

MEMORANDUM

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11 YEARS OF UNINTERRUPTED PUBLICATION

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EIB GRANTS A EUR 70 MILLION LOAN TO UFM-LABELLED PROJECT EUROMED UNIVERSITY OF FES

- **The European Investment Bank is granting a EUR 70 million loan to the EuroMed University of Fes, a flagship project of the Union for the Mediterranean designed to contribute towards regional integration and stability through the promotion of international mobility, intercultural dialogue and cooperation in the fields of higher education, research and innovation**
- **The loan represents a substantial contribution to the construction of the University's eco-campus, which will have the capacity to host over 6,000 students coming from all the Euro-Mediterranean countries. It is expected that around 80% of the students will benefit from international mobility experiences with double diplomas**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has approved a EUR 70 million loan to support the [EuroMed University of Fes \(UEMF\)](#). The loan represents a substantial contribution to the construction of the UEMF's eco-campus. It will consolidate the regional dimension of the University, whose principal vocation is to build academic, scientific and intercultural bridges between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

The EIB loan will finance the construction of the eco-campus, including the teaching and research premises, the sports area, the library and other facilities and equipment. This contribution complements others from international, European and Moroccan financial partners.

The UEMF is a flagship project of the Union for the Mediterranean initiated by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, aiming to have the capacity to host over 6,000 students representing diverse nationalities in the Euro-Mediterranean region and Sub-Saharan Africa. It is expected that around 80% of the student body will benefit from international mobility experiences with double diplomas. The project has also received the institutional support of the Steering Committee of the COP22 as a *"model of eco-space, combining academic life, research, innovation and technology transfer in a clean environment, using the latest technologies for sustainable development"*.

Students of various nationalities are currently enrolled on UEMF academic and research programmes which are focused on important topics for the development of the Euro-Mediterranean region and were launched in partnership with well-known higher education institutions such as the *National Institutes of Applied Sciences (INSA Group)*, the *École Polytechnique de Paris*, the *Università degli Studi di Firenze*, the *Politecnico di Milano*, the *Politecnico di Torino*, the *University of Porto*, the *Universidad Politécnica de Madrid*, the *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*, the *École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs* and the *Université de Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne*. The overall construction of the University is expected to be completed by 2019-2020.

"I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the support of the EIB to the EuroMed University of Fes and to praise the active role of the UfM Secretariat in this achievement" said Prof. Bousmina, President of the EuroMed University of Fes. (EIB 04-04-2017)

NEW REFRIANGO PLANT IN ANGOLA REPLACES SOME BEER IMPORTS

An investment of more than US\$50 million made by Angolan beverage company Refriango in the construction of the first phase of a factory to make Tigra beer has made it possible to replace 60 million liters of annual imports, said the company's chairman.

Estevão Daniel also told Angolan news agency Angop that this project will help to attract others in related areas such as packaging raw materials for the production of the beverages and technical services.

"The beverage sector, due to the development already noted in Angola, opens up opportunities for integration in the value chain, and is thus of high strategic interest in terms of economic diversification," he said.

The chairman of Refriango also said that expansion of the new plant, with an additional investment of about US\$32 million, will triple initial beer production capacity.

Refriango specializes in the production and distribution of juices, soft drinks, water, energy drinks and alcoholic beverages, and has a portfolio of 15 brands, some of which are market leaders in their segments, such as soda brand Blue, water brand Pura, juice brands Nutr and Tutti and Welwitschia tonic water.

