MEMORANDUM

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12 YEARS OF PUBLICATION

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EU AND THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC GROUP OF STATES COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS ON A NEW PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Today the EU and 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) group will begin negotiations on the future of their cooperation after 2020. The ambition is to transform today's partnership into a modern political framework geared to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals.

The countries in the EU and the ACP represent more than half of all UN member countries and unite over 1.5 billion people. The current partnership, governed by the Cotonou agreement, is one of the longest-standing and most comprehensive framework for cooperation between the EU and developing countries. The current agreement expires in 2020.

To mark the opening of the first round of political negotiations in New York, in the margins of United Nations General Assembly, the EU's Chief Negotiator, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, said: *“The partnership between the EU and the countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, is an asset for the EU and multilateralism at large. The revision of the existing agreement is a great opportunity to further deepen the partnership and modernise it in response to global developments such as the UN 2030 Agenda or the Paris Agreement on climate change."*
In turn, Professor Robert **Dussey**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo and Chief negotiator for the ACP Group of States, recalled that: *“The connection between the ACP Group and the EU was established in 1975 in first Article of the Georgetown Agreement, the Constitutive Act of the ACP Group”.* He underlined that: “*the ACP-EU partnership is a valuable and unique achievement that has strengthened bonds between ACP and EU peoples and countries throughout the last 45 years of its existence. The opening of the negotiations today heralds the continuity of trust and confidence cherished by parties to this Partnership”.*

The partnership seeks closer political cooperation on the world stage to tackle major global challenges, aiming to be a shining example of multilateralism as the cornerstone of a rule-based world order. In concrete terms, this will notably mean working jointly towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It will also guide the partnership countries' joint efforts to address pressing challenges such as climate change, migration and peace and security. To have the intended impact, the future partnership will adapt to the new realities in the European Union, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, taking into account geographical specificities. The future partnership will aim at facilitating strong alliance-building in global forums and address key issues from which current and future generations alike can benefit. (EU 28-09-2018)

Negotiation directives

CONSTRUCTION OF CHONGOENE AIRPORT IN MOZAMBIQUE BEGINS

Chongoene airport in Mozambique’s Gaza province will start being built, with the President of Mozambique laying the first stone last Friday, Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias reported.

At the ceremony, attended by the Chinese ambassador to Mozambique, Cui Aimin, President Filipe Nyusi described the future airport as “the emergency exit that has always been lacking in the province of Gaza in cases of distress determined by natural disasters.”

The Minister of Transport and Communications said in February 2017 that the Mozambican government was waiting for the China Export and Import Bank to approve a US$60 million loan to begin construction of Chongoene airport.

Minister Carlos Mesquita, who visited the site where the airport will be built, said the feasibility study and the environmental impact study had been completed and now the government was awaiting approval of the loan to start building the plant in an area of approximately 4,000 hectares.

The Chongoene district, which was recently created, has the first higher education facility in Gaza, the Pedagogical University, and one of the most attractive beaches in Mozambique bearing the name of the capital of Xai-Xai district.

Last September, Notícias reported that Mozambique and China were planning a coastal shipping (cabotage) project in Chongoene, which would also have adjacent rail links, connecting it to the Limpopo Corridor in Macarretane, as well as structural projects such as the Chibuto and Jangamo heavy sands projects in Gaza and in Inhambane, respectively.

The daily newspaper quoted Leonardo Simão, chairman of Muyaque's board of directors, who said in Beijing at the China/Mozambique Business Forum, that there is already a partnership with China Railways International Group to move ahead with the project costing an estimated US$300 million. (08-10-2018))

NEW LIBERIAN LAW GIVES LAND TO GENERATIONS-OLD OCCUPANTS

The topic has been contentious since the state signed away more than 40% of national territory in concessions for logging, mining and agriculture, according to rights groups

Liberia has passed a landmark law that will help communities fight foreign land grabs by giving them ownership of ancestral territory, officials and activists said on Thursday.

President George Weah signed the Land Rights Act into law on Wednesday after four years of debate in the legislature. The topic has been contentious since most of the population have no formal rights to their land, and the state has signed away more than 40% of national territory in concessions for logging, mining and agriculture, according to rights groups.

"This is a landmark victory not only for the government, but for the entire citizenry of our country," said James Otto, a campaigner at Liberia's Sustainable Development Institute. "For the first time in our history, a law is finally saying that communities that have lived on their land forever and ever are now owners of that land," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation

Following the West African nation's second civil war, which ended in 2003, the previous government accelerated policies that granted natural resource concessions to foreign companies. Foreign palm oil concessions were at the heart of reforms which were credited with making Liberia attractive to agricultural investors — but also caused violent conflict.

The land rights act was one of Weah's first major moves since being elected in December. In a statement, the president called it a "key component" of his plans to develop the country.

The head of the agency in charge of land policy said implementation would be difficult. "The Liberia Land Authority has been given the authority to implement the act but we do not have resources, we do not have the technical expertise," said executive director Stanley Toe. "The excitement will soon go but the biggest work lies ahead."

Under the law, communities can claim ownership of customary land by presenting evidence such as oral testimonies, maps, and signed agreements with neighbours, the government said.

A maximum of 10% of the customary land will be set aside as public land. (Thomson Reuters Foundation 20-09-2018)

SINO-ANGOLAN CONSORTIUM BUYS ANGOLAN NATIONAL BRIDGES COMPANY

The Chinese-Angolan consortium made up of Angolan companies Adisandra and Feront and the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) has bought Angola's national bridges company ENPA, the Angolan Ministry of Construction and Public Works said in a statement.

The official statement said ENPA was sold to the consortium for US$2 million and guaranteed the payment of 56 months of salaries in arrears.

The purchase and sale contract was signed by the Minister of Construction and Public Works, Manuel Tavares de Almeida, at an event attended by Chinese ambassador Cui Aimin and members of the Luanda provincial government, according to the statement.

