

MEMORANDUM

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Should a reader require a copy of the Memoranda, please address the request to fernando.matos.rosa@sapo or fernando.matos.rosa@skynet.be.

Daily news of Africa, without comments, as they are published

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COMMISSION APPROVES DISBURSEMENT OF €100 MILLION IN ASSISTANCE TO TUNISIA

The European Commission, on behalf of the EU, has today approved the disbursement of a €100 million loan to Tunisia.

This represents the third and last tranche of the €300 million Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA-I) programme to Tunisia, adopted in [May 2014](#).

The MFA-I programme is part of the EU's comprehensive efforts to help Tunisia respond to the severe economic difficulties it is facing and the persistent political instability in the region. The operation has supported Tunisia's process of economic recovery both by providing concessional funding, and by encouraging the implementation of a number of important policy measures agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and Tunisia.

Pierre Moscovici, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, said: *"This disbursement, on the back of agreement on a new programme, reaffirms the EU's continued commitment to support Tunisia in its efforts to further its economic and political transition. Notwithstanding an unstable regional context, Tunisia has demonstrated its determination to consolidate a fully-fledged democratic system, and to achieve prosperity for all its citizens. The EU firmly stands with Tunisia and its people."*

This first macro-financial assistance operation to Tunisia will be followed by a [second MFA programme](#) (MFA-II) in the amount of €500 million, also in the form of loans. The new operation was proposed following the terrorist attacks of 2015, which contributed to halting Tunisia's economic recovery. This had a significant impact on the country's balance of payments position and financing needs. The programme was agreed by the Council and the European Parliament on 6 July 2016.

The disbursement of MFA-II funds will again be tied to the implementation of a number of policy conditions mutually agreed upon. The Memorandum of Understanding, which lays down these conditions, was signed in Brussels in April 2017. The pending ratification of the Memorandum by the Tunisian Parliament will pave the way for disbursement under the second operation.

The EU's strategy of assistance to Tunisia also includes budget support programmes under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), of which Tunisia is a major recipient among the Southern Neighbourhood countries, as well as substantial loans from the European Investment Bank.

Macro-Financial Assistance

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

The MFA-I for Tunisia was proposed by the European Commission on 5 December 2013 and adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 15 May 2014. A second MFA operation for Tunisia (MFA II) was adopted by the co-legislators on 6 July 2016.

EU-Tunisia relations

Since the revolution of 2011, the EU has continuously and increasingly supported Tunisia in its transition to democracy. EU support to Tunisia has intensified since 2011, and in light of the persistently unstable regional context the country is facing.

During the Association Council meeting on 11 May, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta George Vella, on behalf of High Representative – Vice President Federica Mogherini, reiterated the importance of the cooperation with Tunisia, a Privileged Partner of the EU. The Joint Communication of the EU High Representative and the European Commission of 29 September 2016 on *'Strengthening EU support for Tunisia'*, as well as the Council Conclusions of 17 October 2016, confirm the commitment of the EU and its Member States to that effect.

The two MFA operations [supplement](#) the grant funding provided by the EU to Tunisia under the European Neighbourhood Policy and its financial instrument, the European Neighbourhood Instrument. EU grant assistance to Tunisia since the 2011 revolution has so far amounted to over € 1 billion.

The EU's relations with Tunisia also go beyond financial assistance and development funding, through

initiatives such as [Creative Europe](#), which aims to supporting cultural diversity and the competitiveness of cultural industries both in European and in the European Neighbourhood. (EC 10-07-2017)

CAPE VERDEAN HOTEL COMPLEX OWNED BY MACAU ENTREPRENEUR OPENS IN TWO AND A HALF YEARS

The first phase of the Gamboa Djeu Resort, a hotel complex with a casino to be built in Cabo Verde (Cape Verde), is expected to start operating in two and a half years, businessman David Chow said on Wednesday on the sidelines of the 42nd anniversary celebration of the independence of Cabo Verde.

Chow also said that landfills for the project were almost complete and that the necessary licenses had already been obtained. He added that in August construction of a bridge will begin to connect the capital Praia to the island of Santa Maria, where the complex will be built.

Chow, who is an honorary consul for Cabo Verde in Macau, said that the project which includes a hotel with casino, marina and convention centre involves “a very experienced Beijing construction company, a good architect and local engineers and even some from Macau,” according to Portuguese-language newspaper Tribuna de Macau.

The businessman and main shareholder of the Macau Legend Development company also referred to the future Sino-Atlantic Bank to be set up in Cabo Verde, saying that it could make investments from both Macau and China in the archipelago easier.

The businessman and the Cape Verdean government recently signed a memorandum with a view to setting up a bank in the West African country, which could also have repercussions in the MSAR, given that according to Chow the bank could help increase trade with Macau. (06-07-2017)

KENYANS ARE FIRST IN AFRICA TO GET GENERIC OF LATEST AIDS DRUG



Kenya is the first African country to start using a modern generic version of the latest HIV drug that can improve and prolong the lives of tens of thousands of people who suffer severe side effects and resistance to treatments.

