

MEMORANDUM

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Extra Edition

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EXTRACTION OF NATURAL GAS IN MOZAMBIQUE DUE TO BEGIN IN 2022 OR 2023

US group Anadarko Petroleum estimates that the proposed extraction of natural gas in Mozambique could begin in 2022 or 2023 and a final investment decision be made in 2017, said the chief executive of the oil company.

Al Walker told the Houston Chronicle that the final investment decision of at least US\$15 billion in the Rovuma basin in northern Mozambique, aims to take advantage of the next cycle of rising commodity prices, according to Mozambican daily newspaper Noticias.

“Our hope is that we can move very quickly,” said Walker, noting that consulting firms in the energy sector estimate that at the beginning of the next decade demand and natural gas prices will be significantly higher than at present.

The President of Mozambique met last week with the chief executive of Anadarko Petroleum in Houston, Texas, as part of a visit to the United States that led to meetings with the director general of the International Monetary Fund and the US Secretary of State, John Kerry.

The Anadarko Petroleum group leads one of the two blocks in the Rovuma basin, in Cabo Delgado province, where they found large deposits of natural gas but, like Italian group ENI, which is the operator of another block, has yet to make a final investment decision. (23-09-2016)

UK ANNOUNCES £20M FOR REPATRIATION OF SOMALI REFUGEES



The UK has announced that it will provide an additional £20 million to accelerate the voluntary return of refugees to Somalia from Kenya.

The new support will help ensure that refugees who want to return home have the support and livelihoods in place to ensure their safe, long-term resettlement in Somalia.

Of the £20 million, £4million will be spent in Kenya to identify and register Somali refugees who want to return, and provide safe routes of transport from Kenya.

The remainder of the funds will go into providing shelter, hygiene kits and the essentials for people to return and resume a normal life in Somalia.

“The UK has long supported Kenya as it provides refuge to those fleeing conflict and hunger elsewhere in East Africa, as the second largest donor to refugee assistance here,” said British High Commissioner to Kenya, Nic Hailey in a statement issued in Nairobi on Thursday.

“This new funding will go directly to helping Somali refugees return home from Dadaab, in a way which is safe, voluntary, dignified, and allows them to build a better future for themselves and their families,” he added.

On Monday, Deputy President William Ruto told a roundtable meeting at the UN General Assembly that some 100,000 Somalia refugees have been processed and documented ready to go back home in the ongoing voluntary repatriation. (APA 22-09-2016)

FACILITY FOR REFUGEES IN TURKEY: EU SIGNS GRANTS WORTH €600 MILLION TO HELP REFUGEES ON EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Today, the European Commission signed two direct grants worth €600 million to support Syrian refugees and host communities in Turkey in the areas of education and health.

Since March this year, the EU has mobilised more than €2 billion out of its total budget of €3 billion under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. The Facility supports the implementation of both the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan and the EU-Turkey Statement and is designed to address the most critical needs of Syrian refugees and host communities living in Turkey today.

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations said: *"With the two direct grants signed today, almost half a million Syrian children will gain access to compulsory education. EU assistance will also provide the Syrian refugees with access to much needed health care services. This confirms the European Union's continuous commitment to improving the conditions of refugees living in Turkey. We will work hard to continue delivery and should sign further contracts in the areas of education, health, municipal infrastructure and socio-economic support to refugees in Turkey over the months to come."*

The €600 million grants - €300 million for education and €300 million for health - are funded under the €1.415 billion Special Measure that was adopted by the Commission at the end of July. They help the Turkish authorities cover operational costs and access to compulsory education and healthcare services for Syrian refugees and their children.

The grants will serve to reimburse the Ministries of Education and Health for costs incurred in their efforts to integrate Syrian pupils and students into the Turkish education system, and to ensure Syrian refugees in Turkey have access to health care. The direct grant for education should enable around 500,000 Syrian students to receive education in the Turkish language. The direct grant in the area of health should ensure the provision of comprehensive health care for refugees in Turkey.

Details on projects funded under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/migration/index_en.htm

The Facility for Refugees in Turkey was set up in response to the European Council's call for significant additional funding to support refugees in Turkey.

The Facility has a budget of €3 billion for 2016-2017. This is made up of €1 billion from the EU budget, and €2 billion from the EU Member States. All Member States have sent in their contribution certificates for the €2 billion they pledged.