The company owns one of the largest factories in Africa, with an annual production capacity 1.9 billion litres with 24 filling lines for all types of packaging. (06-04-2017)

BRUSSELS CONFERENCE ON “SUPPORTING THE FUTURE OF SYRIA AND THE REGION” AGREES HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE CRISIS AND €5.6 BILLION IN PLEDGES FOR 2017



Wednesday’s Brussels Conference on “Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region” agreed a holistic approach to handling the Syrian crisis, including massive financial assistance to respond to the humanitarian situation, backing for political work towards a resolution of the crisis, and a long-term vision to support a peaceful and stable future for Syria and the wider region, EU High Representative Federica Mogherini said at the end of the conference, which she hosted and co-chaired with the United Nations, Qatar, Norway, Kuwait, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The conference, which brought together representatives of more than 70 countries and international organisations as well as international and Syrian civil society, agreed pledges for this year of €5.6 billion euros, including €1.3 billion from the EU, which remains by far the largest donor to the crisis. The EU also committed to maintain similar levels of support in the future, amounting to €560 million for 2018 for Lebanon, Jordan and for humanitarian work inside Syria, and to maintain its level of engagement also in 2019.

“Today’s Conference has agreed on a holistic approach to the Syrian crisis,” said the High Representative. “The scale of suffering is such that a political solution is more urgent than ever before. Investment of political work in supporting a resolution to the crisis is key in securing a future, any future, but especially a free and democratic future for Syria and its people. Only Syrians can make the agreement that will secure peace... Sustainable and inclusive peace in Syria for the Syrians remains the objective of all our common work.”

The Conference condemned the use of chemical weapons by the government and Da’esh, as identified by the UN Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Joint Investigative Mechanism, and the attacks on Khan Sheikhun on Tuesday, and called for it to cease immediately. “There must be no doubt that those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law or human rights – whoever they are - will be held accountable,” Mogherini stressed.

Delegates gave their full support to the Geneva peace talks and commended and encouraged the work of the UN Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura. They also stressed the role of civil society, including women’s organisations, as a key part of a lasting solution.

Attention was given also to the importance of achieving full compliance with the ceasefire agreed at the Astana meetings and the conference recognised the special role and responsibility that the three guarantors – Russia, Turkey and Iran - hold when it comes to its full implementation.

The third theme of the Conference was a recognition of the important role played by the neighbouring countries, especially Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Documents were agreed, setting out mutual commitments between Lebanon and Jordan and the international community.

“In particular we need to support the economic development of neighbouring countries to address the impact of the protracted crisis as well as opportunities for Syrians to secure their livelihoods. We need to increase our work to reach the goal of getting all refugee children, vulnerable children in host communities and children in Syria into quality education. No lost generation can be accepted. Practical steps were agreed today to make this happen,” said the High Representative.

“Finally – the fourth theme – we highlighted that reconstruction and international support for its implementation would be a peace dividend - a very powerful one - but only once a credible and inclusive political transition is firmly underway,” Mogherini concluded. (EC 06-04-2017)

[Co-Chairs' Declaration](#)

EU FUNDS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN ANGOLA OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The European Union (EU) will provide 200 million euros for projects in the sectors of trade, energy and water supply in Angola over the next five years, said in Luanda the EU ambassador, Tomáš Uličný.

At the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, on Monday, the ambassador told Angolan news agency Angop that in addition to financial support in the mentioned sectors, over the next six months the EU will fund the training of technicians of the National Bank of Angola.

“More than twenty Angolans will travel to Europe to receive training in banking and some European experts will come to Angola to pass on their knowledge so that the country can reach the European banking standard,” said the diplomat.

Uličný said the EU also aims to support Angola in higher education, by providing at least 8 million euros to train staff over the next two years.

Speaking specifically about the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, which laid the foundations of what is now the European Union, the ambassador said “Europe is proud to look to the past and sees a hopeful future.” (06-04-2017)

BOTSWANA ELEPHANTS ON THE RAMPAGE



Botswana’s Department of Wildlife and National Parks says it is intensifying its wildlife control after elephants went on the rampage in areas outside their range leading to destruction of human property.

The elephants are reported to have been seen in Maitengwe village in northern Botswana, about 600 kilometres from the capital Gaborone.

They reportedly caused damage to crops in various fields.

In a statement on Friday, the department said it is currently driving the elephants back to the range areas which include protected areas after they had left the enclosures, destroying fences and other properties in their path.

The department warned that the exercise may be accompanied by more damage to human property as the elephants are made to retreat to their usual enclosures.