A generic version of Dolutegravir (DTG), first approved in the United States in 2013, is being given to 20,000 patients in Kenya before being rolled out in Nigeria and Uganda later this year, with the backing of the health agency UNITAID.

DTG which was officially launched in the capital, Nairobi on Wednesday (June 28) is the drug of choice for people with HIV in high-income countries who have never taken antiretroviral therapy before and for those who have developed resistance to other treatment.

“This option can come with several advantages, more effective drugs, more effective regimen, fewer side effects and name them. So to us I think in HIV care and TB care there is a reason to celebrate,” said Peter Kimuu, head of policy, planning and healthcare financing at the country’s Ministry of Health.

Doughtiest Ogutu who has been living with HIV for 15 years started taking the drug this year.

She said her viral load – the amount of HIV in her blood – has fallen from 450,000 to 40,000 since she started on DTG and she has not experienced side effects compared to her previous treatment regimen, which included the efavirenz drug.

“Nightmares, you have constant nightmares where you take the drugs and then you go to bed, you are just dreaming of weird things, you are either in a cemetery, or you are dreaming about snakes, or you are dreaming about dead people, funny things, things out of this world. Some people think it’s a myth but it’s a reality. That you actually get to get nightmares, and then with efavirenz, I developed a condition of anaemia, because it would wear me out and drain me and my body cells would not reproduce themselves. So unlike now that you can see me and my flesh looks full of life, you cannot tell whether I’m sick not unless I tell you,” said Ogutu.

The brand name version of DTG is Tivicay, produced by ViiV Healthcare, majority-owned by GlaxoSmithKline.

Sub-Saharan Africa has been at the epicentre of the HIV epidemic for decades and home to nearly three quarters of all people with HIV/AIDS.

UNAIDS aims reach 90 percent of people diagnosed with HIV with antiretroviral treatment by 2020.

In Kenya, about 1 million people are currently on antiretroviral treatment (ART). DTG will first target about 27,000 people before being rolled out countrywide.

Some HIV patients develop a resistance to ARV drugs, which means the medicines do not work on them.

Professor Sylvia Ojoo is the Kenya country director for the University of Maryland School of Medicine and is monitoring the introduction of DTG.

“Eighty five percent suggests that the majority of patients are tolerating their treatment, now the 15 percent could be people who are non-adherent for various reasons, it could be people who are experiencing toxicity, you know or it could be people who failed one way or the other for reasons that may not be clear. So I’d say that the majority of patients right now tolerate the drugs that they are on, that we currently use and the reason that dolutegravir is exciting is that even more people will be able to tolerate it, and you know so therefore it would work even better for the majority. There are other aspects of dolutegravir that is different from our current regimen and that is that the drug itself is less likely to allow for viral resistance to develop,” said Ojoo.

Kenya, with one of the world’s largest HIV positive populations, has made great strides in dealing with HIV.

The country is working with UNITAID to make medicines more readily available and fast, to reduce manufacturing costs by allowing generic companies to access patents for a small royalty and produce them cheaply for the developing world.

Martin Sirengo the head of Kenya’s National AIDS and STI Control Program, says more than two-thirds of those who need treatment are currently accessing ART drugs.

“All the 1.5 million people living with HIV need to be on treatment, as I mentioned about a million and above are already on treatment, so we are looking for about 400,000 because some are already in the system and we are working them out. So it’s becoming increasingly difficult to find the last 400,000 people because some people living with HIV don’t know that they have HIV. So in the same breath we have therefore introduced self-testing, so that Kenyans can get to know their HIV status. So with that in place then the next frontier for HIV really is to move to quality of the services that we provide,” said Sirengo.

The number of new infections in Kenya has almost halved over the last decade to 80,000 a year, he added, thanks to increased testing, treatment and awareness. (Africa News 28-06-2017)

ZIMBABWE BANK SUSPENDS MULTICHOICE PAYMENTS OVER FOREX SHORTAGES

Zimbabwe's Steward Bank has suspended payments to MultiChoice, the pay-TV subsidiary of Naspers, citing unavailability of foreign currency, in a sign that dollar shortages are worsening in the country.

Local banks have been forced to limit withdrawals due to cash shortages, while importers face long delays in paying for goods they bring in, forcing some businesses to buy dollars on the parallel market.

Steward Bank, a unit of telecommunications company Econet Wireless, said in a statement that it was suspending payments to MultiChoice, Africa's largest pay-TV firm, which is popular in Zimbabwe.

"To assist in effective allocation of foreign currency reserves at this critical time, we would like to advise that with immediate effect, the bank has suspended DStv payments for all account classes [except premium]," the bank said.

In May 2016, the central bank in Zimbabwe set priorities for imports, imposed limits on cash withdrawals and introduced a bond note currency in a bid to ease the acute shortage of money in the country.

In a report on Friday, the IMF estimated that \$600m-\$800m was in circulation in Zimbabwe.

Economic analysts said most of the money was outside the official bank sector.

Most Zimbabweans, who still vividly remember the 500-billion percent hyperinflation that wiped out their savings and pensions in 2008, are holding on to the US currency as a store of value.

