

MEMORANDUM

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EGYPT IMPOSES NEW TAX ON AIRLINE TICKETS

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi issued a decree amending the tax law to impose new levies on airline tickets, according to the government's official Gazette.

The amendment taxes Egyptians traveling abroad who buy tickets in the local currency.

An additional EGP400 (1\$=7.80EGP) will be charged on first and business class tickets, while economy class passengers will pay an extra EGP150.

Students, patients traveling for medical treatment, those pursuing studies abroad, going on internships, Hajj or to perform official functions are exempt from the tally. (APA 09-10-2015)

NIGERIA'S PAN-AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS MAY CHANGE ITS DYNAMIC WITH SOUTH AFRICA

A question Nigerians often raise in discussions about SA and its West African counterpart is why there are not more Nigerian companies investing here.

Where are the Nigerian banks, the food franchises, the supermarkets and IT companies? they ask. The diplomats are particularly exercised by the trade and investment imbalance. This, they say, reflects badly on the bilateral relationship.

It is true that there are few Nigerian investments here more than 20 years after SA opened its doors to the rest of the continent. Dangote Cement has acquired a cement operation, and oil and gas company Oando has a few, largely inactive, shares listed on the JSE. But there is little else if you don't count the many small businesses owned by Nigerians resident in this country.

Compare this with the fact that the majority of SA's top listed companies have a presence in Nigeria.

But such a comparison negates the reality that the two countries are at different stages of development. Its relative underdevelopment, large market size and reasonable growth rates mean the opportunities in Nigeria are just so much greater than they are in SA. That is why our companies are there.

Nigerians are also exploring these opportunities — often in conjunction with South African companies. The growth story in SA is just not that compelling right now. That is a market reality even if it doesn't square with the politicians.

Besides its low growth, SA is also not an easy market to penetrate, because of high levels of competition. African banks have tended to avoid SA for this reason.

Nigeria's banks, which have expanded aggressively into West and East Africa, only have representative offices here, although many Nigerians believe, erroneously, that the real reason for this situation is that their banks are actually prohibited from setting up retail operations in SA.

Exchange controls and SA's regulatory environment including black economic empowerment requirements, make this a less than welcoming environment for other Africans.

So it was interesting, and heartening to see the recent announcement that Nigerian metal-can manufacturer GZ Industries is to invest in building a factory in SA, in partnership with a local company, Golden Era, to explore regional markets. The company's move is not to tackle the investment imbalance but because it sees a good business case in this region.

The company is also investing in a factory in Kenya.

And there may be more such investments as Nigerian companies look beyond their domestic market in search of new opportunities elsewhere. Many have already set up shop in their West African hinterland, while others are looking further afield for opportunities.

For example, Computer Warehouse Group and integrated payment company Interswitch have bases in Uganda to explore East Africa, oil and gas services company Orlean Invest is exploiting opportunities in Mozambique's gas industry, while fertiliser company Notore Chemical Industries is exporting products across Africa.

And there are many others that are thinking about becoming, or raising money to become, pan-African players. It takes time to build competitive industries, particularly in a challenging market such as Nigeria. South African firms have been able to build critical mass domestically over years and test their cross-border strategies with neighbouring markets before venturing further afield.

The same model is being used by growing companies in other regions. SA is not an exception in this regard, as it is often painted; it is just ahead of the game.

If GZ Industries succeeds in SA, it may be a catalyst for other Nigerian companies to put a toe in this market in the same way MTN's success in Nigeria lured other South Africans to that market. It is early days, but hopefully this is a first small step towards changing the often negative SA-Nigeria narrative. (BD 12-10-2015)

BOTSWANA SEES ANGOLA AS POTENTIAL MARKET

Botswana said Friday that it sees Angola as its potential market for its products.

In a statement ahead of President Ian Khama's visit to the country, the Botswana government said currently, the Southern African nation exports beef and Blackquater vaccines to Angola.