The statement noted that ENPA is on the list of 74 public companies that the Government intends to privatise in the medium term, a matter that, although admitted on several occasions by official representatives, has not been detailed and the identity of all these companies is unknown.

The Sino-Angolan consortium has given assurances that by the end of this month, wage arrears amounting to 3.6 billion kwanzas (US$12 million) will be paid, as well as arrears of Income Tax, Social Security and debt to creditors, amounting to 1.8 billion kwanzas (US$6 million). (08-10-2018)

BOTSWANA FIGHTS CLAIMS OF ELEPHANT POACHING SPREE

The conservation charity made a damning claim that it had discovered at least 87 poached elephant carcasses

Botswana has rejected claims of a surge of elephant poaching made by a leading conservation charity and put on display carcasses of animals allegedly slaughtered for ivory — some with tusks still intact.

Elephants Without Borders (EWB) claimed two weeks ago that it had discovered at least 87 elephant carcasses during a routine aerial survey of conservation areas, suggesting a sudden spike in killings in recent months.

The claims led to global media attention and questions were raised about Botswana's antipoaching efforts.

But officials demanded to see EWB′s proof and subsequent visits to the Chobe National Park located just 19 corpses — only six of which were found to be poaching victims.

′Normal deaths′

"Last year, the whole year, we lost about 81 elephants. So I can say it's just normal, like any other year, we haven't recorded any mass killing," said Churchill Collyer, the deputy director of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks.

Officials added that since the start of the year, a total of 63 elephants had died across the country and that there had been no noticeable increase in elephant poaching.

About 40,000 African elephants are killed every year for their tusks, according to conservation groups.

The elephants are illegally traded as part of a multibillion-dollar industry that extends from Africa to Asia and beyond.

Botswana, which has Africa′s largest elephant population, is on the frontline of the battle against the illicit ivory trade.

This week, the country′s authorities took journalists to the vast Chobe National Park in the northeast which has more than 100,000 elephants — the country's largest concentration of the animals.

Several hours spent flying over the reserve which borders Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, showed six elephant carcasses, four of which appeared to have been poached.

″This is almost more than six months since it was killed,″ said Collyer of one animal with dried, perforated skin and missing tusks.

About 20km away, another decomposed carcass was found but when EWB led rangers to it, the tusks were still intact, suggesting it was not killed for ivory.

″The cause of the natural death could either be from old age, from diseases, from starvation during the drought season,″ said antipoaching deputy Brig Com George Bogatsu, who has six years′ experience in the fight against poaching.

He stood next to the carcass with an assault rifle slung over his arm and a handgun tucked into the side pocket of his camouflage trousers.

The animal was one of those counted by EWB as poached. The group said in a statement that ″an unusually high number of elephant carcasses were seen by the survey team″.

″Our current survey adheres to the highest international standards,″ it said.

″There is no cemetery in the wild — animals like elephants will take years and years to completely disappear″ from the spots where they die, said Simon Barwabatsile, the country′s antipoaching coordinator.

EWB had been contracted by Botswana to conduct aerial elephant population surveys. Before concluding the work, group director Mike Chase said the survey pointed to elephant poaching on a scale ″by far the largest″ in Africa.

He said it coincided with the disarming of Botswana′s rangers earlier this year.

But the military insisted it remained ready to repel poaching gangs armed with high-powered rifles.

Barwabatsile said there had been ″legal issues″ about rangers being armed with certain guns.

″There′s been a withdrawal of some arms from the anti-poaching unit within the department of wildlife and national parks,″ he said.

He could not confirm how many weapons — understood to be fully automatic rifles — had been taken out of circulation.

A group of other wildlife conservation groups said last week that civilian rangers are still armed with ″high-calibre weapons, but no longer carry automatic assault rifles″.

Some in the conservation community have suggested that EWB made such alarming claims because of ″vested interests″.

Survival International′s Stephen Corry said he expected more reports ″stirring up panic over the increasing threat of poaching″ as groups raise cash ahead of a conference in London on the illegal wildlife trade next month.

But EWB insisted that ″given the high number of elephant carcasses seen during the survey, EWB felt it a moral and patriotic duty to immediately report this.″

″EWB′s sole concern is for the wildlife and the natural heritage of our wonderful country.″ (AFP 20-09-2018)

ANGOLA'S FLAGSHIP AIRLINE TO BE PRIVATISED GRADUALLY

The privatisation of Angolan flagship airline TAAG will be carried out gradually, with the first step being to create adequate and attractive conditions for private investment, the carrier's chief executive said on Friday in Luanda.

Rui Carreira also said that the restructuring of TAAG aims to make the company more competitive, and one that provides excellent services.

The chief executive was speaking after the inauguration ceremony of the members of the new board of TAAG, which was chaired by Transport Minister Ricardo de Abreu, according to Angolan state news agency Angop.

The transformation of TAAG, from public company to public limited company, follows a decree signed last September by the President of the Republic, João Lourenço, when he dismissed the airline's former management.

In 2019 TAAG plans to acquire 11 medium-haul aircraft under the company's modernisation programme and state-of-the-art B787 aircraft for long-haul routes. (08-10-2018)