This is worsening the country's currency shortages.

Naspers has faced dollar shortages in other African countries including Angola, Mozambique and Nigeria. At the end of March, it had \$289m trapped in those countries, but had managed to extract almost all the money by the end of May.

The South African group's pay-TV business in the rest of Africa has suffered a decline in profits because of the effect of currency weaknesses in the main operating markets. (Reuters 10-07-2017)

CHINESE GROUP HUAWEI INSTALLS URBAN SECURITY SYSTEM IN CABO VERDE

The Cape Verdean government and Chinese telecommunications and networking equipment group Huawei Technologies on Monday in Praia signed a contract for the development of the first phase of the "Safe City" project, the archipelago's government said in a statement.

The contract to be signed includes the construction of an Operational Command Centre, the installation of a video surveillance system and a system of alerts and integrated operational communication (voice, SMS and data).

This first phase is due to start operating in January 2018, and a second phase is already under study to cover the islands of São Vicente, Sal and Boa Vista, with the start scheduled for the second half of 2018.

An agreement of intent was initially signed in October 2016 in Macau, according to statements made at the time by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Paulo Rocha, according to which Cabo Verde would be endowed with a modern urban security management system.

Rocha also said that the project, with an estimated cost of US\$ 20 million, translates into a system for placement of video surveillance cameras in the country's main urban centres, a command centre and a control centre for all entities that operate in the area of security, such as the National Police and Municipal Police. (10-07-2017)

EXPERTS PREDICT NIGERIA WILL SURPASS AFRICA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET BY 2020

As a result of the recent increase in adoption rate of solar and inverter technologies in Nigeria, Theophilus Nweke, the Managing Director of Cloud [Energy Photoelectric](#) Limited, made predictions that Nigeria would go beyond Africa's renewable energy target by 2020.

Last year, the New Partnership for Africa's Development in cooperation with other international agencies that also had a focus on renewable energy, set a target of 2020 for Africa to expand its renewable energy capacity as well as achieve universal access.

In Nigeria however, the target was accepted with major doubts considering the nation's failures to previously meet all set development targets.

However, according to Nweke, given the increased adoption rate of renewable energy technologies across the country, Nigeria would likely surpass NEPAD's target for the country even before 2020. According to a survey that led to the launch of the Cloud Energy Solar Access Program by a team of market monitors, Nigeria is set to spring a surprise. From the survey, Nigerians were already adopting solar and inverter technologies in large numbers.

The trend also showed that more young and middle aged professionals, inspired by necessity and without any pressure from the government, are getting over frustrations of electricity supply by switching to solar.

The Cloud Energy Solar Access Programme has supported this trend by removing the barriers of high costs with up to a 12-month payment plan for Solar and Inverter bundles designed to create easier and effective access to solar energy.

The solar access program is for all Nigerians, the Cloud Energy boss explained. The employed and self-employed who either own homes or live in rented apartments, big and small offices, schools, cooperatives, churches, mosques, banks, military and para-military institutions will all benefit from the programme.

An initial payment of 30% of total cost, a plan that spreads the balance over 12 month and the solar or inverter bundle is installed. All products enjoy a manufacturers' warranty of up to 25 years.

The Cloud Energy Solar Access Programme was also designed to educate the public on the benefits of using solar energy as a means of hastening the pace of the nation towards attaining the renewable energy goals of 2020.

The programme also contributes to the fight against climate change and creates thousands of jobs in the clean energy sector.

Other benefits include increased productivity, a substantial reduction on electric bills and 24/7 entertainment. (CRO 04-07-2017)

WORLD BANK FINANCES PRODUCTION OF STATISTICS IN MOZAMBIQUE

The World Bank (WB) has approved a US\$62 million grant to Mozambique to improve the production and dissemination of quality socio-economic statistics and to support the use this data in policy-making, the agency said.

The statement issued by the World Bank stresses that the high economic growth that Mozambique has experienced in the last decades did not translate into a proportional reduction of poverty, so there is a need for timely and high quality statistical data to design economic policies that adequately address poverty and regional disparities.

Mark Lundell, director of the World Bank for Mozambique, said in the statement that the institution intends to "strengthen the basis of a virtuous cycle that consists of the production of statistics that are better quality and are available to the interested parties, through their regular use in policymaking, and resulting in an increasing commitment to transparency and accountability on the part of the government."

The components of this project include strengthening the capacity of the National Institute of Statistics, data collection (including the upcoming 2017 population and housing census and new household surveys), analysis and dissemination, planning and data management of development aid.

The project is consistent with the objectives of the World Bank's strategy for Mozambique for 2017-2021 to fill data gaps in the key areas needed to track progress in poverty reduction as well as efforts to achieve sustainable development objectives. (10-07-2017)

NAMIBIAN BANKS EMBRACE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



Veeam rolled out its availability solutions to Bank Windhoek, Bank Gaborone and Cavmont Bank in Zambia

One of the biggest challenges facing financial services organisations that are embarking on digital transformation initiatives, is to integrate data while still ensuring business continuity.