President Ian Khama will undertake a two-day state Visit to Angola on 12 - 14 October 2015, at the invitation of his counterpart José Eduardo Dos Santos.

The statement says the visit is expected to strengthen and consolidate the bilateral relations and bonds that exist between Botswana and Angola.

Bilateral relations between Botswana and Angola have continued to flourish since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1975, it says.

The two countries are expected to discuss further cooperation and exchanges in the areas of energy and water resources, agriculture, transport and communications, wildlife and conservation. (APA 09-10-2015)

CHINA HARBOUR ENGINEERING WILL CO-FINANCE AND BUILD DEEP WATER PORT IN SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

The China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) will co-finance and build a deepwater port in São Tomé and Príncipe, the São Tomé government said Monday in São Tomé.

The government statement signed by the Minister of the Presidency, Afonso Varela, said "CHEC intends to apply at least US\$120 million" in this project, which has an estimated cost of just over US\$800 million and is scheduled for completion in 2019.

According to the document, the Memorandum of Understanding between the parties was concluded a week ago, and the China Harbour Engineering Company is responsible for planning, design and construction.

The port will be built in phases, with the completion of the first scheduled for 2018, according to the document adding that this is "a world-class facility and will be developed to serve the logistics needs of the Gulf of Guinea."

Incorporated in 1980, CHEC, a subsidiary of the China Communications Construction Company Group Ltd (CCCC), is a conglomerate of engineering services with an annual turnover of over US\$5 billion and over 60 representatives in 80 countries.

The first deepwater port in the archipelago will be built in the Fernão Dias area, Lobata district, 12 kilometres from the capital of São Tomé and Príncipe.

Without a deep-water port, loading and unloading of ships is currently done at sea using barges. (13-10-2015)

EIB PRESIDENT ENCOURAGES DEAUVILLE PARTNERSHIP TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank and current Chairman of the grouping of International Financial Institutions engaged in the Deauville Partnership today highlighted the need to increase support for investment to finance economic and social transformation in the Middle East and North Africa.

President Hoyer highlighted the contribution of the Deauville Partnership toward enabling continuous dialogue essential for economic transition. But he said the grouping must now step up its support for infrastructure investment and job creation in the region.

Speaking on behalf of international financial institutions involved in the initiative following contributions by Christine Lagarde, IMF President and Wolfgang Schäuble, German Finance Minister, President Hoyer outlined a number of ways in which international financial institutions, including the EIB, could increase their contribution. This includes supporting job creation, mitigating the economic impact of violent conflict, unlocking additional resources to support economic growth, and increased coordination to ensure more effective engagement.

"Since the start of the Arab Spring the Deauville Partnership has helped the international community support economic recovery and job creation across the Middle East and North Africa. Together with other international financial institutions the European Investment Bank has helped finance new infrastructure and basic services essential for the quality of people's lives. Countries in the region are facing huge additional pressures, including from the need to provide hospitality to refugees escaping fear and violence. The EU Bank stands ready to work with others through the Deauville partnership and other mechanisms to increase our engagement." said Werner Hoyer, European Investment Bank President.

The Deauville Partnership gathers Finance Ministers representing the G7 states and countries in transition – Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Libya and Yemen. The IFI platform within the Deauville Partnership includes the African Development Bank, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Arab Monetary Fund, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Finance Corporation, the International Monetary Fund, the Islamic Development Bank, the OPEC Fund for International Development, and the World Bank.

Over the last 5 years the European Investment Bank has provided more than EUR 22 billion for investment in energy, water, hospitals, urban development and private sector projects in Turkey, the Middle East and North Africa. (EIB 08-10-2015)

MALAWI REVERSES DECISION NOT TO RECRUIT OVER 50 MEDICAL DOCTORS

Malawi through the Ministry of Health has on Friday reversed its decision not to give contracts to over 50 new graduate doctors, nurses and midwives.