People in the area have been enjoined to give the elephant control teams high levels of cooperation and other necessary assistance where possible.

“The public is advised to be extremely vigilant and cautious when moving in the affected areas. They should limit their movements and if possible avoid moving at night” the department said.

The ground teams from the department are tasked with ensuring that the destruction is assessed and efforts made to repair them.

The department advised that damages to fences should be repaired immediately to prevent the movement of livestock and other wildlife moving into private properties. (APA 31-03-2017)

NIGERIA, OIL MAJORS TO SEAL DEAL ON \$13.5BN ZABAZABA DEEPWATER PROJECT

The Nigerian Government, Shell and the Nigerian Agip Exploration Limited (NAE) will sign the Final Investment Decision (FID) for the \$13.5 billion Zabazaba Deepwater project located in Oil Prospecting Lease (OPL) 245 in the second quarter of this year.



The Zabazaba Deepwater is a Greenfield offshore licence block located in OPL 245 in the eastern portion of the Niger Delta with water depths ranging from 1,200 to 2,400 meters.

Agip and Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCo) signed the production sharing agreement at the ratio of 50:50, where NAE is the operator.

NAE is developing the Zabazaba oilfield which has proven reserves of 560 million barrels of oil, as a standalone development, while Etan field, which is also in OPL 245, will be developed as a tie-back to Zabazaba.

The OPL 245, which has about 9 billion barrels of crude oil, is believed to be the largest oil block in Africa.

According to This day newspaper report on Monday, the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Mr. Simbi Wabote, confirmed the development in a statement on Sunday.

It explained that the agency expedited action in its evaluations and approvals on the Zabazaba project, with a view to increasing Nigeria’s crude oil production and creating opportunities for the growth and development of Nigerian Content.

He said that the conclusion of the technical evaluation “has paved the way for Agip to proceed with its plans to receive and evaluate the commercial bids, conclude negotiations and award contracts in the second quarter of 2017”.

Wabote said that NAE was planning to achieve first oil in 2020, and also achieve the Final Investment Decision (FID) in the second quarter of 2017 and start execution of the project in the third quarter. (APA 03-04-2017)

PPC ZIMBABWE OPENS US\$82M CEMENT MILL IN HARARE

PPC Zimbabwe has opened its new US\$82m Harare mill that has been commissioned by President Robert Mugabe.

The facility features a cement ball mill with dynamic separator, a single line packer and palletizer, and road and rail off-loading facilities. This is in positioning PPC to meet local demand, as well as boost the country's ability to export to the region.

The mill, which will bring PPC's collective capacity (Bulawayo and Harare) to 1,4 million tonnes per annum will allow the company to increasingly penetrate the northern regions of the country and grow exports into its neighbors.

It will also ensure continued roll-out of its bulk and mini-bulk strategy, enabling PPC to partner strategically with developers and construction clients to boost efficiencies and delivery on projects.

Speaking at the event, Zimbabwe's Minister of Trade and Commerce Dr Mike Bimha noted the Government's continuous commitment towards ensuring companies like PPC Zimbabwe operate in a business- conducive environment as well as getting a fair return on their investment.

Todd Moyo, Chairman of PPC Zimbabwe, acknowledged PPC's significant investment in the mill as demonstration of its long-term positive outlook and forecast for the country and region, in that it was inclusive of up skilling in local labour in the construction.

The company also contracted other local companies; JR Goddard Construction, Ascon-Tencraft and HVC – all of which contributed towards the opening of this advanced facility.

In line with its brand promise of "strength beyond the bag", PPC Zimbabwe also launched its new Surecast 42.5R cement at the event, certainly a first for the country.

The cement's increase in early strength makes it the ideal offering for small, medium and large contractors – allowing new flexibility in mix designs, better brick yields and a total reduction in concrete cost for readymix, among others.