For Namibian-based [Capricorn Group](#), [Veeam® Software](#) provided the assistance it required for this journey.

Working with its partner Complete Enterprise Solutions, Veeam rolled out its availability solutions encompassing backup and replication functionality to the three banks in the group; Bank Windhoek, Bank Gaborone and Cavmont Bank in Zambia.

Previously, the entities functioned separately, but after their merger into a single holding company, the business required a different approach. This saw the need to consolidate its systems as it identified more digitally-focused business prospects as a group and unlocked strategic opportunities at its other operations in Zambia and Botswana.

“While the initial requirements focused on backup and some replication, our evolution into a more mature financial services group meant we needed more measurement elements around our data availability. After all, you can only manage what you can measure,” says Johan Maritz, lead technical platform specialist at Capricorn Group.

Analysing data trends

Claude Schuck, regional manager for Africa at Veeam, says the project has been an ongoing process during the past two years as the group started migrating portions of its systems to Veeam.

“This culminated in a decision by Capricorn Group early last year to migrate all their availability requirements to Veeam. The project itself took approximately four months to complete and has provided the group with significant guidance in terms of their systems, data, and opportunities for streamlining internal processes,” he says.

Maritz says that with Veeam, Capricorn Group can now conduct trend analysis based on its backups, virtual machines, capacity, and usage to proactively manage its storage requirements as it evolves into a forward-looking trends organisation.

“Veeam enabled us to identify the over provisioning of our virtual machines. By downscaling from a resources perspective, we were able to significantly reduce costs. As the Veeam system allows for dynamic resource allocation, we can assign the required resources where it is needed most during busy month-end periods,” says Maritz.

Data management

Additionally, Veeam availability reporting provided Capricorn Group with information on its usage trends to help it manage its data centre infrastructure more cost effectively.

“While we do not yet fully automate all our resource pools, business intelligence can help us make more informed decisions based on the analysis we are able to do through Veeam.

Furthermore, Maritz says, Veeam is enabling it to manage its digitalisation projects in Zambia and Botswana as it becomes a more digitally-centric organisation.

“The business benefits of being digital first includes availability, risk mitigation, and financial control over the growth of our environment. Already, we have saved at least 25 percent in costs by reducing our virtual machine resource allocation thanks to Veeam and are looking at more reductions in the future,” he concludes. (ITNA 06-07-2017)

CABINDA, ANGOLA, WILL HAVE INDUSTRIAL HUB IN 2018

The first phase of the construction of the Fútila Industrial Hub (PIF), begun in 2013 in Cabinda, will be completed in the next 15 months, Angola's industry minister announced.

Minister Bernarda Martins, who had already travelled to that province to witness the start of works awarded to Benfin, said she hoped the hub would start receiving the first industrial units, as minimum conditions are already being created.

The company's representative, Manuel Nunes Barata, said that Fútila's industrial complex results from a partnership between the Angolan government through the Ministry of Industry and Benfin, under the terms of the presidential decree to complete the construction work, including the management and business model.

The site selected for the construction of the Industrial Hub is located 20 kilometres north of the city of Cabinda and its great advantage is its proximity to the oil field of Malongo and the deep water port under construction in Caio.

The hub has a total of 2,344 hectares, with the first stage of implementation covering 102 hectares, with completion scheduled for October 2018.

Angolan news agency Angop reported that the water supply network is 35% complete, the electricity, street lighting and information technology installation is at 20%, and two buildings have already been built, the first for administrative services and the second for the fire department. (10-07-2017)

ALGERIA TO GRANT LEGAL STATUS TO AFRICAN MIGRANTS

Algeria plans to grant residency rights and job permits to illegal African migrants, responding to a shortage of workers in farming and construction while also seeking to combat a surge in racist sentiment.

Prime Minister Abdelmadjid Tebboune's plan follows the launch of an anonymous online campaign that blames African migrants – whose numbers are unofficially estimated at 100,000 – for taking jobs and spreading the HIV virus that causes AIDS.

Youth unemployment is running at around 30% in Algeria, but the country also faces a shortfall of workers in some sectors as it tries to steer its economy away from over-reliance on oil and gas production.

To determine the number of beneficiaries of the scheme, the interior ministry is organising a census while security services will screen potential residency candidates.

"They will get a residency document which will allow them to get a job," Tebboune told lawmakers on Friday night. "We won't allow any NGO or individual to tarnish the image of our country."

He gave no further details on the scheme.

African migrants in Algeria are mostly from Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso and have come to escape acute poverty and terrorism back home. Some use Algeria as a transit country en route to Europe via neighbouring Libya.

Germany says Libya camps no solution to refugee crisis

Germany will not back a proposal establishing camps in Libya to corral migrants heading for Europe, Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said yesterday (2 May) at the African Union's headquarters.

"That's great news, I will be happy if I can work under the framework of the law," said a young Malian working illegally in a housing project as a mason in Ouled Fayet, west of Algiers.

Tensions

Tensions between Algerians and the migrants often boil over.

A year ago in Bechar, in western Algeria, rioting broke out after a local woman was believed to have been kidnapped by migrants.