The decision by government has come a day before the Medical Doctors Union of Malawi (MDUM) and Society of Medical Doctors (SMD) jointly issued an ultimatum of 14 days or risk a nationwide industrial action.

Spokesperson for Ministry of Health, Adrian Chikumbe said Friday that government through Treasury has agreed to take back on board all the doctors, nurses and midwives new graduates.

"Treasury has identified some funds which will be given to the Ministry to cater for the new graduate doctors but on contract until they are registered by the Medical Council of Malawi (MCM)," he said.

Currently, he said, the Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD) will

submit all the names to the Treasury for possible funding.

However, several medical experts and Unions described the move by government failing to absorb the medical doctors as lack of seriousness. (APA 04-10-2015)

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE SEEKS INVESTMENT IN LONDON

The government of São Tomé and Príncipe is due this week in London to have meetings with investors and development partners to attract investments for projects in the archipelago, the country's Prime minister said in São Tomé Monday.

Patrice Trovoada told Portuguese news agency Lusa that the government, during the meetings on Wednesday and Thursday, aims to raise funds for projects that are considered structural, specifically the port and airport, tourism, services and transport.

"We are a country that is heavily dependent on international aid, there is a predetermined envelope, we will evaluate this envelope (with partners), we will try to refocus some projects and ensure the aid will be increased," said the Prime Minister.

The meeting with representatives of the private sector, on Wednesday, is justified by the head of government with the fact that private investment "creates wealth" and because "public money available for development aid is increasingly difficult (to get)."

The projects that are considered to be structural include extending the runway and modernisation of the international airport and construction of a deep-water port.

Angola, Portugal, the European Union, Taiwan, Sweden, Norway, Equatorial Guinea, United States of America, Azerbaijan, Israel, Iran, Brazil, the Brazil Development Agency, Saudi Arabia and Dubai are among the countries and institutions expected to attend this event. (13-10-2015)

IMF AND EIB STRENGTHEN COOPERATION ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that enables the two organizations to enhance their close cooperation in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in supporting capacity development and institution-building. IMF Deputy Managing Director Carla Grasso and Ambroise Fayolle, EIB Vice-President responsible for innovation, signed the agreement today in Lima, Peru on the margins of the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings.

At the conclusion of the signing ceremony, Ms. Grasso made the following statement: "This Memorandum of Understanding comes at a very important time, in the wake of the international conferences on [Financing for Development](#) in Addis Ababa in July and the **Sustainable Development Goals** in New York in September, and ahead of the follow-up international conference on climate change in Paris later this year. I am very happy that today we are joining forces on advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strengthening capacity development efforts in order to address global economic challenges in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr. Fayolle emphasized:

"The EIB is looking forward to reinforcing the joint efforts toward sustainable economic development, financial stability, and inclusive growth. Partnerships are the key to the SDGs' success and cooperation between IFIs in advancing the post-2015 agenda is critical. This new partnership with the IMF will benefit the membership of the two institutions by promoting synergies and leveraging financial resources for capacity development".

Background information:

Given the compatible missions of the EIB and the [IMF](#) and their deep commitment to promote, develop, and strengthen global financial stability, inclusive economic growth, and sustainable economic development, the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding represents a key step in fostering the

two institutions' capacity development efforts. Since 2005, EIB has been supporting IMF capacity development by participating in the IMF's regional vehicles, including the Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center ([METAC](#)) and the network of five Africa Regional Technical Assistance Centers (AFRITACs); it has contributed a total of about \$5 million to these initiatives between FY06-15. Both institutions seek to strengthen their successful partnership in capacity development to the benefit of their membership. Under this MOU, EIB and the IMF will harness respective strengths and expertise to foster even greater successes in the years ahead. (EIB 08-10-2015)

W/BANK URGES ETHIOPIA TO SERIOUSLY WORK ON JOB CREATION

World Bank has urged the government of Ethiopia to aggressively work on job creation and infrastructure development to meet the growing demand of ever increasing urban population of the country, reports said on Friday.