With the Harare mill fully functioning and ready to meet demand, its official commissioning sees another milestone in the PPC Group's African expansion strategy achieved. Moyo also spoke of key developments in DRC and Ethiopia later on this year.(CRO 28-03-2017)

AFREXIMBANK OFFICIAL SAYS FACTORING SERVICES CAN BRIDGE SME FINANCING GAP



Ms. Kanayo Awani, Managing Director of the Intra-African Trade Initiative of the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), has said that factoring services can bridge the gap in the financing of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Africa by addressing the challenges the SMEs face in accessing funding for business activities.

Speaking during the opening of a two-day factoring promotion seminar organised by the Bank, in Douala, Cameroon at the weekend, Awani said that the effectiveness and potential of factoring services to support SMEs became even higher during periods of financial distress and that, because of its unique features, factoring was well-suited for facilitating financial inclusion of SMEs.

A statement on Monday by Afreximbank quoted Awani as saying that supporting its strategy to grow intra-African trade and facilitate greater SME contribution to regional and global supply chains, Afreximbank had been championing the development of factoring in Africa.

According to Awani, the Bank's support had been through provision of credit lines to factors, capacity-building workshops, policy and regulatory inputs, advisory services and technical assistance to promote best practices.

"We are proud to note the increased awareness about factoring in Africa and, more tangibly, the growing number of factoring companies on account of our efforts," she said, adding that increasing factoring transaction volumes and ensuring stronger legal frameworks were also part of the Bank's targets.

Also speaking, Aboubakar Njikam, representative of the Governor of the Littoral Region of Cameroon, said that the country had enacted legislation to regulate factoring in recognition of its importance as in unlocking economic development.

Cameroon was sparring no effort in promoting the development and use of the product and the new law provided the enabling environment for its growth in the coming years.

Cameroon is among African countries where new factors are emerging and its factoring volumes reached about €40 million in 2016.

In addition to providing networking opportunities for international and sub-regional factoring practitioners, the seminar introduced participants to the principles, mechanics, risks and benefits of factoring using case studies and success stories.

More than 150 finance professionals, legal practitioners, corporates and SMEs from Cameroon, the Central Africa region and beyond attended the seminar, which was organized in collaboration with FCI, the global representative body for the factoring and receivables finance industry; Afriland First Bank Group; and CamLease, the Cameroonian leasing association.

The seminar follows similar factoring promotion and capacity-building events organised by Afreximbank in Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia and Mauritius. (APA 03-04-2017)

TANZANIA FIRM EMBARKS ON US\$20M LAND RECLAMATION, HOTEL PROJECT

A Tanzanian company has embarked on a project dubbed Mtoni Marine that would involve reclamation of land from the sea for the construction of hotels in a development costing Sh43.8 billion (about US\$20 million).

Bakhresa Group of Companies general manager Karama Awadhi told journalists on Monday that about 70 percent of the project has so far been implemented and was expected to be completed in August this year.

"Our people are working around the clock and if all goes well we expect to complete the project in August," he said.



He noted that the project has created jobs for thousands of Tanzanians and several more are expected to be created once it is completed.

He said the land reclamation project project is being implemented by Coastal Bridge Company in collaboration with Bakhresa Group of Companies while Estim Construction Ltd was involved in the h Hotel construction

According to the official, they are building hotels consisting of 106 rooms, six of which will be presidential rooms that can accommodate the same number of Presidents at one go.

He noted that they are in the process of completing land reclamation of the Indian Ocean Sea with a height of 150 meters and width of 50 meters.

“Our land reclamation project is expected to produce a water park and marine park for family outings,” he said.

According to him, after completion of the water park project they expect to accommodate at least 3,500 families in one go and the marine is expected to accommodate at least 30 boats of height 30 metres in one go. (APA 03-04-2017)

AGIP MULLS MEGA DESALINATION PLANT IN KENYA

Italian energy giant [Azienda Generale](#) Italian Petroli (Agip) has partnered with [Lamu County](#) to construct a desalination plant in Kenya. The desalination plant in Kenya will harness the Indian Ocean to provide fresh water to residents.

Agip an energy firm owned by Italian oil major ENI, will see the Sh20 million plant established at Siyu Village in the Lamu archipelago.

