a copy of which was made available to PANA here, Fanizza explained that the inadequacy of financial flows and the appreciation of the South African Rand, the major currency of Zimbabwe’s trading partner, has caused a liquidity crunch that has weakened economic activity.

'The external position remains precarious with low levels of international reserves, a large current account deficit, and external arrears,' said the IMF official, noting that Zimbabwean authorities intend to re-engage with the international community.

Already, according to the statement, the authorities took decisive fiscal measures on the revenue and expenditure sides to keep fiscal policy on track and to protect social expenditures, despite the large civil service wage increase earlier in 2014.

'The mission welcomes Zimbabwe’s decision to start working with the international financial institutions to prepare a plan for clearing the outstanding arrears, as a step toward resolving the country’s debt challenge,' said Fanizza.

He went on: “The reform efforts have started to lay the ground for stronger, more inclusive and lasting economic growth and addressing the economic challenges remains a priority for the government.

'It is encouraging that the authorities have come to the conclusion that Zimbabwe cannot address these challenges without the support of the international financial community.'

Fanizza said Zimbabwe's policy reform agenda, which the authorities will monitor with the help of IMF staff under a proposed new 15-month Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) to end December 2015, comprises four major areas.

He mentioned the first area as balancing the primary fiscal budget.

'This will send a strong signal that Zimbabwe’s government intends to live within its means. Moreover, fiscal policy will focus on raising the efficiency and quality of public spending and rebalancing the expenditure mix toward infrastructure and social outlays,' he said.

The second area is about restoring confidence and stability in Zimbabwe's financial sector.

On this, Fanizza explained that approval of the draft operational framework for the acquisition of nonperforming loans by the Zimbabwe Asset Management Company and other private asset management companies by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) Executive Committee/Board, submission to Parliament of amendments to the RBZ Act, and amendments to the Banking Act, will be instrumental in restoring confidence and bringing stability to the sector.

The IMF official mentioned the third area as addressing the country's debt challenge by stepping up re-engagement with all creditors with the objective to normalise relations.

He said it would be essential for Zimbabwe to gather support to define a strategy for clearing its arrears with multilateral institutions.

Fanizza said the fourth area is about clarifying Zimbabwe's indigenisation and economic empowerment laws in order to encourage mutually-beneficial partnerships between domestic and foreign investors.

'This step will go a long way toward allaying negative perceptions on the security of investments and property rights, provide legal transparency and predictability, and reassure markets of the government's open invitation to invest in Zimbabwe,' he added.

After conducting the third and last review under the SMP approved by the IMF management in June 2013, which was followed by discussions with Zimbabwe authorities on a 15-month successor SMP, the Fund's team will submit its report to management for approval by November 2014. (Pana 01/10/2014)

EBOLA EPIDEMIC BATTERING LIBERIAN ECONOMY, SAYS MINISTER

Liberia's Ebola crisis is battering the economy of a nation that has spent the past decade recovering from 14 years of civil war, its minister of commerce said Tuesday.

"The road ahead is not very clear, as our entire development agenda is at risk," said Axel Addy, who was in Geneva for a UN meeting.

"All that we've achieved is at risk should this epidemic continue," he told reporters.

Liberia has been hit the hardest by the worst-ever outbreak of Ebola, which has killed more than 3,000 people in west Africa.

The latest UN data released Saturday said 1,830 people have died from the killer virus in Liberia so far, and 3,458 people have been infected. Authorities now fear the crisis will derail the impoverished state's drive to recover from 14 years of civil war, which by the time it ended in 2003 had claimed 250,000 lives.

Before the epidemic, Liberia had notched up strong growth of more than 9.0% per year since 2005, rising as high as 15.7% in 2007, according to World Bank figures.

"I've been privileged to see a country rise from the rubble of war to peace, to a nation where we see our children going to school, roads being paved," Mr Addy said.

"Ebola has interrupted that severely," said the California-raised minister, whose family fled to the United States in 1989 when he was a child, and who returned in 2005.

Liberia, whose longstanding key export, rubber, has more recently been joined by iron ore, relies heavily on commodity exports.

But with commodity prices falling or flatlining, Addy said the country was already feeling the pinch before the deadly Ebola virus struck in March after spreading from neighbouring Guinea.

"The onset of the Ebola crisis has exacerbated this even further," he said.

Liberia has slashed its economic growth forecast for this year to 2.5%, from 5.9%, as international mining groups have mothballed operations and farmers cannot get their crops to market.

Government revenues, already dented by the slowdown, are now under massive strain from the cost of fighting the outbreak. Food prices have also come under pressure as the northern region of Lofa, the bread-basket of the nation of some four million, has been one of the worst-hit by the outbreak, said Addy.