In a report released by the bank, the number of Ethiopians residing in cities is projected to reach 42 million by 2030.

The report, which pointed out the disparity of land supply in towns, noted that the government should further consolidate its activities in creating jobs and making inhabitants own houses.

Acting Country Manager and Program Leader at the World Bank Quiser Khan said the over 5.4 percent annual population growth in towns would contribute a lot to the growth of the country.

The bank recommended the government of Ethiopia to make preparations ahead of time to particularly make use of the 80 percent youthful productive population that would dominate the country after 15 years.

The small-scale enterprises need to employ many people and investors engaged in manufacturing sector encouraged to create wide job opportunities, Khan stated.

Even if urbanization is better than it was a decade ago, the growth is not at the desired level, according to the study. (APA 09-10-2015)

ANGOLA AND CHINA WILL ACCEPT NATIONAL CURRENCIES IN BILATERAL TRADE

The central banks of Angola and China are due to settle the details of an agreement that will allow the use of national currencies of both countries in bilateral trade, said the governor of the National Bank of Angola.

José Pedro de Morais told Radio Nacional de Angola that the agreement, whose signing date he did not mention, would bring many advantages when it comes into force.

The agreement, which was announced last August by the Minister of Commerce of Angola, Rosa Pacavira, but later denied, will enable economic agents of both countries to use the Chinese currency in Angola and the Angolan currency in China, thus facilitating trade.

"These days the international financial institutions support this type of agreement, because it allows foreign trade to continue without using a third currency, which in this case would be the dollar," stressed José Pedro de Morais.

The governor said, however, that in the long term the costs of Angola importing consumer goods are unsustainable, given the lack of foreign currency in the market at the moment.

Morais said the cycle marked by “ever higher incomes, both for families and for businesses” had come to an end and noted that the price of oil of over US\$100 per barrel had ended, “and it’s no longer possible to think in these terms.”

The governor of the BNA said the time had come to “think about how to create and identify new sources of growth, particularly in agriculture and the transfer of resources used in the import of consumer goods to sectors that allow more sustained growth.” (13-10-2015)

EIB SETS NEW 35% TARGET FOR CLIMATE LENDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The European Investment Bank (EIB), the world’s largest lender for climate related projects, will increase the proportion of its lending in support of climate related investment in developing countries from 25% to 35%.

Speaking at a meeting of finance Ministers and multilateral financial institutions at the IMF - World Bank annual meetings in Lima, Werner Hoyer confirmed that the European Investment Bank will increase climate lending in countries identified by the UNFCCC and the OECD as being especially vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.

“The EU Bank will provide well over USD 110 billion for climate action projects around the world over the next 5 years. We must do all we can to unlock new investment in countries especially vulnerable to climate change, including those with low-lying coastal areas and regions exposed to desertification, drought, and flooding. The EIB now expects its lending for climate projects to represent over a third of its support in those countries”, said Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank Group.

Confirmation of the expected increase in EIB lending for climate investment comes weeks after the EIB adopted a new strategy to guide its climate lending around the world, setting a minimum of 25% of all EIB lending in support of climate.

“Our new climate strategy focuses on enhancing the impact of climate funding, increasing financing for adaptation to climate change, unlocking new support from private capital, and ensuring that every project we help finance minimises emissions and is as resilient as possible to climatic uncertainties”, added Hoyer.

The Lima meeting provided an opportunity for governments and institutions involved in international climate finance to identify opportunities for scaling-up their efforts in the run up to COP 21 meeting in Paris at the end of the year.

The EIB is the world’s largest multilateral lender for climate related projects. In 2014 it provided loans totalling USD 25.4 billion for initiatives directly beneficial to climate change mitigation or adaptation across Europe and around the world. (EIB 09-10-2015)

FIRST COMPLETE ANCIENT AFRICAN GENOME FOUND IN ETHIOPIA

The first complete ancient African Genome has been discovered from excavations in the Gamo Highlands of Ethiopia, a Kathryn Arthur archeology team in Ethiopia announced on Friday.