AN ETHIOPIAN SHOE WORN ALL OVER THE WORLD SHOWS HOW YOU DO SUSTAINABLE MANUFACTURING IN AFRICA

For decades, the image of Ethiopia in the rest of the world's imagination was one of poverty, a people entirely dependent on the aid from Western countries. Of course Ethiopia struggled under desperate real

socio-economic issues, but that wasn't all there was to the country, just like poverty isn't all there is to poor people.
Bethlehem Tilahun Alemu knew poverty but she also knew that it shouldn't limit herself or the community she lived in. So when she completed university just as the country was finding its feet, she was determined to remain in Ethiopia and help her community stand up from poverty. She's done just that, with shoes.
"Typically the people talking about poverty alleviation as the goal are not connected to the communities they are trying to 'alleviate' poverty in," Alemu says.
Alemu is an example of an entrepreneur determined to create a manufacturer in Africa that benefits the local economy without exploiting local workers or the environment. As Ethiopia tries to develop its textile industry, the country has fallen into international bad habits like low wages. In Ethiopia, and around the continent, developing an industrialized manufacturing sector is key to alleviating poverty, if the sector is developed sustainably.
Just don't limit SoleRebels to the "low bar" of poverty alleviation, says Alemu. She is much more ambitious: 500 global soleRebels branded retail stores and $1 billion in revenues by 2028. This month, SoleRebels opened its 22nd location in Hamburg's trendy St. Pauli district—the ideal area for an ethical shoebrand that now also caters to vegans.
SoleRebels is one of the few brands started and run from a developing country and exporting to the world. Long before they were awarded the Free Trade label, the company was clear they wanted to remain a sustainable, environmentally conscious brand in Africa, for the world. SoleRebels' other locations include Silicon Valley, Athens, Barcelona, Singapore and nine locations in Taiwan.

Innovative, yet, traditional design.
In the thirteen years, Alemu developed business model centered on eco-sensibility and community empowerment by inventing a supply chain in line with the brand's aim. Each shoe is created by the hands of a locally-trained artisan. The designs of flip-flops, slip ons and sneakers are based on the seleate or barabasso, the traditional Ethiopian tire soled shoe.
SoleRebels' supply chain is staffed by artisans divided into teams for leather cutting, assembly and spinning and cutting the fabric. The brand's sustainability and almost non-existent carbon footprint is thanks to recyling car and truck tires, and hand-spinning fabrics from loca hemp and koba. The aim is to use the country's traditional techniques and textiles in new innovative ways. With this, she's been able to scale a handmade product into a manufacturer with a global footprint.
"There are no 'hidden executives' or third party layers to reach me—you want me, email me," she says. Named one of Quartz Africa's 30 most innovative young Africans in 2015, innovation plays a role in the factory and the storefront.

Alemu, hands on.
In the factory, the SoleRebels' spinning team has come up with a new thread and weaving technique to create a more breathable and absorbent shoe lining. Stores now boast kiosks in stores that allow customers to have a say design their own shoes, picking the elemts to create customized shoes, all while connecting them to the artisans who will make their shoes back in Ethiopia.
As the brand continues to grow, Alemu says she will not outsource manufacturing as other sustainable brands have been forced to. An Ethiopian shoe walking all over the world is proving you can create a sustainable manufacturer in Africa
"That's like outsourcing the soul of your brand." (Q 01-10-2018)

AFRICA NOT A PRIORITY FOR BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENTS, IBRAF SAYS

Economic relations with Africa have been losing importance for Brazil's governments, which ignore the continent's potential, unlike China and other emerging economies, according to the Brazil-Africa Institute (IBA, in Portuguese).

In an analysis of the development of relations with Africa of the last Brazilian governments, as well as the proposals of the presidential candidates of 7 October, IBA noted that those with political power in

Brazil should select their trading partners in Africa, out of those who " have greater vocation to establish a dialogue with Brazilian companies."

Also absent from the policy proposals is "the transfer of national technology, which could lead Brazilian brands to gain ground in the African continent," said the Brazilian institute.

"A cluster of 1.2 billion people cannot be overlooked. Of the five economies expected to grow most in 2018, four are in Africa (Ghana, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast and Djibouti) according to the World Bank. The African middle class is expected to increase proportionately more than in other regions of the world. In Nigeria, for example, there are more births per day than in the European Union as a whole. What could be a problem can be seen as an opportunity," said IBA.

"While China sees Africa as a big agenda, Brazil is turning its back on the continent. In addition to China, Turkey, Japan and the United States are examples of other nations that already see this opportunity and make massive investments in Africa," it said.

According to IBA, the current government of Michel Temer "does not value this relationship" with the African continent and the presidential candidates "do not put forward a counterbalance to the current policy."

The government of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva gave priority to programmes to get closer to Africa and, between 2003 and 2011, the former president made 13 trips to Africa, visiting 28 countries, more than his two predecessors put together, and increased the African diplomatic network, which now has 28 embassies.

Under Dilma Rousseff's administration, "these actions lost intensity," according to IBA, with the former president making only seven official trips to African countries, prompting criticism from business people and diplomats for weakening Brazil-Africa relations.

In response, Rousseff announced an agenda for the continent, such as the renegotiation of US$900 million in debts of 12 African countries with Brazil – the first step to making new business viable and a reform in the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC).

Since August 2016, when he took office, Temer made no official visits to Africa until July of this year when he visited Cabo Verde (Cape Verde) for the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) summit and to South Africa for the BRICS summit.

"The rapprochement with Africa is a permanent priority, which translates into concrete actions to strengthen our ties and promote development on both sides of the South Atlantic," Temer told the BRICS summit.

Among the few Brazilian projects announced in Africa is the construction of a laboratory that will reduce the time for diagnosis of tuberculosis in São Tomé and Príncipe and the inauguration of the new training centre of Brazilian aeronautical company Embraer in Johannesburg. (08-10-2018)