The online anti-migrant campaign has shocked many in Algeria, which sees itself as a leading influence in the Sahel region and more widely in Africa, for example negotiating a peace deal in 2015 in Mali.

The campaign also appears to have embarrassed the government in a country that takes pride in its history as a bastion of anti-colonialism after its own 1962 war of independence against France.

Last month a hashtag “No to Africans in Algeria” was widely shared on Twitter and Facebook, calling for expulsions to protect Algerian families and prevent “chaos”.

Amnesty International’s local representative, Hassina Oussedik, has urged the government to do more to protect African migrants.

Algeria has embarked on politically sensitive reforms to modernise its still largely state-run economy, but it has been hit hard by a crash in oil prices that has deprived the country of more than half of its revenues.

The migrants already present in the economy tend to work illegally and are very often underpaid, human rights groups say.

Some economists doubt the government’s plan will make much difference to Algeria’s workforce, while others view it as a way to further monitor traffic across its southern borders, where Islamist militant groups are active.

“The goal of most of the migrants is definitely to reach the El Dorado in Europe,” economist Arslan Chikhaoui told Reuters. “Algeria is still only a transit destination.” (EurActiv 04-07-2017)

S/AFRICAN AIRWAYS MARKS 10 YEARS OF FLYING TO MUNICH

South African Airways (SAA) has marked 10 years of flying to Munich in Germany, the SAA has said.



“The daily flights between Munich and Johannesburg are a significant part of our European network strategy.

“It is also an important connection for the industry and trade, as well as for tourism from southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland,” SAA Head of Europe, Michael Bentele, said on Wednesday.

Initially equipped with three weekly connections, the route quickly showed potential and was increased to daily flights in October 2007.

Since then, the cash-strapped national carrier has been offering a connection from Munich to Johannesburg daily. (APA 06-07-2017)

TANZANIA TO BUILD CONTROVERSIAL STIEGLERS GORGE DAM “COME RAIN, COME SUN”

Tanzania has decided to go ahead with a controversial megaproject that promises to increase the nation’s generating capacity by 150%, but which also threatens wildlife in a vast Unesco heritage site. The 2.1GW Stieglers Gorge hydroelectric project would dam the River Rufiji as it flows through the Selous nature reserve, about 60km southwest of Dar es Salaam.

The plan was formulated in the 1980s but Tanzania has never had the capital to put it into effect. The decision to go ahead now follows a visit from Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn in March

and the offer of technical assistance from Ethiopia.



The Selous game reserve covers an area the size of Denmark

Ethiopia has become Africa's leading authority on transformative hydropower schemes after undertaking ambitious projects like the 6GW Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which is presently nearing completion. Ethiopia has agreed to send a group of expert advisers to help Tanzania set up the scheme.

Tanzanian President John Magufuli opened the Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair on 3 July with an assurance that the decision to go ahead was irreversible.

"Come rain, come sun, Stieglers Gorge hydroelectric dam must be constructed," he [said](#). "We are not going to listen to people who speak about impacts on environment without facts on the grounds."

He added that a feasibility study has been completed and work was under way to choose a contractor to build the dam.

Magufuli, whose nickname is "the bulldozer", was elected partly on his record of forcing through infrastructure schemes.

Opposition to Stieglers Gorge has been based on its impact on the Selous [game reserve](#), which covers an area the size of Denmark. The reserve has already had its elephant population reduced to 10% of what it was in the 1970s owing to "industrial-scale poaching". It is also home to the critically endangered black rhinoceros.

Magufuli said claims of irreversible damage to the reserve were groundless since the project would cover 1,350 sq km, equivalent to 3% of the total 45,000 sq km of the reserve's land area.(CGR 04-07-2017)

CONGO: FIRST TOURISM FORUM TO TAKE PLACE 17-18 JULY IN BRAZZAVILLE

The first national forum on tourism will take place from 17 to 18 July 2017 in Brazzaville in order to showcase the touristic potentialities of Congo in all dimensions, according to a statement of the Congolese ministry of Tourism seen by the African Press Agency on Thursday.

The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Dr Taleb Rifai, is expected to take part in the conference, which will feature several panels including the integration of Congo in the main tour destinations of Africa, the challenges faced by tour operators and how to tackle them.

"The sustainable development of tourism has become one of the five priorities of the Republic of Congo, which wants to put it in an African perspective given the real touristic potential in the country" the statement points.



“At the global level, tourism has become a key factor in economic diversification and job creation,” says the source.

The Congolese government is organizing these first national tourism conferences in partnership with the UN agencies in the Congo and the World Bank. (APA 06-07-2017)

AFRICAN UNION ENDORSES MAJOR NEW INITIATIVES TO END AIDS



African heads of state have endorsed two major new initiatives to help end AIDS by 2030. The [community health workers initiative](#) aims to recruit, train and deploy 2 million community health workers across Africa by 2020. The western and central Africa catch-up plan aims to rapidly accelerate access to HIV treatment in the region and close the gap in access between African regions. The initiatives were endorsed at the AIDS Watch Africa Heads of State and Government Meeting, held on 3 July during the 29th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Western and central Africa catch-up plan

Under the leadership of countries and regional economic communities, and in collaboration with UNAIDS, the World Health Organization, Doctors Without Borders and other partners, the catch-up plan in western and central Africa, which started implementation in late 2016, seeks to dramatically accelerate the scale-up of HIV testing, prevention and treatment programmes, with the goal of putting the region on the Fast-Track to meet the 90–90–90 targets by December 2020.