The project will harness the resource from the Indian Ocean to allow for subsistence use of desalinated water by residents of Lamu East.

It also presents a new ray of hope for the area’s inhabitants who have had challenges accessing the precious resource with many being forced to rely on salty water even for use at home.

“This is a timely project for the people of this area. On behalf of the people of Siyu and the County Government of Lamu at large, I want to sincerely congratulate Agip for their kind gesture to establish the desalination project in this area,” said Lamu governor Issa Timamy.

Addressing a gathering at Siyu, the Italian Ambassador to Kenya Mauro Masoni thanked Mr. Timamy and Lamu’s residents for supporting the project.

“I think it is extremely important to realize a project like this in this very dry island. I believe it will greatly improve your lives,” said Amb Masoni.

Once started, the plant will be completed within six months and is projected to produce at least 2,500 litres of fresh water an hour.

Water Executive Fatma Awale said a five-month feasibility study done by a Japanese company, Toyota Tsusho Corporation, had concluded that desalination of the Indian Ocean sea water as a viable project that could permanently address water shortage in Mombasa.

Water desalination is a process that separates dissolved salts and other minerals from water. Mombasa has no fresh water sources and depends on supply from Mzima Springs in Taita Taveta, Baricho Water Works in Kilifi, Tiwi boreholes and Marere Water Supply in Kwale county.

The county receives 48 million litres of water daily from these sources against a demand of 186m litres. According to Awale, the plant will be situated along the coastline for easy harvesting of sea water before it is converted to fresh water for consumption in Mombasa.

Acute shortages have in the past forced the Lamu government to seek external help from well-wishers and donors to address the issue that is now worsened by an ongoing drought.(CRO 30-03-2017)

NAMIBIA TO PHASE OUT CHEQUES BY YEAR'S END

Namibia is still on course to phase out the use of cheques as a form of payment by the end of the year to be replaced by an electronic payment system, the country's central bank said on Monday.



In 2015, the Payments Association of Namibia announced the reduction of cheque payments within the National Payment System from N\$500,000 (\$37 057) to N\$100,000 (\$7411) that took effect on February 1, 2016.

While the phasing out of cheques altogether, is anticipated by the December 31 the association noted that this is a sign the country is in transition toward electronic based payment methods.

The central bank and the Bankers' Association of Namibia have since requested cheque processing institutions to carry out an impact assessment to review and evaluate the impact the new development will have and to ensure the efficient phasing out of cheques. (APA 03-04-2017)

ROLE OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: EUROMED INVEST ACADEMY HELD IN MARRAKECH



BUSINESSMED

An academy under the theme « Fostering Women leaders – Women in BSOs » was organised earlier this month in Marrakech in the framework of the EU-funded EUROMED Invest project. More than 85 representatives of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) from the Mediterranean region, entrepreneurs, and several stakeholders from the private sector to discuss the role of women in the economic and social development of their own countries.

The EUROMED Invest Academy is a training and exchange of best practices workshop for BSOs aiming at maximising the exchange and improving the quality of services provided to SMEs in the Mediterranean region. The Marrakech academy was an opportunity to share best practices in various BSOs about women entrepreneurs and services provided by BSOs.

The meeting provided an opportunity to take stock of the progress made in achieving gender equality and empowering women in development programs at the regional and national level.

The aim of the EUROMED Invest project is to boost private business and investment within the Euro-Mediterranean region to contribute to inclusive economic development. The project's activities aim to empower Euro-Med business and investment networks to implement targeted strategies in support of SME development in specific sectors: agri-food, water and alternative energies, tourism, transport and logistics, cultural and creative industries. (Euromed Invest 31-03-2017)

[EUROMED INVEST \(EU Support to business and investment partnerships in Southern Mediterranean\)](#)

WHEELCHAIR AS BELATED BIRTHDAY GIFT FOR MUGABE



Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe on Monday received a belated birthday present befitting of his advanced age – a motor-controlled wheelchair.

The Zimbabwean leader, 93, got the “mobile chair” from his cabinet ministers during a ceremony held at State House in Harare.