BRITISH ENGINEER WINS $2BN KENYA DAM AFTER LEGAL WRANGLE

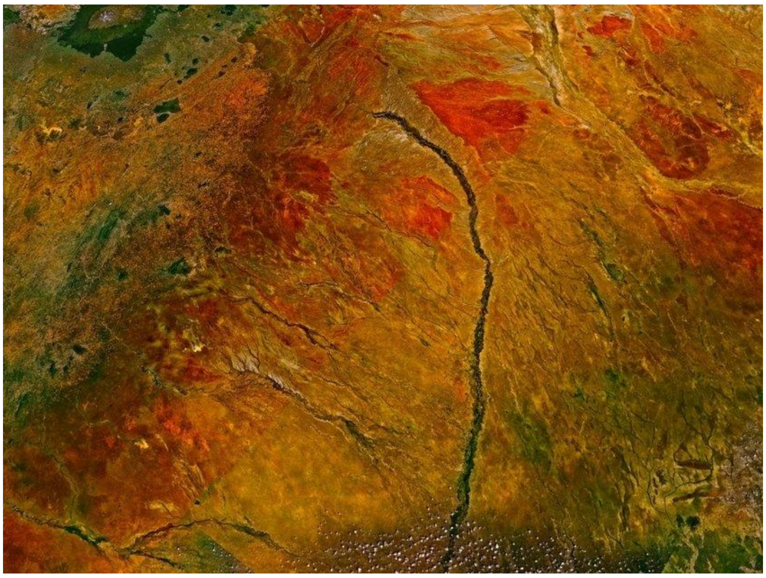
A British engineering firm with a track record in mining projects appears set to fund, build and operate a massive dam in Kenya after an unusual procurement dispute in the country.

GBM Minerals Engineering Consultants, based in Twickenham, London, has been cleared by Kenya's procurement authority to proceed, in a consortium, with building the High Grand Falls Dam on the River Tana, reports newspaper, *Vanguard*.

Vanguard and other local media have stated the cost of the scheme as being $2bn.

Second in importance only to the cross-country railway now being built, the High Grand Falls Dam will accommodate a 700MW hydropower plant, and make a large reservoir, displacing thousands of households for irrigation, according to newspaper, *Daily Nation*.

"GBM Engineering Consortium" became the legal winner of the tender, issued by Kenya's National Irrigation Board (NIB) in November last year when six other firms, including five Chinese contractors, failed to meet minimum requirements, reports the *Nation*.



Satellite image of the Tana River in Kenya

But six months later the NIB cancelled the tender, claiming GBM had failed in the technical evaluation, and had not submitted a bond of 0.5%, according to the *Nation*.

GBM then sought legal redress against the NIB through Kenya's Public Procurement Review Board (PPRB), arguing that the bond was due only at the financial evaluation stage.

In July this year the PPRB ruled in favour of GBM, but NIB appealed.

Now the PPRB has upheld its original decision, ordering NIB to conclude the tendering process, reports Vanguard.

Contacted by GCR, GBM declined to comment at this stage.(GCR 04-10-2018)

ANGOLA CHASES THE TOURIST DOLLAR

The World Economic Forum last year forecast that Angola, alongside Mozambique, would be among the ten fastest growing leisure tourism destinations worldwide over the next decade. The sector has the potential to generate a great deal of employment in a way that the ever present oil industry so palpably fails to do. There is a long way to go before Angola becomes a popular tourist destination but there are signs that the new government of President João Lourenço is taking real steps to help the industry take off.

Tourism was one of nine sectors listed by the government as prime candidates for foreign investment in July. Even during the worst of the slump in oil and gas revenues between 2014 and the start of 2018, hydrocarbons accounted for more than 90% of export revenues, with most of the rest generated by diamond exports. Oil and gas prices may have bounced back since then but if Lourenço is serious about economic diversification, then tourism is the obvious long term option.

'Long term' should be a given because millions of overseas visitors will not turn up overnight. Angola's image needs even more improvement than the country's infrastructure but it is possible that a large tourism industry could grow if the seeds are planted now. Crucially, the sector has the ability to create employment outside Luanda and in many small businesses, boosting the private sector development that is so badly needed.

An Angolan tourism consultant, Amélia Carlos Cazalma, said: "What we need to do now is to work on our image as a unique tourist destination. We need to identify which sector we want to focus on first. It needs to be done step by step, we can't do it all at once."

Hotels, restaurants, cafes, tour guide operators and many more businesses have the potential to create hundreds of thousands of jobs in the areas that most need job creation. Luanda's target of creating one million tourism jobs by 2020 seems unrealistic but such a figure should be possible in the longer term if the government actually enacts all of the policies it has promised.

Both state and private sector investment has been forthcoming. The government is investing $125 million in setting up six regional schools for hotel and tourism to provide the skilled workforce needed for the sector: in Luanda, Huíla, Huambo, Moxico, Uíge and Benguela. Private companies have begun to invest in high class rural accommodation. A total of $35 million has already been committed to the Pululukwa eco-lodge resort in Huila Province on a 210 hectare site, with 99% of the workforce Angolan.

Potential competition with East Africa

Nowhere on the west coast of Africa has managed to develop a tourism sector to rival those of Kenya and Tanzania on the east coast but Angola has all of the ingredients needed to do just that. Its attractions are obvious, including its many natural attractions and stunning wildlife, which are far less well known than they deserve to be. The country could offer the same twin centre holidays as its more illustrious east coast competitors. Visitors could be offered comprehensive wildlife and waterfall tours, followed by a week on the 1,600km long coastline, enjoying the Atlantic Ocean sun, sea and sand.

Ruacana Falls should be one of the biggest natural attractions in Africa. Located in Huambo Province on the border with Namibia, it is one of the biggest waterfalls in Africa, at 700m wide and 120m high during the March-May wet season. There are hiking trails in the area and outdoor adventure companies have begun to offer canoe and white water rafting trips. Other stunning waterfalls include Epupa Falls on the Kunene River, where there are hundreds of natural pools, and the 400m drop of the Kalandula Falls. The Fenda da Tundavala is an incredible 1,000m drop that hosts a variety of waterfalls.

One of the biggest obstacles to Angola offering the same kind of holiday experience as East Africa is the impact that poaching has had on fauna in much of the country. Quicama National Park, which lies just 75km from Luanda, was re-established in 2001 when many large animals were airlifted into it, but poaching continues to affect animal numbers. An African tour operator, who did not wish to be named, said: "The government needs to put the resources into anti-poaching forces if we're going to offer a real wildlife experience." However, it covers 11,900 sq km and has the potential to offer attractive safaris.