While the world witnesses significant progress in responding to HIV, with 57% of all people living with HIV knowing their HIV status, 46% of all people living with HIV accessing treatment and 38% of all people living with HIV virally suppressed in 2015, the western and central Africa region lags behind, achieving only 36%, 28% and 12%, respectively, in 2015. The gap is considerable: 4.7 million people living with HIV are not receiving treatment, and 330 000 adults and children died from AIDS-related illnesses in 2015.

“We cannot accept a two-speed approach to ending AIDS in Africa,” said UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé. “To put western and central Africa on track to end AIDS, we must address stigma,

discrimination and other challenges to an effective response, allocate funding to support the most effective strategies and implement delivery strategies that reach the communities most in need.”

The catch-up plan will aim to increase the number of people on treatment from 1.8 million to 2.9 million by mid-2018, giving an additional 1.2 million people, including 120 000 children, access to urgently needed treatment.

The first call for a catch-up plan for the region was made at the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS in June 2016. Since then, at least 10 countries (Benin, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone) have developed country operational plans deriving from the western and central Africa catch-up plan with a focus on ensuring the needed policy and structural changes.

Two million community health workers

The community health worker initiative aims to accelerate progress towards achieving the 90–90–90 targets by 2020—whereby 90% of all people living with HIV know their HIV status, 90% of people who know their HIV-positive status are accessing treatment and 90% of people on treatment have suppressed viral loads—and to lay the foundation for sustainable health systems. Championed by the President of Guinea and African Union Chair, Alpha Condé, the initiative seeks to confront the acute health workforce shortages across Africa and improve access to health services for the most marginalized populations, including people living in rural areas.

“Recruiting 2 million community health workers is a critical step towards achievement of the Africa-wide socioeconomic transformation envisioned in the African Union’s Agenda 63”, said Mr Condé. “Few tools have the ability of community health workers to drive progress across the entire breadth of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

Substantial evidence, from both Africa and elsewhere, demonstrates that well-trained, properly supervised community health workers provide an excellent quality of care and improve the efficiency and impact of health spending. Community health workers have helped devise some of the most effective service delivery strategies for HIV testing and treatment, and studies have also linked community-delivered services with increased rates of immunization, exclusive breastfeeding and malaria control coverage.

“Sustainable community health work is a matter of survival and development in Ethiopia, said Prime Minister of Ethiopia Hailemariam Desalegn. “My community health workers have made better health happen. Achieving universal health coverage is not possible without building community health systems.”

UNAIDS estimates that there are more than 1 million community health workers in Africa today, but most focus on a single health problem and are under-trained, unpaid or under-paid, and not well integrated in health systems. The new initiative endorsed by AIDS Watch Africa seeks to retrain existing community health workers, where feasible, and to recruit new health workers to reach the 2 million target.

“Few investments generate such a remarkable social and economic return as community health workers,” said Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute, Columbia University. “Community health worker programmes are essentially self-sustaining, in that they avert illness, keep workers healthy and productive and contribute to economic growth and opportunity.”

While community health workers may hold the key in many settings to achieving the 90–90–90 targets, the benefits of this new initiative extend well beyond the AIDS response. The initiative will expedite gains across the health targets of Sustainable Development Goal 3, create new jobs that will strengthen local and national economies and offer new opportunities to young people. The new initiative is aligned with the World Health Organization’s Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health.

Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free

At the AIDS Watch Africa meeting, the participants also called on member states and development partners to support the African Union campaign to eliminate new HIV infections among children and keep mothers alive as part of the Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free collaborative framework.

“Complacency gives birth to regression of the gains made in reducing HIV prevalence, said, Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda. “We in Uganda have rekindled the campaign to end AIDS; the science exists, as well as the medication. We can win this battle.”

AIDS Watch Africa is a statutory entity of the African Union with the specific mandate to lead advocacy, accountability and resource mobilization efforts to advance a robust African response to end AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria by 2030.

UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).(UNAIDS 03-07-2017)

ETHIOPIA AMONG OTHERS REJECT AU DECISION ON AFRICAN CFTA

Ethiopia has rejected the decision taken at the 29th ordinary session of the African Union Assembly regarding implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), considering its effect on the country's economy, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn has said.



The AU summit which ended Tuesday in Addis Ababa emphasized the need for member states to implement the first phase of the CFTA by the end of this year, through attending to the issue of tariff barriers.

Dessalegn told a press conference late Tuesday, after the conclusion of the summit, that seven countries including Ethiopia did not agree to fully opening their doors for the continental free trade area. They want to open their doors step-by-step, as it requires readiness on the part of the countries concerned.