The team, led by Gamo elders visited the Mota Cave which is found in the Gamo Highlands in south-western Ethiopia in 2011.

One year later, the team incorporated international archeologists and found the first complete African Genome after excavating the Mota Cave. The ancient DNA extracted from the skeleton provides the ancient human Genome sequenced from the African continent. The human male skeleton is reportedly 4,500 years old.

Archeologists had given him the name Bayira meaning “first born” in the Gamo language, in honor of the ethnic group that lives in the area today.

The morphology and the DNA indicate that Bayira was a male, who was 30 to 50 years old when he died. Bayira was buried 46 to 60 centimeters below the present cave floor surface in an ashy layer and under a small stone cairn of basalt rocks.

According to the report released after the DNA extraction, besides being the first ancient Genome sequenced from Africa, Bayira predates a migration of humans from west Eurasia in to the Horn of Africa about 3000 years ago.

Bayira's genetic sequence does not contain any traces of West Eurasia genes, supporting the idea that more recent population movements are more responsible for Eurasian admixture in to modern African population. (APA 09-10-2015)

ANGOLA RAISES US\$58 BILLION IN FDI BETWEEN 2003 AND 2011

Angola raised more than US\$58 billion between 2003 and 2011 and will remain a major destination of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa, said Monday in Luanda the Minister of Commerce.

Minister Rosa Pacavira, who was speaking at the opening of the first seminar on private investment promotion in Angola, stressed the country was now the fourth largest FDI destination in Africa, due to strong growth of the economy and investments in infrastructure.

In addition to the privileged geographical position within Africa and good road and rail networks, the minister noted the country has a plethora of natural resources like diamonds (fifth largest producer), iron, phosphate, copper, gold, bauxite, uranium and manganese, oil and natural gas.

Pacavira stressed that, together with these attractive factors for private investment, Angola is experiencing a climate of peace, political, military and macroeconomic stability, and has a legal framework to set up companies with reduced levels of bureaucracy. (13-10-2015)

ECONOMIST URGES REVIEW NIGERIA'S OIL SUBSIDY REGIME

The Chief Executive Officer of Financial Derivatives Company Limited, Mr. Bismarck Rewane, has called for a review of the subsidy regime to ascertain its sustainability and relevance to the welfare of all Nigerians.

Delivering a paper on 'Oil Subsidy and Implications for National Economic Growth' at a conference in Lagos on Thursday, Rewane noted that with the drop in the price of crude oil by over 50 percent, it has become imperative for the government to review the subsidy scheme.

He explained that the drop in the price of crude oil has reduced the cost of petroleum products, thus reducing the burden borne by the consumers.

According to him, with the current low price of crude oil, the burden on consumers by subsidy removal will be minimal.

He said that subsidy removal would increase government's revenue for the provision of other amenities to the people and that the multiplier effect was so huge that it would erode the burden on consumers arising from the removal.

Rewane noted that Angola, Ghana and some other countries have reduced subsidy payment or eliminated it completely.

He, however, maintained that an outright removal of subsidy without addressing the fundamental problems of corruption and inadequate local refining capacity would not provide the solutions. (APA 09-10-2015)

BOOSTING DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE: CIVIL PROTECTION PROJECT ORGANISES TRAINING IN BEIRUT

Some 30 participants from different Lebanese ministries and agencies took part in the 5-day “On-Site Operations Coordination Course” (OSOCC) training workshop held by the EU-funded programme PPRD South II (Prevention, Preparedness, and Response to natural and man-made Disasters) last week in Beirut.

The training programme complemented the earlier Host Nation Sunspot (HNS) training course, with both courses aiming to prepare beneficiary countries like Lebanon, to receive and manage international assistance in times of crisis caused by natural and man-made disasters.