A recent report by the World Travel and Tourism Council concluded: "Although the [civil war] damage is still widespread, the country is gradually recovering. The national parks are slowly being restocked with wildlife from neighbouring states, and tourism is set to grow exponentially."

The Minister of Hotel and Tourism, Ângela Bragança, says that infrastructure is the key to developing the Angolan tourism sector. She set the Tourism and Hotel Multi Sector Commission up in December to coordinate the work of all ministries with influence over the provision of the required infrastructure.

Some steps have already been taken to put the required infrastructure in place, including upgrading the nation's airports. The fact that the new Luanda International Airport will receive its first international flights in August has received lots of attention but eight other airports are in the process of being approved by the International Civil Aviation Organization, including Catumbela Airport, which is due to open this year. All of them will be operated by the airport management company Enana.

Indeed, the government is relying on airports to help promote regional development. A tender has been launched for the contract to build Mbanza Congo Airport in Zaïre Province. The government acknowledges that there is little demand for the project at present but the government hopes that its presence will stimulate economic activity in the area.

Air travel

Even under the current air travel regime, the new airports should help to attract more visitors to the country. However, it is vital that the government liberalises air travel in order to attract new airlines, enable additional services and push air fares down. Aside from the main tourist destinations in Africa, such as South Africa and Kenya, reaching many African destinations can be very expensive, partly because of the lack of competition but also because of a lack of direct flights. Many international visitors are currently forced to take two flights in order to reach Luanda, while a third would be required to reach Angola's provincial cities.

Under the 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision, African governments were required to enact an Open Skies agreement, granting free access to each other's airlines but progress towards achieving it has been glacial. Local governments and tourism authorities in Cape Town have signed an agreement with Angola's TAAG Airlines to offer daily flights between Cape Town and Luanda during peak periods using Boeing 777-300s. At present, tourism traffic on this route is mainly from Angola to South Africa but the Angolan government hopes to attract more South African visitors in the future.

In May, the government listed TAAG among the companies it was prepared to privatise, although it is not yet known whether this would involve a full sell-off or the sale of a fixed stake in the business. The fact that the government has to subsidise the firm makes divestiture more likely. TAAG is currently more than $1 billion in debt.

TAAG has already formed the Air Connection Express with other Angolan carriers in order to improve connections across the country. Air Namibia, in particular, is keen to launch new Angolan services. It currently flies just four times a week between Windhoek and Luanda but wants to start direct flights between Windhoek and Benguela, Namibe, Ongiva and Lubango from October.

Relaxed visa regime

Over the past year, the government has taken real steps to simplify the laborious via application process. Until recently, the visa system was designed to provide access for foreign experts in specific industries but all visitors were required to provide an invitation letter from someone within Angola.

However, new bilateral agreements allow visitors from 61 countries – from the end of March – to acquire visas for 30-day single stays and 90-days over the course of a year upon their arrival, including the entire European Union, the other member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Russia, the United States, China, India and Japan. Those arriving will be required to provide accommodation details, means of supporting themselves, a return ticket and vaccination certificates.

Attracting visitors from within the SADC region is the obvious place to start. Tourists from eight countries, mainly in SADC, are now totally exempt from visas: Botswana, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa and Zimbabwe, plus Singapore. Visitors from other countries are to be awarded visas within a maximum of three days by diplomatic and consular missions as standard. Expedited visas are currently only available at high cost.

Many foreign hotel investors shelved their investment plans as a result of the severe economic downturn in the country. Even the hotel sector is overly reliant on the oil industry: most modern hotel capacity is in Luanda and most visitors are in some way connected to the oil sector. There is little doubt that very high hotel prices deter visitors. Average daily room prices stood at $200 for a three star hotel in Angola last year, with $380 for a five star hotel. Hotel occupancy rates fell from an already low 39% in 2016 to 35% last year. Occupancy rates of 80% are generally considered healthy by the industry.

The pressure on foreign investors to partner with Angolan companies has deterred development. In February, AccorHotels pulled out of Angola, leaving 50 hotels in the hands of its Angolan partner AAA. The French firm had signed an agreement to gradually take over and rebrand the hotels under the Ibis flag but AAA had been unable to meet its share of investment. However, it was reported in June that Accor was keen to re-enter the Angolan market, but this time without any domestic partner. If the government is serious about attracting foreign investment, it needs to allow foreign firms to pick their own investment projects. (Magazine, by Neil Ford 28-09-2018)

CAMEROON ARMED FORCES AND SEPARATISTS HAVE THE ANGLOPHONE REGION ON LOCKDOWN AHEAD OF ELECTIONS

On Monday Oct. 1, Cameroon's Anglophone separatists marked the first anniversary of their self-declared breakaway state, the Federal Republic of Ambazonia (Southern Cameroons) in a somber

mood. This was a marked difference from last year's outpouring of celebrations and rhetoric by locals to unilaterally and symbolically declare independence of Cameroon's two English-speaking regions.
That was because both the Cameroon government and the separatists themselves had decreed a total lockdown for the date, Oct. 1 and beyond—with an eye on a contentious national election less than a week away.
In order to circumvent the type of massive mobilization of English speakers which saw thousands on the streets last year, the government placed restrictions on movement. In the north-west region, movement of persons from one sub-division to another was prohibited for a period of 48 hours, spanning from Sunday Sept. 30 to Monday Oct. 1. The public gathering of more than four people was also temporarily outlawed. This added to a dusk-to-dawn curfew earlier in place.
The governor of the north-west region, Lele Lafrique Tchoffo Deben Adolphe said the temporary restriction of movement of people was an "appropriate measure taken to guarantee security of its citizens and their properties before, during and after this day [Oct. 1]."
In the south-west region, similar restrictions, including shutting down of all businesses, suspension of socio-cultural meetings, closure of motor parks and ban on circulation, were instituted by local administrators.