Ethiopia, Djibouti Rwanda and Sudan did not agree to the CFTA timeframe, as, confirmed by their officials in Addis Ababa, but countries with better development status insisted on the soonest implementation of the CFTA, which they said will boost the continent's intra-Africa trade to 52 percent from the current 13 percent.

Ethiopia feels it needs to first create a conducive atmosphere, so that it is able to comply with the new situation, according to Dessalegn.

Ethiopia believes that it is proper to open its doors to the free market step-by-step, since its economy is not ready yet, he declared.

"We took a stand on sensitive issues that would bring negative impact on the country and the people, and we are happy that this stand of ours has been accepted by other countries.

"Our decision is to work together and trade with our fellow African countries in areas other than the sensitive issue. We are also happy that our difference was respected," he added.

Some 86 percent of the expected 90 percent of African countries have agreed on implementation the continental free trade area as envisaged by the AU.

Niger President Issoufou Mahadou, in a briefing he also gave to journalists Tuesday on current progress regarding the CFTA process, said the negotiations will continue with the countries that rejected the implementation plan to put into effect the CFTA in 2018. (APA 06-04-2017)

TANZANIA: HOW TANZANIA WILL BENEFIT FROM SH926BN PORT PROJECT



Tanzanian President John Magufuli.

The Dar es Salaam Maritime Gateway Project (DSMGP) launched by President John Magufuli yesterday is expected to boost the economy by significantly increasing Dar es Salaam Port's capacity.

The project is expected to enhance trade, both locally and within the East African Community (EAC) and South African Development Community (SADC) regions.

The \$421 million (Sh926.2 billion) project will entail, among other activities, the widening and deepening of berths number one to 11 and construction of a new multipurpose berth at Gerezani Creek. The work will also involve the widening and deepening of the entrance channel and turning basin and improving rail linkages and platforms at the port.

The huge investment will see waiting time at berths slashed from an average of 80 hours to 30 hours, thus reducing the amount charged for delay of consignments at the port. The project is being funded by the World Bank, which has provided a \$345 million concessionary loan and \$12 million grant.

The government, through the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), has injected \$63 million and the United Kingdom has provided a \$12 million grant through the Department of International Development (DFID).

Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA) has pledged to improve the operational efficiency of the port through rehabilitation of access roads and demolition and relocation of sheds, taking the total value of the project to over \$480 million. The DSMGP will be implemented in 28 months.

President Magufuli said yesterday that the project was important for Tanzania's development because Dar es Salaam was the country's economic centre through which 90 per cent of imports passed through, including goods destined for the landlocked neighbouring countries of Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Zambia and Malawi.

"The expansion and modernisation will increase the volume of cargo passing through the port, thereby improving the government's capacity to implement development projects and provide social services to the people. I commend the ministry (of works, transport and communication) and TPA for overseeing the commencement of this project," he said.

Dr Magufuli added that super-sized ships could not dock at the port due to its relatively shallow depth, leading to delays that inconvenienced people using the facility.

World Bank country director Bella Bird said the bank and DFID would continue to work with the government in capacity building programmes tailored for institutions such as Bandari College, Dar Maritime Institute and the College of Engineering and Technology at the University of Dar es Salaam.

The Head of State said once the project was completed, the port could potentially serve a combined population of 565 million in the EAC and SADC regions.

He asked the contractor, China Harbour Construction Engineering (CHCE), to ensure that the first phase of the project, which is to be implemented in two phases, was completed as scheduled.

Dr Magufuli said also lined up for revamp were ports in Mtwara and Tanga and on lakes Victoria, Nyasa and Tanganyika and airports in various regions.

He directed the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication, TPA board of directors and the Tanzania Revenue Authority to follow up on tax evasion on containers at inland container depots (ICDs), saying there was a company that was "stealing" from the government. "I will not reveal the company's name today, but this firm takes cargo purported to be transit goods to ICDs before diverting them to the domestic market, thus denying the government revenue," he said.

In another development, President Magufuli criticized TPA for allowing "ownerless" locomotives to be offloaded at Dar es Salaam Port.

"I know you don't want this to be known, but how can a ship offload locomotives whose owners are not known? Next time a consignment of tanks or explosives could be offloaded here. Under good coordination and patriotism such a thing couldn't have happened," he said, and directed the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication and security agencies to investigate the matter.

TPA director general Deusdedit Kakoko later told reporters that the locomotives were made by a South African firm, which intended to supply them to Tanzania Railways Limited (TRL). However, TRL rejected the locomotives over quality and specification concerns.

ETHIOPIA'S PARLIAMENT APPROVES SEVEN LOAN AGREEMENTS

Ethiopia's House of Peoples' Representatives (Parliament) on Thursday unanimously approved seven loan agreements.



The House approved the \$30 million agreement the country signed with OPEC Fund for International Development.

It also endorsed the \$30 million loan with the Arab Bank for Africa Economic Development, and another \$20 million with the same bank to be used for the upgrading of the Shambu-Agamsa road in southern part of the country.

The House also approved the agreement inked with the China EximBank for \$171.8 million for the construction of the Arsi-Negele-Hawassa road, which is part of the Hawassa-Modjo expressway.