"Farmers' ability to harvest their crops and get it to market has been a challenge," added the minister. "Transportation services have been hit dramatically, so commerce has been challenging and also has triggered price increases of some key essentials." Imports of rice, a staple in Liberia, which consumes six million tonnes annually, have become increasingly costly amid the Ebola crisis. *(*AFP 30-09-2014)

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM MANUAL LAUNCHED IN MAURITIUS

Transparency Mauritius (TM) has launched a manual on investigative journalism which 'will help journalists go deep into their investigations to reveal what public figures and institutions hide from the population', according to TM's Executive Director Rajen Bablee.

Bablee said investigative journalism is an excellent tool for exposing corruption.

'Ideally, this should form an integral part of daily journalism in all the newsrooms. It is not a prestigious field that is reserved for the elite,' he said.

According to him, investigative journalism requires deep systematic and original research works. At times, it involves the digging of information and secret or hidden stories.

'It also requires research skills and a vast use of sources available and confidential documents,' Bablee said. (Pana 01/10/2014)

PIC PLANS R2.5BN IN AFRICAN INVESTMENT

THE Public Investment Corporation (PIC), which invests R1.6-trillion on behalf of the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) and other state entities, plans to invest R2.5bn on the African continent in the current financial year.

This is in line with its commitment to have $1bn of its portfolio invested in the rest of Africa, $500m for developmental investments and $500m in private equity.

Last year the PIC's biggest transaction in Africa was the acquisition of a 1.5% stake in Nigerian-listed Dangote Cement for $289m.

Its first investment in the rest of Africa after the change in the PIC's investment mandate was the $250m investment made in Ecobank which has exposure to more than 30 countries in central Africa.

These investments are in line with the GEPF's investment mandate, which was changed in 2011 to require the PIC to commit 5% of assets under management for investment in the rest of Africa, and another 5% to global bonds and equities.

Investments in the rest of Africa currently represent 0.5% of the PIC's total R1.6-trillion assets under management, which grew from the previous year's R1.4-trillion.

Acting CEO Matshepo More said in the corporation's annual report tabled in Parliament that the PIC planned to invest a further R2.5bn in the rest of the continent in the current financial year. "The PIC is in good financial health with its profitability at R209m as at March 31 2014, up from R130m at the end of the 2013 financial year."

Of total assets under management, 49% is invested in local equities, 32.4% in local bonds, 7% in cash and money-market instruments, 4.39% in properties and 5.36% in offshore equity and bonds.

During the 2013-14 financial year R11.4bn worth of unlisted investments were approved, of which R4.8bn has already been disbursed.

The PIC is increasingly expected by the government to contribute towards socioeconomic development, and its performance in this regard was highlighted by Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene, who is also chairman of the corporation.

PIC investments had created in excess of 7,805 direct and indirect jobs, and sustained 78,636 jobs. "The PIC is emerging as a leader in the development of green industries by directly and indirectly funding renewable energy projects that will generate in excess of 1,558 megawatts of electricity," he said.

The PIC has entrusted R50bn of its funds to black asset managers as a way of spurring change in the asset management industry. It approved R6.9bn in unlisted developmental investments last year and plans to invest at least R2bn in social and economic infrastructure this year.

It also emerged from the PIC's annual report tabled in Parliament that it had cast votes at 232 shareholder meetings in the past year, of which 6% were votes against proposed resolutions.

The bulk of the votes (50%) opposed proposals on remuneration policies with the rest against capital structures (32%), the re-election of directors to the audit committee (10%) and nonexecutive director fees (4%). (BD 02-10-2014)