So far, 34 projects have been contracted worth €1.252 billion, out of which €467 million has been disbursed. The total allocated for implementation under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey on humanitarian and non-humanitarian actions now stands at €2.239 billion.

The Facility provides a joint coordination mechanism, designed to ensure that the needs of refugees and host communities are addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. Funding under the Facility supports refugees in the country, it is therefore not a funding for Turkey. The support seeks to improve conditions for refugees in Turkey as part of the EU's comprehensive approach to addressing the refugee crisis inside and outside the EU. (EC 28-09-2016)

MOZAMBICAN INSURER PREPARES INTRODUCTION OF AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE

Mozambican Insurance Company Emose is considering the introduction of agricultural insurance, "a move that could help stimulate investment in the sector," said recently the president of the company.

Antonio Carrasco, quoted by daily newspaper Notícias, said his company had already invited commercial banks operating in the country to collaborate in the introduction of this new insurance.

The president of Emose also said that this year the company had started a reflection on crop and natural disaster insurance in the country, and hosted a day of discussion involving international agricultural insurance experts, which had made it possible to draw some conclusions.

"Emose must be the only insurance company in the country that intervenes in this area of agricultural insurance, despite being in the experimental stage, and last year we issued insurance in the area of cotton," said Carrasco.

Empresa Moçambicana de Seguros, which in 2017 will have its 40th anniversary, in addition to agricultural insurance, is preparing to offer natural resources insurance, particularly for oil and natural gas. It plans to create a specific company for this area called Moçambique Seguros. (28-09-2016)

IMF MISSION OBSERVES ADVANCES IN RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE WITH MOZAMBIQUE

The head of the International Monetary Fund mission to Mozambique, Michel Lazare, who is also an assistant director at the Washington-based financial institution says he believes advances have been made in restoring international confidence in the Mozambican government.

Mr. Lazare, whose mission has been working in Mozambique since last Thursday, told a media briefing that their meeting with Prime Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosario was fruitful and that there are advances in complying with the measures defined to restore confidence.

Lazare however declined to give any details or say what measures he had in mind but simply added that meeting President Filipe Nyusi had in Washington earlier this month with the IMF and World Bank officials, including IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, "was a success".

The IMF is demanding an external forensic audit of Mozambique's public debt to regain investor confidence after a scandal over more than \$2 billion in secret loans was discovered in April this year.

The controversy arises over three government guaranteed loans to quasi-public companies in 2013 and 2014, the closing years of the government of Nyusi's predecessor, Armando Guebuza. Between them these loans amounted to over \$2 billion, and added 20 per cent to the Mozambican foreign debt.

One of the loans was the \$850 million of bonds launched on the European bond market by the Mozambique Tuna Company (EMATUM). The main banks handling the bond issue were Credit Suisse and VTB of Russia.

The IMF suspected corruption was involved in the loan and its main demand was also echoed by Mozambique's other western partners, such as the United States and Britain, and they demanded an independent audit which would track down exactly what happened with all the money involved.

The debt crisis and aid suspension has hit Mozambique hard, with its currency, the metical, losing nearly 40 percent against the US dollar since January and economic growth slowing to below 4 percent.

With foreign debt soaring towards 100 percent of GDP, the government has been forced to revise its 2016 budget, which now shows a deficit equal to 11.3 percent of GDP, while the central bank hiked interest rates by 300 basis points in July to try to prop up the currency and contain inflation. (APA 28-09-2016)

UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN COMMITS TO FIGHT STRUCTURAL UNEMPLOYMENT

At the third Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour today in Jordan, [Ministers of UfM member countries reaffirmed their commitment to work together to address the challenges relating to employment, employability and decent work in the Mediterranean region, in particular for young people and women](#). The European Commission – represented by Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility – and Jordan's Labour Minister Ali AL-Ghezawi were the co-Presidents of the two-day UfM-meeting. Commissioner