Furthermore, the House endorsed the \$218.6 million loan agreement with the African Development Fund and the China EximBank \$262.2 million loan for the implementation of a water project in Dire Dawa city, as well as for the construction of the Aisha wind farm and Adama-Hunan industrial park respectively.

The loan agreement signed with the European Investment Bank for lease and loan services to small and medium enterprises was also approved. (APA 06-07-2017)

WTO URGES AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS TO DISMANTLE BARRIERS TO TRADE

It takes approximately nine billion documents to move goods across the globe annually, with a shipper having to pay an extra one percent of the total transaction cost each day that his/her container remains at the border, Director of Information and External Relations Division of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Keith Rockwell, has disclosed.

He has, therefore, appealed for a speedy ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) by member countries that are yet to do so as it will enhance intra-regional trade and make the continent more competitive in the global commerce space.

According to him, the TFA will, among others, reduce the global cost of transactions, incentivise small and medium enterprises to explore and take advantage of gray areas within the exports space and boost foreign direct investments to the continent.

He told a gathering of African journalists and civil society organisations in Accra that “trade facilitation will save time and money for both producers and consumers, aside from being a big incentive for small and medium-sized businesses in the region.”

Mr Rockwell asked African governments to leverage available funds from the WTO Global Trust Fund, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank and other donor organisations to enhance their capacity in the facilitation of trade.

“There are funds available to help digitise customs processes as well as build capacity towards the effective implementation of the TFA,” he stressed, speaking on the topic, *“Implementing the TFA: Challenges and Opportunities for African Countries”*.

He added: “In this part of the world, there are a lot of barriers to regional trade, but it is critically important that African countries trade more together.

“Trading with your neighbour is something that should be much easier than trading with people far away because there are similarities in taste, cultural orientation, and proximity. It should be something that takes place on a much bigger scale than it currently does.”

Figures from the global trade administrator show that the full and effective implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) will reduce global trade costs by 14 percent, with African countries tipped to enjoy even bigger reductions.

It is also expected to boost the growth of developed and least developed countries (LDCs) as it will increase diversification of exportable goods, raise yearly exports by 3.5 percent and contribute about 0.9 percent in annual economic output.

By 2030, the implementation of the TFA could add up to 2.7 percent growth in annual exports, move up global GDP to more than 0.5 percent with even larger gains for developing countries and LDCs where current trade costs are equivalent to applying 219 percent tariff on international trade.

According to Mr. Rockwell, the adoption of transparent and paperless procedures will enhance trade among African countries and to the rest of the world as a whole.

“If the business person knows what is required of her/him, it makes it much easier to engage in any business activity,

Moreover, if you can obtain the documents you require and pay at a single place, better known as the single window that will save time and money,” he indicated.

The concept of trade facilitation agreement is basically to simplify the import and export processes; enjoin signatories to be more transparent with customs procedures, and harmonise international trade to bring down transaction costs.

It has also been tipped as a huge step towards improving the trade environment by reducing the cost of doing business at the borders, aside from bolstering the relatively low intra-African trade figures.

The three-day dialogue on the theme *“Challenges for the multilateral trading system—perspectives from West Africa”* was organised by the World Trade Organisation and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

The event brought together representatives from civil society organisations, policy makers and media practitioners drawn from across the region to discuss how to enhance ECOWAS members can explore the gains of the multilateral trading system.(Footprint to Africa 05-07-2017)

ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES TO START THRICE-WEEKLY FLIGHTS TO KADUNA

Ethiopian Airlines has finalized preparations to start scheduled thrice-weekly flights to Kaduna, Nigeria, from August 1, 2017.



Located in north-western Nigeria, Kaduna is a trade center and a major transportation hub for the surrounding agricultural areas with its rail and road junction, the airlines said in a statement it circulated. Group CEO Ethiopian Airlines, Tewolde Gebre Mariam, said: “We are pleased to commence scheduled operation to Kaduna; a fifth city in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. As a Pan-African Airline, serving our beloved continent Africa has always been a source of pride for Ethiopian Airlines. With this commitment, Ethiopian has been able to create a missing link; availing easy movement of Africans from one corner to the other.

“During the temporary closure of Abuja Airport for reconstruction four months ago, we were the first foreign carrier to land at Kaduna Airport, allowing our passengers to experience ultimate comfort on-board our B-787 Dreamliner.”

With the addition of Kaduna, Ethiopian Airline’s totally operates 23 weekly flights to Nigeria’s main cities namely, Abuja, Lagos, Enugu and Kano.

Ethiopian Airlines maiden flight to Nigeria dates back to the 1960s, same time the country got independence from British colonial rule. (APA 06-07-2017)

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.

The Memorandum is also made available by AHEAD-GLOBAL, BCA, Chamber of Tenerife (by posting it at the Africa Info Market), CCA - Canadian Council on Africa, CCA - Corporate Council on Africa (USA), CIP,HTTC,NABC (by posting selected news) and SwissCham-Africa to their Members.



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Fernando Matos Rosa

fernando.matos.rosa@sapo.pt

fernando.matos.rosa@skynet.be