The ministers said the wheelchair is meant to make it easy for Africa's oldest leader to “navigate his way around the office and at home.”

Mugabe has lately struggled to walk, often becoming an embarrassment to his countrymen during foreign visits.

The present comes about a month after First Lady Grace Mugabe boasted that her husband will rule the southern African country “even from the grave”. (APA 03-04-2017)

CONSTRUCTION OF SOUTH SUDAN-ETHIOPIA LINK ROAD KICKS OFF

Construction of the much anticipated South Sudan-Ethiopia link road has kicked off. The South Sudan-Ethiopia link road is expected to open up the two countries and enhance trade.

According to the government officials the roads will provide access for South Sudan to the Port of Djibouti and allow it to export oil or fuel by tanker to Ethiopia.

While the other road will run from Boma, in central South Sudan, through Bor and Dima to Raad, in southern Ethiopia. The other, more northerly road will connect Pagak, in western Ethiopia, to Gamebella and Palouge, in northern South Sudan.

The construction of the two roads was agreed when the officials from both Nations met both sides being represented by their head.

Ethiopian side was represented by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn while the South Sudan side what represented by President Salva Kiir on 24 February.

So far It has been reported in South Sudan that work has already been completed on sections of the two roads inside Ethiopia, which could also be used to bring food aid into the country.

The two leaders said that the transportation of good across the two nations has been a big challenge and there was need to ensure that the project kicks off on time and ends on time.

“We are glad that the two nations are looking into growing together in terms of trade and the road systems connecting the two countries will be a major mile in ensuring that the two nations develops together” added Prime Minister Hailemariam.

Landlocked South Sudan is still closely tied to rump Sudan in terms of its links with the rest of the world. It relies on an oil export pipeline through Sudan to Port Sudan as its only export route, paying high transit fees to Khartoum for the privilege.(CRO 30-03-2017)

MOZAMBICAN, CHINESE FIRMS TO INVEST US\$3M IN POWER PLANT

Chinese firm Shanghai Electric Power Co and Mozambican coal miner Ncondezi have announced plans to invest US\$3 million over the next 12 months in the construction of a thermal power plant in Mozambique, state radio reported on Monday.



According to Radio Mozambique, the completion of the work is required to secure a concession contract that would be granted by government decree.

The two companies are listed on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) of the London Stock Exchange and have been jointly developing this project in Mozambique.

The plant, which is expected to have initial installed capacity of 300 megawatts, will be expanded up to 1,800 megawatts, with the output sold to Mozambican state power utility EdM.

The coal mine that will supply the power station has resources estimated at 4.7 billion tonnes, an amount which, according to the Energy Ncondezi, can feed a large project with a long life.

Ncondezi is planning to produce coal in the Zambezi coal basin of Mozambique in the same area where mines are being developed by Brazilian mining giant Vale and Riversdale Mining.

It also hopes to export 10 million tonnes a year of thermal coal, used to fuel power stations to the Indian market by 2020. (APA 03-04-2017)

CENTURY POWER PLANS TO CONSTRUCT 495MW POWER PLANT IN NIGERIA

In West Africa, a Nigerian-based power generation company, [Century Power](#) has announced that it plans to construct a power plant in Nigeria that will produce 1,500MW of electricity, which will be fed into the nation's power grid.

According to Media, the plant will be constructed in three stages at the Century Power Generation Plant in Okija, Anambra State, starting with 495MW, which is estimated to be finished in 2020.

Presently, the company's managing director, Dr. Chukwueloka Umeh, contributed in a panel discussion held in the US, where he raised some of challenge facing the power sector in Nigeria.

Umeh said: "There are challenges confronting every facet of the power value chain in the nation, beginning from gas generation all the way to electricity distribution, and in order to secure these, major investment is required."

He continued: "A huge part of this investment will come from local and foreign investors, but the government must craft favorable conditions in all these sub-sectors to guarantee influx of these urgently required investments. It cannot be business as normal."