Thyssen stated: *"In some countries on the Mediterranean shore, as much as half of the young people are out of a job. We cannot allow this. Decent jobs and good opportunities in life are among the best measures to invest in our future. Therefore, it is time to give a new impetus to our UfM cooperation. We need inclusive labour markets which provide equal chances to all: women and men, the young and the old, university graduate and school dropouts."* The participating ministers consulted with representatives of social partners from both shores of the Mediterranean and underlined the importance of tripartite and bipartite social dialogue. They welcomed the plan to organise a UfM Social Dialogue Forum in 2017/2018 and a €3 million financial support provided by the EU to the regional 'Pilot project for the Promotion of Social Dialogue in the Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood'. This project will be first implemented in Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan as priority countries and may possibly be expanded to other UfM partner countries. It is the first time that social partners from both northern and southern countries of the Mediterranean adopted a [common declaration](#). (UfM)

GAMBIAN FERRY TAKEN OUT OF SERVICE FOR MAINTENANCE TO ENHANCE SAFETY



The Gambia Ferry Services under the management of Gambia Ports Authority (GPA) has removed one of its ferries (Johe) from service, saying it will be taken on maintenance after two years of operation since it was last rehabilitated, a press release from GPA said on Friday.

The move by GAP has left only one ferry (Kanilai) transporting passengers on the seven kilometer distance Banjul-Barra crossing point, which is the main and busiest crossing point on the river Gambia.

The river route is used to transport people goods from Banjul to different destinations within the country, neighboring Senegal and beyond, earning revenue to the Gambia government.

The ferry services is said to have triggered the border closure between Gambia and Senegal earlier this year, after Gambia took a unilateral decision to increase the ferry crossing fees for Senegalese trucks using the ferries. It however reversed its decision after ECOWAS headed a diplomatic negotiation between the two nations.(APA 23-09-2016)

GHANA LIKELY TO BECOME 4TH BIGGEST OIL PRODUCER IN AFRICA

Ghana is tipped to become one of Africa's leading oil producers by 2020 if two more of her new oilfields start full commercial production, says a report by the Ecobank.

This will propel the country to 4th position in terms of countries that produce oil in Africa with about 240,000 barrels of oil per day.

The report published by the Ghanaian Times on Friday says Ghana currently produced around 103 barrels per day, leaving it in the 9th position after Nigeria, and Angola, who produces an average of 1.867 million barrels per day and 1.754 barrels per day respectively.

President John Dramani Mahama last month inaugurated the Tweneboa-Enyera-Ntomme (TEN) oilfield

and is expected to add 80,000 more barrels per day during peak production.

Other fields, such as Sankofa are expected on stream in 2017 to propel the country to the fourth position by 2020. (APA 23-09-2016)

HALF A DOZEN CANDIDATES VIE FOR TOP WHO JOB, INCLUDING ETHIOPIA'S FOREIGN MINISTER



Six candidates are in the running to take over the helm of the World Health Organisation (WHO), including Ethiopia's foreign minister, who is bidding to be the first African to hold the position, the UN agency said Friday.

The WHO's 194 member states had until the end of the day on Thursday to propose candidates to replace director-general Margaret Chan, who will step down next June after 11 years in the role.

The list of people to replace her includes Ethiopian foreign minister Tedros Adhanom, who enjoys the unanimous backing of the African Union.

The renowned malaria researcher and former health minister from 2005-2012 was among the first to throw his name in the hat, but he will face competition from rivals proposed by France, Italy, Pakistan, the UK and Hungary.

The WHO is a vast UN agency with an annual budget of \$4.4bn, and is responsible for co-ordinating responses to global emergencies and raising awareness about health issues from pollution to tropical diseases.

It was heavily criticised for its slow response to the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, which has killed more than 11,000 people since late 2013. Chan has admitted mistakes were made. France has proposed former health minister Philippe Douste-Blazy to replace her, while Pakistan has thrown its weight behind former health minister Sania Nishtar — one of only two women on the list.

The other woman is Flavia Bustreo, who was proposed by Italy and who is currently serving as the WHO's assistant director-general for family, women's and children's health.

Another insider is David Nabarro, who among other things, organised the UN's response to the Ebola epidemic in 2014, and who was proposed by the UK.

Hungary has put forward former health minister Miklos Szocska.

The WHO said a shortlist of three would be presented in May 2017 at the agency's annual World Health Assembly, which will make the final appointment.

The new director-general will take the helm of the organisation on July 1 2017. (AFP 23-09-2016)

COMPANY INVESTS IN CONSTRUCTION OF STEEL TOWERS IN ANGOLA

Angolan company Construtora CNJ União plans to invest US\$65 million in building a factory to manufacture towers for power lines, under a private investment agreement made public in Luanda on Thursday.