However, despite the measures, pro-independence English-speaking Cameroonians hoisted the blue-white flags of Ambazonia, and chanted their national anthem in some towns like Muyuka, Santa, Pinyin, Fontem, Ndu, Bafut, and even in far-off London where demonstrations took place.(Q 02-10-2018)

PORT OF NACALA, MOZAMBIQUE, BEGINS TO BE MODERNISED

The project to modernise the deep water port of Nacala, northern Mozambique, began on Thursday with a ceremony attended by the Minister of Transport and Communications, African news agency APA reported.

Minister Carlos Mesquita recalled that this project, with funding of US$273.6 million from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), will have a major social impact on the region, as well as an economic impact.

"This project will give direct employment to 400 citizens and allow companies operating in Nacala to benefit from it, since a wide variety of services will be needed," he said.

The port, part of the Nacala Development Corridor, currently has the capacity to process 900,000 tons of miscellaneous cargo, and is still being used by Vale Moçambique to export coal mined in Moatize, Tete province.

Most of the cargo transiting the port, in addition to coal, comes from Malawi, which does not have direct access to the sea and uses the facility to import and export some of the products it needs, such as fertilizers, sugar, wheat, clinker and tobacco.

The port and the rail network in northern Mozambique are managed by the Northern Development Corridor, a partnership between Sociedade de Desenvolvimento do Corredor de Nacala and state rail and port company Portos e Caminhos-de-Ferro de Moçambique. (05-10-2018)

MOZAMBIQUE BEGINS WORK ON FIRST EVER PAVED ROAD TO TANZANIA

Anyone wishing to travel from the capital of Tanzania south to the capital of neighbouring Mozambique invariably catches a plane. The flight time from Dar es Salaam to Maputo is about five or six hours.
If you have a fear of flying, it is theoretically possible to drive.


Sunset over the huge Lake Niassa Reserve

You would have to drive west from Dar to the port of Kigoma on Lake Malawi, where you would catch a ferry to the Zambian port of Mpulungu. After this you'd have to drive south, through Lusaka to Zimbabwe, then all the way across Zimbabwe to Johannesburg, from where you'd head east and, skirting the northern border of Swaziland, enter Mozambique at Lebombo, followed by a last lap to Maputo on the two-lane toll road known as the EN4. All being well, the journey would take about five or six days.

Clearly, there is little prospect of connecting up the economies of eastern and southern Africa without better ground transport links than that – so the ceremony held on Tuesday, 2 October, to begin work on the first paved highway between Tanzania and Mozambique, had rather more significance than most new road schemes around the world.

The first stone was laid by Filipe Nyusi, the president of Mozambique, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. This marked the beginning of work on a historic project: a 165km metalled road that will directly link Mozambique with its northern neighbour.

In his speech, President Nyusi said the road was a dream come true. "It will promote international commerce with Tanzania and consequently contribute to poverty eradication," he said.

The planned road falls far short of linking the two capitals, but it's a start, and quite a significant one.

That's because the border between the two countries is marked by the Rovuma River. This was spanned by the "Unity Bridge" back in 2010, but the bridge has remained unused because there is no road on Mozambique's end of it – a fact that reflects the relative wealth of the two states, with Mozambique's GDP of about $12bn being less than a quarter of Tanzania's.

Now that road will finally be supplied, thanks to a grant of $72m from the African Development Bank (AfDB), approved in December 2016.

The work will be carried out in two phases by Chinese contractor Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Group, which will employ predominantly local labour.

The first stage of the work involves paving a dirt road from Negomano, on the Tanzanian border, to Roma, a distance of 70km.

This will cut the time taken to move between the two towns from three hours by four-wheel drive to one, by a standard car, and replace wooden bridges with three reinforced concrete structures. The second phase will take the road south from Roma to the regional transport hub of Mueda. This part of the project will begin in 2019.

Joao David, an infrastructure specialist at the AfDB, said the bank was expecting the Mueda–Negomano road to boost the regional economy, mainly by making it easier for tourists to reach the Niassa Reserve, home to a wide range of elephants, wildebeest, impalas and antelopes, as well as more than 400 species of birds.


The easiest way to reach Mueda from Mozambique

David said: “It is no accident that currently more than 60% of the bank’s operations in Mozambique are aimed at the transport sector. This partly reflects the role Mozambique plays on the regional chessboard, as a country providing services to landlocked countries.”

Other significant projects in the country include the $5bn Nacala corridor rail and port project in Mozambique and Malawi, of one of Africa’s largest infrastructure schemes. This is designed to create a corridor for trade in coal and agricultural (GCR 05-10-2018)

ANGOLA PLANS TO TRANSFER FUEL TANKS FROM THE SEA ONTO LAND

The entry of new operators in the Angolan oil derivatives logistics sector could lead to products currently stored in floating tanks to be stored onshore, a senior official said on Thursday in Luanda.

The director general of the Petroleum Derivatives Regulatory Institute (IRDP), Manuel Ferreira, recalled that more than half of the 700,000 cubic metres of oil products are stored in floating tanks and said transferring them to land would reduce costs.

The official, speaking at the end of a working visit to the Pumangol logistics base in the São Pedro da Barra neighbourhood, also said that in order to reverse the current situation, the IRDP is working with sector operators (Sonangol and Pumangol), in order to speed up this transfer from sea to land.

Ferreira, quoted by Angolan news agency Angop, also said that the proposal to revise the current legal framework, which gives the monopoly on the activity to Sonangol Logística, is being prepared so that other companies, such as Pumangol and SonanGalp, can also operate in the segment.

“The bill will be delivered, through the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Oil, to the President of the Republic before the end of the year,” said the director general of the IRDP.