According to Press, Umeh elucidated that Nigerians are entrepreneurial, nonetheless, must have the right infrastructure to unfasten the potential that the nation has been debating about for decades.

"It is easy to see that we export timber, but import toothpicks merely because we do not have a stable and dependable supply of electricity to allow SMEs manufacture goods locally at cutthroat costs, thus generating jobs for the mounting unemployed population."

"The population fears about tariff increases, but do not realize that they really pay much higher tariffs by generating their own power with petrol or diesel powered generators," he maintained.

On renewable energy, he said what Nigeria needs are big base load plants, with the capacity to produce 100MW and more, stating that renewable are necessary to assist preserve the environment, while sources such as hydro are nice to have in the power mix, media reported.(CRO 30-03-2017)

GROWTH OF S/AFRICA'S TOURISM MEANS MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Newly-appointed South African Tourism Minister Thokozi Xasa has said that growth in international and domestic tourism means more opportunities for local suppliers and providers of services to tourists.

Speaking at the 2017 Local Government Tourism Conference underway in Johannesburg, Xasa said tourism growth meant more opportunities for small businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators, and people from local communities to become actively involved in "the wonderful world of tourism."

Themed "Tourism Planning is Everybody's Business", the conference is expected to provide a platform for public and private sector stakeholders to deliberate on how integrated tourism planning could lead to a sustainable and inclusive sector that creates employment opportunities, and contributes to poverty alleviation.

The South African government recently allocated US\$38 million to promote tourism over the next three years.

She said: "We are not after short-sighted growth that is haphazard and aimless. We want sustainable growth that creates more opportunities for black people, especially people in rural areas, and for women, the youth and people living with disabilities."



According to her, growth in tourism must lead to economic and social transformation for the country.

“All of us here today have one thing in common: we are all partners in tourism development, which makes it essential that we are all partners in planning for tourism growth and development.

“We are at a very special juncture in the development of tourism in South Africa, a time when collaboration, partnerships and planning together is absolutely essential if we are to succeed in extracting the full value and benefits of tourism for all our people,” she said.

Noting that tourism was a half-exposed treasure chest, she said: “The lid is half-opened and not many of our people can get to the jewels in it. But if we all work together, we can prise the lid open, so that the benefits of tourism, and the natural and cultural heritage of our country, can be shared by all the people in our country.” (APA 04-04-2017)

EU FOSTERS RESEARCH AND INNOVATION DIALOGUE WITH WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES FROM THE EU AND NORTH AFRICA

EU Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas attended last Friday in Tunisia the Forum for the Dialogue in the Western Mediterranean, referred to as the "5+5 Dialogue". With ministers and high level ministerial representatives in charge of research and higher education from the countries participating to this sub-regional forum (Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia), as well as the Secretaries General of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), they discussed ways of deepening cooperation in research and innovation.

"Horizon 2020, our research and innovation programme, is open to the world. Researchers or businesses from all over the globe can participate. I want to call on the Western Mediterranean countries to pursue their common objectives through our programme. It's the best means of addressing the common challenges that we face, such as water provision, agro-food systems, migration flows and climate change," said Commissioner Moedas.

During his visit, Commissioner Moedas also held high-level bilateral meetings with Slim Khalbous, Tunisian Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research, Fadhel Abdelkefi, Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation, and Fatallah Sijilmassi, the Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Tunisia is [associated](#) to Horizon 2020 since 1 December 2015. Since then, it has been working on strengthening the governance and the performance of its national research and innovation system. Tunisian researchers and organisations have participated in successful EU-funded projects. For example, the University of Sfax participated in the [MedSeA](#) project that [greatly contributed](#) to our knowledge of the dangers of acidification of the Mediterranean Sea. The [EAU4Food](#) project, which included the Tunisian National research Institute of Rural Engineering, Water and Forests (INRGREF),

brought [agricultural innovation](#) directly to the local population. And supported by [an Advanced Grant](#) awarded by the European Research Council, sociologist Alia Gana is assessing the varied results of the Arab Spring in the [Tarica](#) project.(EEAS 03-04-2017)

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