According to the investment contract, the plant will be built in the municipality of Cacuso, creating 750 jobs for Angolan citizens and 50 for foreigners.

The plant will have an annual production capacity of 40,000 tonnes of metal structures for electricity transmission, with growth estimated at 100,000 tonnes per year until 2030, “can expand to neighbouring countries whenever the market allows.”

Investors, under contract with the Technical Unit for Private Investment (UTIP), will benefit from several tax incentives such as a reduction of tax payable and will ensure the “transfer of more advanced technology” to Angola through this factory as well as increasing the “productive efficiency” and the availability of foreign currency in Angola.

The investment contract also includes construction by the company of a primary school with four classrooms, hiring an educational institution “for technical training of the community” and the creation of social facilities to “help project workers and their families to establish themselves,” the document said. (23-09-2016)

US GRANTS MOROCCO US\$3M FOR PRISON MANAGEMENT REFORMS

The United States has granted Morocco 3 million dollars aimed at stepping up the reforms of the Kingdom’s penitentiary system, APA learns from a statement.

The grant agreement was signed Thursday between the Penitentiary and Rehabilitation Services of Morocco (DGAPR) and the Embassy of the United States in Rabat.

The money will be spent on activities that have already been discussed and agreed with the DGAPR, including among other things, a program for the reintegration of prisoners after their release, the refurbishment of the penitentiary infrastructures and the implementation of regional initiatives with which DGAPR can help other countries and serve as a regional training platform.

The funding will enable DGAPR to carry on its efforts towards providing conditions of detention respecting international norms, the source added. (APA 22-09-2016)

POWER PLAN LEAVES AFRICA IN THE DARK



Us president Barack Obama’s signature initiative for Africa — a \$9.7bn plan to double electricity access in the world’s poorest continent — has fallen short of its goals, so far producing less than 5% of the new power generation it promised.

Obama announced Power Africa three years ago with an ambitious goal: to add 10,000MW of power and supply electricity to 20-million households within five years.

As the president addressed the US-Africa Business Forum in New York on Wednesday, the project has yielded less than 400MW of new power after running into political and economic difficulties.

“If you look today at the number of megawatts that are actually on the grid directly related to the Power Africa initiative, it is very little,” John Rice, vice-chairman of General Electric, said in May at the World Economic Forum in Kigali, Rwanda.

Power Africa, he said, “was a well-intentioned effort, with a lot of smart people, a lot of willing participants, financial institutions and yet, for some reason, it could not come together”.

The programme's shortfalls mean that when Obama leaves office, the nation's first black president and the son of a Kenyan farmer will not be able to claim a legacy-defining endeavour in Africa.

By comparison, President George W Bush's signature initiative in Africa — the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Pepfar) — provided drugs to fight HIV/AIDS to more than 2-million people by the time he left office.

General Electric declined to make Rice available for an interview.

Power Africa's leaders say they are redoubling efforts to accelerate progress.

US agencies announced \$1bn in loans and financing on Wednesday for projects in SA, Ghana, Kenya and elsewhere.

Obama administration officials say Power Africa was never expected to change the continent's energy landscape overnight. The goal was to persuade the private sector to tackle Africa's shortages, not simply provide a government handout, says Andrew Herscowitz, Power Africa co-ordinator at the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Results will take years, he says. "You can't just wave a magic wand and have all the infrastructure appear — it takes time to build things.

"A huge project doesn't get built overnight. Not in the US, not in Europe, not in China, not anywhere," he says.

Power Africa is backing projects across the continent, Herscowitz says, showing that the private sector is responding to US efforts.

A burgeoning market for solar panels is cropping up in places such as Rwanda and Sierra Leone, and companies have committed more than \$40bn to dozens of Power Africa projects, he says.

USAID estimates the initiative will ultimately provide electricity to 60-million households in more than 20 countries.

"Three years after launching Power Africa we're seeing real progress," Obama said on Wednesday, citing solar power and natural gas projects in Nigeria and "off-grid" power generation elsewhere in Africa. "We're on our way, and by 2030 I believe we can bring electricity to more than 60-million African homes and businesses."

But many of the successful projects claimed by Power Africa were under way long before the initiative began, and much of the progress touted on paper has yet to materialise in actual electricity.