Pumangol has 78 filling stations, or 8.0% of Angola’s total service stations, with a market share of the oil derivatives retail market of around 21%. (05-10-2018)

FORTE MOBILISATION EUROPEENNE POUR SOUTENIR LE DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'UNIVERSITE EUROMED DE FES AU MAROC

L'Université Euromed de Fès au Maroc a bénéficié ce jour d'une subvention de plus de 13 millions d'euros - soit plus de 148 millions de dirham marocain (MAD) - de l'Union européenne via la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) pour accompagner la construction et l'équipement de l'éco-campus.

Les accords de financement entre l'Union européenne (UE), la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) et l'Université Euromed de Fès ont été signés ce jour sous les auspices de M. Mohamed Benchaâboune, Ministre de l'Economie et des Finances du Maroc, en présence de Madame Claudia Wiedey, Ambassadeur de l'Union européenne au Maroc, de Madame Anna Barone, représentante de la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) et de M. Mostapha Bousmina, Président de l'Université Euromed. Un évènement a également été organisé à Fès avec les étudiants et les membres du corps professoral de l'Université où un échange fructueux a eu lieu sur la politique de voisinage et les liens Europe- Sud de la Méditerranée.

Ce financement européen intervient dans le cadre d'un mécanisme particulièrement innovant, la Facilité d'Investissement pour le Voisinage (FIV), dont un des objectifs est de financer des investissements dans des projets clés d'infrastructures sous la forme de subventions qui viennent en complément des prêts accordés par les institutions financières européennes. En 2017, la BEI avait en effet octroyé un prêt de 70 millions d'euros à l'Université Euromed de Fès avec des conditions de financement optimales grâce à sa notation AAA, et l'UE un don de 5 millions d'euros.

« Nous espérons que plusieurs promotions d'étudiants de tous horizons (Méditerranée, Afrique subsaharienne, Europe) sortiront de l'Université Euromed, nourris des valeurs de tolérance entre les peuples, enrichis des vertus de l'interculturalité et forts des compétences les plus utiles tant pour le marché du travail local qu'international" a déclaré Mme Claudia Wiedey, Ambassadeur de l'UE au Maroc.

« Nous nous félicitons de pouvoir contribuer à nouveau, grâce aux fonds de l'UE, au développement de l'Université euro-méditerranéenne de Fès, qui occupe une place essentielle dans le domaine de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche au Maroc. Sa vocation interculturelle et sa disposition à nouer des partenariats avec d'autres établissements universitaires du bassin méditerranéen en font un acteur académique clef pour la région », a déclaré Madame Anna Barone, Représentante de la BEI au Maroc.

Avec ce nouveau financement, l'Union européenne et la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) réaffirment avec force leur soutien aux ambitions de l'Université Euromed de Fès pour une formation d'Excellence, boursière et sociale, résolument tournée vers les nouveaux métiers et vers l'Economie verte.(EIB 03-10-2018)

GUINEA-BISSAU'S ECONOMY SLOWS DUE TO WEAK CASHEW MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Guinea-Bissau's economic growth rate is expected to fall to 3.8% this year due to a weak cashew marketing campaign, according to the findings of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission.

The mission led by Tobias Rasmussen, which visited Bissau between 19 September and 2 October 2018 for the sixth assessment under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) agreement, reported that the weak marketing campaign caused a slowdown in economic activity, "crushing production, exports and consumption."

"The mission expects real growth of 3.8% of GDP in 2018 against rates of about 6% between 2015 and 2017, and also foresees an external current account deficit rise to 3.6% of GDP, in 2018, compared with an estimated 1.9% in 2017," said the statement issued in Washington.

The statement added that government revenue has been weighed down by weaker economic growth as well as the slow progress of the reforms underpinning the 2018 budget, with tax collection in the first half of the year 9.7% below the programme's target.

The poor performance of tax revenue was, however, partially offset by higher non-tax revenue, including non-recurring revenues from the sale of seized timber.

As regards policies for the banking and financial sector, the authorities, among other measures are encouraging banks with high levels of bad debt to become more actively involved in debt restructuring that is sustainable for borrowers and to assess the possibilities for accelerated implementation of guarantees.

The ECF is a credit agreement that ensures a sustained programmatic commitment, in the medium and long term, in case of long-standing problems in the balance of payments.

The three-year agreement for Guinea-Bissau, approved on 10 July 2015, was extended for one year on 1 July 2018, increasing total access to about US$32.2 million. (04-10-2018)

TWICE AS MANY AFRICAN PRESIDENTS MADE IT TO CHINA'S AFRICA SUMMIT THAN TO THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As the current chairperson of the African Union, Rwandan president Paul Kagame was among the first five leaders to address the just-concluded 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Kagame extolled the "deepening" partnership between Africa and the global body, noting, "the dividend of a more focused and functional Africa benefits everyone."

But even as he emphasized this mutual cooperation, it was hard not to notice the absence of major African leaders at the world's biggest political summit. A Quartz analysis of the African principals who spoke at the general debate using the country list published by the UN shows fewer African presidents attended the general assembly in New York than were at the third summit of the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation that took place in Beijing two weeks earlier in September. The index of leaders who attended FOCAC was gathered from the forum's official English website. By Quartz's count 51 African leaders were in Beijing compared with 27 in New York.

And it's not just about the presidents: at least 24 African states sent lower-ranking officials to the UN than they did to FOCAC.

The UN list included nations from all regions of the continent, both small and large. Ethiopia's prime minister Abiy Ahmed, Africa's youngest leader, skipped the session even though he was expected to be one of the prominent speakers. Presidents from Somalia to Gabon, Uganda, and Senegal all missed UNGA, sending prime ministers and foreign secretaries instead. These African heads joined other global leaders who snubbed the assembly of nations including China's Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin, and German chancellor Angela Merkel. (The exception to the rule was eSwatini, the only African state with diplomatic relations with Taiwan which didn't attend the shindig in Beijing.)

Observers say the disparities in attendance between UNGA and FOCAC point to the shifting dynamics and priorities of the African continent. It also illustrates the limitations facing the UN, whose lofty declarations and bold rhetoric has faced growing criticism in recent years. The 193-member state body has also struggled to make its work more substantive globally, as the threats to multilateralism grow and it stares down funding cuts from the United States under the Trump administration, one of its major contributors.