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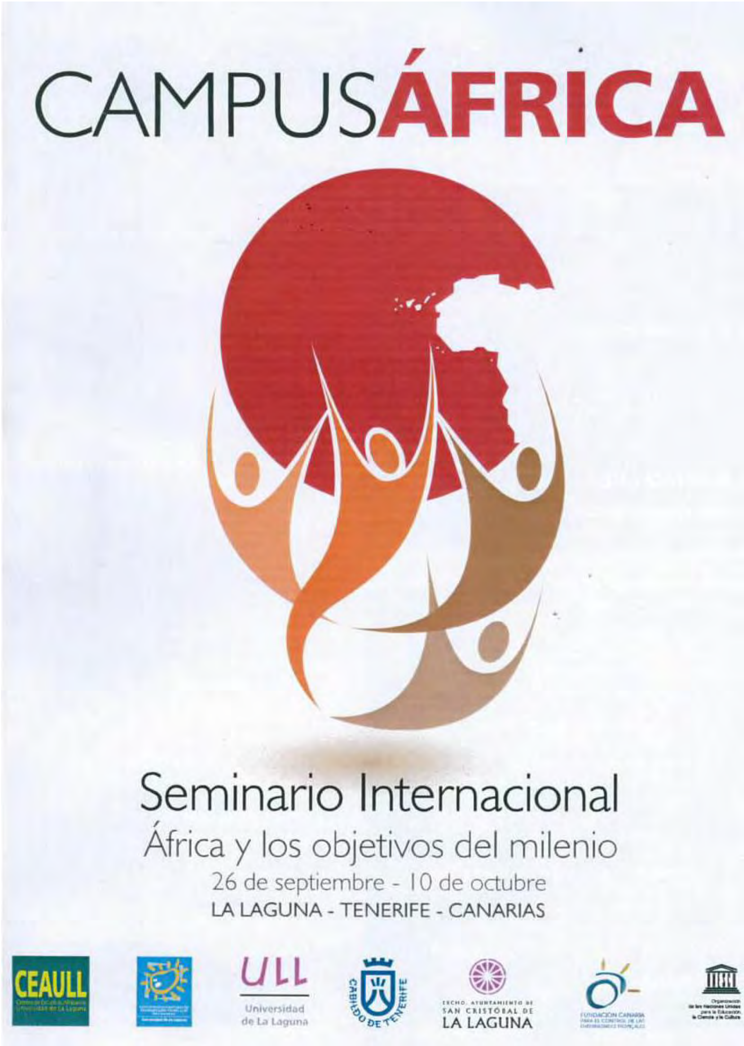

Campus ÁFRICA Seminario Internacional 26 de septiembre – 10 de Octubre de 2014

Directores:
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En su informe titulado *Un mundo nuevo* (2000), impulsado por el entonces Director General, Federico Mayor Zaragoza, la UNESCO, consciente de que “la anticipación y la prevención, la reflexión y la acción prospectivas son imperativos absolutos”, proponía a la comunidad internacional la creación de “foros intelectuales y éticos orientados al futuro, con el concurso de científicos, creadores, responsables, expertos y de la sociedad en su conjunto”. Porque “el progreso científico, el saber y la apertura de espíritu forman parte del acervo común” de la Humanidad y están, por ello, en el centro de las preocupaciones de la UNESCO, para quien “*proteger* no basta, también hace falta *preparar* el porvenir”. Y para ello se proponen en dicho informe cuatro contratos para el siglo XXI: un nuevo contrato social, un contrato natural, un contrato cultural y un contrato ético.
En la línea de las recomendaciones de la UNESCO, la Fundación Canaria para el Control de las Enfermedades Tropicales (FUNCCET) instituye Campus**ÁFRICA**, iniciativa que aspira a constituirse en un foro de reflexión, de fermento científico y de acción proactiva relacionados con el continente africano y con la vocación tricontinental de las islas atlánticas. Sus objetivos son los siguientes:
1. Crear un foro de reflexión especializada sobre los retos sanitarios, medioambientales, socioeconómicos, políticos, éticos, educativos y culturales del continente africano en el marco del proceso globalizador actual.

2. Facilitar el encuentro entre personal académico, emprendedores y profesionales que favorezca la obtención de sinergias orientadas al desarrollo y a la cooperación estratégica con África.
3. Ofrecer formación avanzada aplicada al análisis y la investigación de los problemas que aquejan al continente africano.
4. Estimular el liderazgo científico-técnico y socio-cultural entre las jóvenes generaciones.
5. Potenciar el protagonismo de los archipiélagos de la Macaronesia como un espacio geoestratégico singular en el marco de las relaciones internacionales.

La oferta formativa de Campus**ÁFRICA**en su edición de 2014 cuenta con el apoyo del Cabildo de Tenerife, del Ayuntamiento de La Laguna y de la Universidad de La Laguna, y se articula en dos programas:
1. **Programa General**: Conferencias, mesas redondas y actividades culturales de carácter general, abiertas a un público amplio, cuyo eje temático serán las distintas áreas de actuación que constituyen los Objetivos del Milenio en su relación con el continente africano.El Programa General se desarrollará preferentemente en horario de tarde (de 17 a 20:30 horas).
2. **Programa Científico**: Conferencias, mesas redondas y sesiones de laboratorio de carácter especializado cuyo eje de interés serán las enfermedades tropicales, emergentes y ligadas a la pobreza, con especial atención al continente africano. El Programa Científico se desarrollará en horario de mañana (de 9 a 13 horas).

En definitiva, el programa aquí ofrecido pretende contribuir a crear un clima positivo en tiempos de crisis, fomentando la reflexión, la cooperación, la visión prospectiva y el espíritu proactivo en un marco urbano atractivo como el de La Laguna, Ciudad Patrimonio de la Humanidad, y en un contexto social en el que todos cuantos se involucren y participen tienen mucho que ganar. Porque, como nos recuerda la UNESCO, el futuro no se puede prever, pero sí se puede preparar

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