That is evident on a visit to the main electronics market in Lagos, Nigeria, where shouting street vendors compete with hundreds of roaring generators that spring to life daily during power outages that last hours.

Even in the nation boasting Africa's most potent economy, electricity is fleeting, and far too sporadic to keep this sprawling market up and running.

"There was power supply this morning, but hardly did it last for one hour before it went off," says Olajide Opemipo, a logistics manager who works in the market.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's largest concentration of people without power. More than 620-million people in the region lack a reliable supply of electricity, according to the International Energy Agency.

Power Africa enjoys some congressional support, suggesting it could survive Obama's presidency.

Representative Ed Royce, the Republican chairman of the House foreign affairs committee, says the aim is for the private sector to continue to invest after Obama leaves office.

He sponsored legislation, signed by Obama in February, that encourages future administrations to continue investing in Africa's power sector. "All of us understand that dealing in Africa in terms of development work is a long process."

Obama pledged to provide "light where currently there is darkness" and double access to power across sub-Saharan Africa when he introduced Power Africa in 2013.

The initial five-year timeline for the programme was later extended to 15 years, and the goal for increasing electricity access expanded to 60-million households by 2030, the target Obama cited on Wednesday, up from 20-million. The initial \$7bn commitment has risen to almost \$10bn.

"An undertaking of this magnitude will not be quick," he said last year in Addis Ababa. "It will take many years."

Power Africa officials say they are on track to meet their target of adding 30,000MW of power by 2030.

The initiative has closed deals to add 4,600MW to the grid, although plants producing less than 400MW have been built so far. In Nigeria, a US-backed effort to privatise power plants would add about

2,500MW to the grid. But the expected gains have not materialised and the country's power generation has fallen to a decade low of about 3,000MW in 2016.

"The situation is not getting better and we are not seeing results," Opemipo says when asked about Power Africa.

"If I were to rate them, I would give them zero because I don't know when the initiative started and what they have contributed so far."

Policy decisions and political dysfunction on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean have hampered the effort. In the US, congressional gridlock over the Export-Import Bank has handicapped progress. The bank, which lost its charter for several months in 2015, was slated to provide \$5bn in financing out of the initial \$7bn US commitment.

It has only provided \$131.5m so far, and has not approved any additional financing since July 2015. An aide at the bank says Senate Republicans' refusal to fill vacancies on its board has left financing for several Power Africa projects stuck in limbo. Without a quorum, the bank cannot approve deals worth more than \$10m.

In Nigeria, a change in political leadership, currency controls and an economic recession sparked by falling oil prices have spooked investors.

Transnational Corporation of Nigeria, an affiliate of one of Power Africa's largest partners, in August suspended plans to build a \$1bn power plant, citing a surge in militant attacks on oil pipelines. Another project, the Azura-Edo Independent Power Plant, was delayed for months due to regulatory obstacles. The 450MW plant is now moving forward, in part due to legal assistance from US advisers, Herscowitz says.

"The regulatory environment is quite rigid," says James Nicholas, co-founder of Global Business Resources USA, which plans to build two solar plants in Nigeria.

"It's bureaucratic," he says.

Power Africa's delivery of results in Nigeria and elsewhere could determine whether the next US president continues to invest in the continent's power sector.

Obama has not devoted much of his public time to Power Africa, and the project lacks a high-level champion in the White House, says Todd Moss, a senior fellow at the Centre for Global Development, a Washington research group.

"I worry that the sustainability of the initiative is at risk when a new administration comes in and they have their own priorities," says Moss, a former assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of African Affairs.

Royce says investors see promise in a region in which many consumers spend billions of dollars on expensive and dirty diesel generators.

Power Africa counts Goldman Sachs, Alphabet and Citigroup among its corporate partners.

Recognising the challenges and delays that come with constructing fully fledged power plants in the continent, Power Africa is shifting its focus to faster, off-the-grid energy projects such as solar panels, Herscowitz says.

Solar companies in Tanzania, Kenya and Rwanda serving thousands of customers have been funded by the programme, he says.

"It's challenging," Herscowitz says.

"If it weren't challenging, you would not need Power Africa." (Bloomberg 23-09-2016)

PROJECTS IN CABINDA TO CHINESE COMPANIES

A Chinese company has been hired by the government of Angola to build a power grid and respective residential connections in the city of Cabinda, with the respective contract signed on Wednesday in that provincial capital.