The truancy could, however, be practical says Hannah Ryder, the CEO of Beijing-based consultancy firm Development Reimagined (DR). While the general debate takes place every year, the China-Africa forum happens every three, meaning "there is going to be some priority given to something that happens less often." UNGA also provides African country representatives an opportunity to catch up, network and discuss pressing matters, something, Ryder notes, leaders might have already done in Beijing.

African heads of states and governments might have chosen to stay back given the tense protests and domestic pressures they face at home too. This could be true of Cameroon, Togo, South Sudan, Uganda besides Ethiopia, where premier Abiy chaired a major ruling party meeting this week following deadly ethnic violence in recent months.

The variance in attendance also shows how the relationship with China is absolutely crucial to African leaders—a point Ghanaian president Nana Akufo-Addo emphasized in his speech at the UN. Research from Development Reimagined has indicated that few other continental or country-specific bilateral summits have managed to attract as many African heads of states or pledges as FOCAC. And Chinese leaders reciprocate this goodwill, visiting the continent more often than their European or American counterparts, and announcing pledges to the tune of $60 billion in the next three years.

African countries are also prioritizing their engagements with each other by signing free trade agreements, discussing how to finance their own security, and working to reduce external mediation and interference in regional security affairs.

In these changing times, Ryder says the UN should work to bring African states into the fold and rejuvenate their commitment to pursuing common global goals. This, Ryder adds, will involve addressing the imbalances in the very foundation of the UN system and engaging these emerging states when they don't need traditional aid or peacekeeping forces. "It's a big task."(Q. 05-10-2018)

EDP - ENERGIAS DE PORTUGAL ENTERS MOZAMBIQUE THROUGH INVESTMENT IN DUTCH COMPANY

EDP - Energias de Portugal has invested 2.0 million euros in the purchase of a stake in SolarWorks! of the Netherlands, operating in Mozambique and preparing to enter the Malawian market, the group said in a statement.

The investment resulted from a round of financing led by EDP Renováveis, a subsidiary of the EDP group, in conjunction with venture capital firm Persistent Energy Capital LLC, following a capital increase by SolarWorks!.

EDP's statement said that the investment will stimulate the international expansion of SolarWorks! in Southern Africa, where it has operated a pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) business since 2016.

This investment by EDP marks the beginning of the new strategy defined for the A2E (Access to Energy) area, in which it has committed to invest 12 million euros over the next three years to cover 200,000 people, mainly in developing countries .

SolarWorks! BV has been working in Southern Africa for the last decade, offering a range of quality solar products that give people to access to electricity for the first time in their lives. (03-10-2018)

The Memorandum is supported by the ACP-African, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat, Chamber of Commerce Tenerife, Corporate Council on Africa, CIP-Confederation of Portuguese Enterprises, Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development, HTTC - Hungarian Trade & Cultural Centre, NABC- Netherlands-African Business Council, SwissCham-Africa and other organisations.

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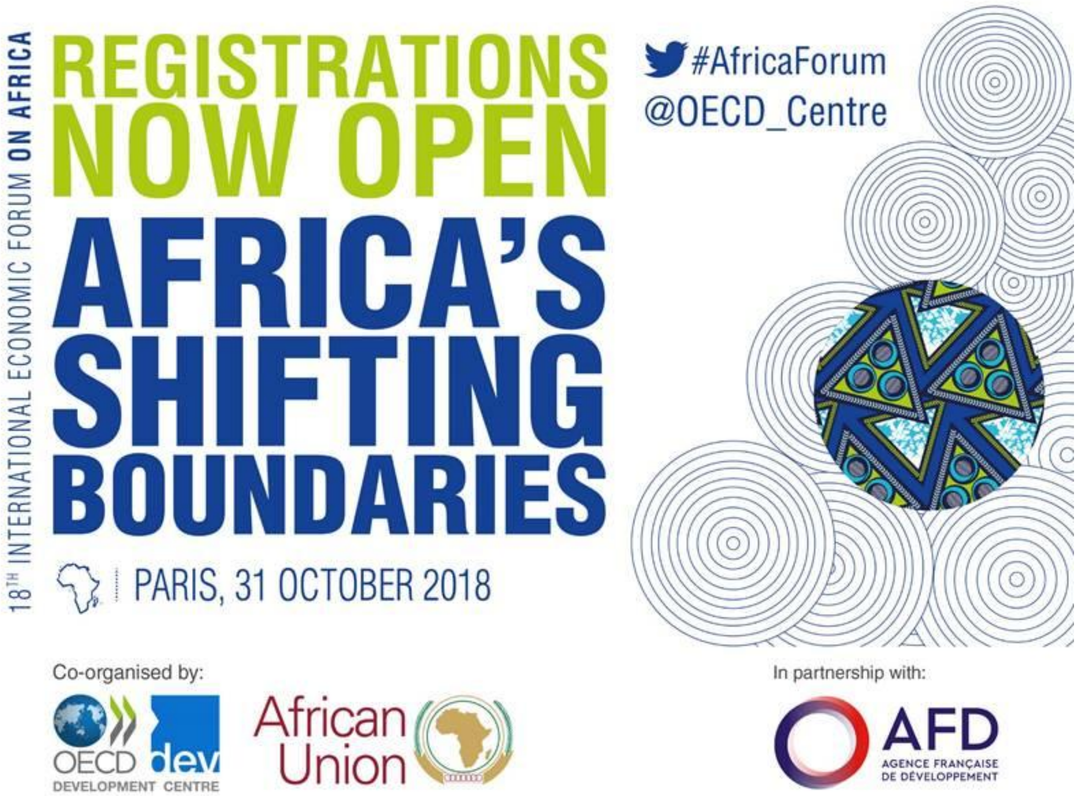

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