Participants were introduced to a methodology for on-site emergency response and strategies for effective field coordination in times of crisis between different actors – representatives of concerned ministries, first response agencies (LAF, Red Cross, Civil Defence...) as well as international assistance teams. The course also offered a platform for cooperation between international and local response activities when a disaster takes place.

PPRD South II (Prevention, Preparedness, and Response to natural and man-made Disasters) is a three-year programme with a €5 million budget which aims at raising national resilience of southern Mediterranean partner countries (targeted by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)) affected by a natural or man-made disaster, mainly through risk reduction (prevention, mitigation, public awareness) and preparedness (capacity building, contingency planning), including better cooperation at the international level. (EU Neighbourhood 12-10-2015)

MOZAMBIQUE, TANZANIA EYE SECOND BRIDGE

Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi and his Tanzanian counterpart, Jakaya Kikwete have reaffirmed their desire for a second bridge over the Rovuma River that marks the border between the two countries, APA learns here on Friday.

A second bridge was one of the matters discussed in official talks between Mozambican and Tanzanian delegations on the first day of a state visit by Kikwete to Mozambique.

The first bridge over the Rovuma, known as the Unity Bridge, was inaugurated in May 2010. This bridge, at Negomano, is underused, partly because of the poor state of the access roads. Many travellers continue to use ferries or canoes to cross the river.

Briefing reporters on the talks, Mozambican Foreign Minister Oldemiro Baloi said a new bridge would help stimulate trade and regional integration.

“The two bridges over the Rovuma will empower connections in the region, and the countries north of Tanzania will also benefit from this second bridge”, he said, adding that the two countries are determined to raise the funds necessary to build it.

Baloi believed that the bridges over the Rovuma could also form part of a trans-African highway from Cape Town to Cairo.

The discussions also covered coastal and maritime security. The maritime border has already been

demarcated, and so is not in dispute.

Baloi said but the hydrocarbon reserves in the offshore Rovuma basin do not respect man-made borders, hence the need for close cooperation between Tanzania and Mozambique at all levels, including the ministries of defence and of mineral resources.

Baloi added that the threat posed by poaching was also discussed and the meeting stressed the need to step up protection for the Niassa Reserve in northern Mozambique and the Selous Reserve, which is the continuation of the same ecosystem in southern Tanzania. (APA 09-10-2015)

NIGERIA'S PRESIDENT ENLISTS WEST TO HELP RECOVER STOLEN MONEY

The UK and US have thrown their muscle behind Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's bid to recover billions of dollars he says his compatriots embezzled and stashed abroad.

At stake is whether courtrooms thousands of miles from Africa can help the continent track down stolen money, seize it, try the culprits and return the funds in timely fashion. In May, Mr. Buhari became the first Nigerian to unseat an incumbent president, elected on his vow to recover a vast fortune of money lost to corruption. Within weeks, he was at the White House to ask for help.

"We're all in," replied Vice-President Joe Biden, said Garba Shehu, spokesman for the Nigerian president.

When it comes to helping Africa's top economy battle graft, this month has offered the first glimpse of how fast and far Mr. Buhari's friends abroad can move. In the past, Western governments have acted on similar pleas from other African states — but this time, they have operated with unprecedented nimbleness.

Following a summer meeting in Washington between British and American investigators, London police on October 2 raided a luxurious home near Regent's Park. There they briefly detained Dieziani Alison-Madueke, Nigeria's oil minister from 2010 to 2015.

Hours later, her neighbours in Nigeria watched as scores of cops searched her house: "The former minister has questions to answer," said Bitrus Babuje, a fellow resident of the leafy Abuja suburb called Asokoro.

One of Africa's most prominent politicians, Ms Alison-Madueke and her associates are suspected of bribery, corruption and laundering money through British and US banks. She has previously denied those allegations and police haven't charged her with anything.

A lawyer speaking on behalf of Ms Alison-Madueke, Oscar Onwudiwe, said she was invited by the police in London this month but not arrested. He said he didn't know the purpose of the invitation.

"If the police come to your house for any reason, does it make you a criminal?" he told The Wall Street Journal.

For Nigeria's government, the detention announces Mr Buhari's intent to root out endemic corruption, a promise at the core of his campaign. Eventually, the crackdown could help recover much-needed funds for an exchequer hit hard by collapsing oil prices.

"Most of the money taken out of Nigeria is taken to the West," said Femi Adesina, a spokesman for Mr Buhari.

"So Nigeria will need collaboration with the West."

Nigeria isn't the first African country to find its officials investigated abroad for financial crimes. But the current flurry of legal action seems unique for its speed and scope. Mr Buhari is president of Africa's most populous state — and he has leveraged that position to steer a global hunt for laundered money. Anti-corruption investigators in Nigeria have arrested three directors at the state oil company in recent days, said two people close to the administration. None were charged; the oil company says it is eager to expose corrupt employees.

American officials have also considered a visa ban or financial sanctions against Ms Alison-Madueke and a dozen of her associates, oil officials and politicians, US officials said. Washington is scrutinising whether her associates laundered money in the US, the UK and other countries, the officials said.

Both the State Department and the UK's National Crime Agency declined to comment on their investigations: "We continue to work with Nigeria to fight corruption," a State Department official said. Together, the litany of legal actions — conducted on three continents — point to a swift but uncertain precedent for Africa's struggle against corruption.

"The real issue is the signalling effect: that holding public office in Nigeria should not be a licence to plunder," said Bismarck Rewane, MD of Lagos research firm Financial Derivatives. "It's working. The number of bribes I'm being asked for has dropped."

For the better part of a decade, graft fighters in Africa, having lost faith in their own courts, have asked judges in Europe and America to wage their battles. Major political figures in Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Republic of Congo have all seen their assets frozen or targeted by French or American courts. But those investigations have proceeded slowly. In some cases, they have stalled. Prosecutors have struggled to prove that cars, houses, and artwork there were purchased with money stolen thousands of miles away.

For now, a civil court in West London has frozen £27,000 confiscated by the police from Ms Alison-Madueke, said a clerk at the court. Police also seized £5,000 and \$2,000 from her mother, court clerks added. The small amount is the first publicly recorded evidence that legal action has been taken against the former minister and her family.

Mr Buhari has also been in London lately: he met Prime Minister David Cameron at his Downing Street office in May.

On the flight there, he sat in British Airways' first class — just a few rows in front of Ms Alison-Madueke — said two people familiar with the matter. The incoming president refused to speak to her, they said, for the entire six-hour flight. (WSJ 13-10-2015)

UN ENVOY PROPOSES NEW GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY FOR LIBYA

- The Special Representative of the United Nations (UN) in Libya, Bernardino Leon has proposed the formation of a government of national unity bringing together the rival factions in the country, APA learns from a diplomatic source in Tripoli.

"We propose that Faez Sarraj leads this government, assisted by 3 deputies representing the east, the center and the south of the country," Mr. Leon said in a press conference held on Friday morning in Skhiratt (Morocco).

"After one year of work on this issue with more than 150 Libyan personalities from all regions, the time has come for us to be able to propose a government of national unity", he commented.

Libya has been prey to persistent security troubles since the overthrow of Muammar Ghadafi's regime in 2011.

Violence and political anarchy gave armed Islamists the possibility to achieve some advantages in Libya, in the same way as smugglers of clandestine migrants from the Libyan coast towards Europe through the Mediterranean.

Since 2014, the power in this country has been shared between two rival governments and parliaments, one of which is recognized by the international community and is based in Tobrogh, in the east of the country.

The other government and its parliament is supported by Islamist militias and are based in the capital city.

The UN proposal has to necessarily get the approval of the two parliaments, several MPs of which have qualified such approval as "precocious". (APA 09-10-2015)

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