The project for electrification and domestic connections in the city of Cabinda is budgeted at US\$60 million and includes construction of three major electrical substations, installation of hundreds of transformation posts and 30,000 household connections, allowing about 180 000 people access to electricity for the first time.

On the same occasion the government awarded two construction projects to strengthen the supply of drinking water to the people of Cabinda to companies that are part of the China Railway 20 Bureau Group Corporation and China Railway Construction Corporation.

The first project was awarded to a company from the China Railway Group 20 Bureau Group Corporation, has a completion period of 23 months, will cost US\$120.2 million and, according to the Angolan news agency Angop will benefit over 630,000 residents when it is linked up to the second project.

The second project was awarded to a China Railway Construction Corporation company, and also has a lead time of 23 months and cost US\$88.8 million.

The Minister of Energy and Water, João Baptista Borges, who travelled to Cabinda to witness the signing of contracts, also launched an electricity and water project in Dinge commune, in the municipality of Cacongo, which is 95 kilometres north of Cabinda. (23-09-2016)

GERMANY DONATES EQUIPMENT TO ASSIST NAMIBIA'S LAND REFORM

The German ambassador to Namibia, Christian Matthias Schlaga on Friday handed over to the Ministry of Land Reform five Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) as part of the Namibian – German cooperation in the area of land reform.

Germany has been supporting the land reform process in Namibia since 2003 through the Support to Land Reform Programme implemented by the German technical aid agency; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

The equipment, that has been installed across the country in towns like Lüderitz, Mariental, Otjiwarongo, Opuwo and Katima Mulilo, are valued at 120, 000 Euros.

“These Continuously Operating Reference Stations are part of the physical component of Namibia’s geodetic infrastructure. This infrastructure is a network of control marks that serve as physical reference points used in geodetic surveying and other surveying projects in its vicinity.

Five CORS are receiving Global Navigation Satellite System data and enhance the precision in cadastral, topographical and engineering surveys, in remote sensing and in a large variety of other geographic information services (GIS) and mapping activities.

They are a strategic component in the approach of the Ministry of Land Reform to upgrade and densify the geodetic network of Namibia,” Schlaga and Land Reform Minister Utoni Nujoma said in a joint statement.

“Once operational, the enhanced accuracy possible through the CORS network is able to aid various processes of land governance, such as land registration processes. This includes the surveys required for the implementation of the Flexible Land Tenure Act, an innovative instrument seeking to accelerate access to and delivery of secure tenure in informal urban areas, which piloting and implementation has become a focal area of the Namibian – German cooperation in the sector”.

The five CORS supplements an existing network of seven stations, of which another five have also been supported by the German Government through GIZ.

“The individual stations are covering large areas, with a countrywide CORS network being envisaged to comprise at least 20 stations. Three of the new stations are particularly aiding the north of the country, where the density of the geodetic network is rather sparse,” the statement said. (APA 23-09-2016)

POLITICAL WILL IS WEAK TO MAKE TRAVEL IN AFRICA CHEAPER AND EASIER



Aliko Dangote, Africa's richest man, is fond of banging the visa drum. He uses many public platforms to urge leaders to make it easier for Africans to travel around their own continent.

Last week was no exception. Dangote, in a television interview in Nigeria with CNBC, said he needed 38 visas to travel across Africa. And it was not always straightforward to get them, he said.

"You go to a country that is looking for investment, that particular country will give you a runaround just to get a visa," he said.

"You have to know somebody who is big in that country to call somebody. They are giving you visas as if it is a favour."

Dangote's comments will resonate with many people who have battled to get visas timeously for multiple business trips. Only 13 African countries allow other Africans to enter without a visa or give visas on arrival.

South Africans often complain about the hoops they have to jump through to get visas for other African states, but in fact, SA is part of the problem. According to the African Development Bank, 75% of the most visa-friendly countries in Africa are in East Africa.

In Southern Africa, the visa-friendly nations are Mauritius, Madagascar, Zambia and Mozambique. West Africa fares better with six countries regarded as visa-friendly. Nigeria is not among them.

So what about the African passport? The AU launched it earlier in 2016 with some fanfare, and without a hint of irony. Two passports have been issued so far — to the presidents of Rwanda and Chad. That is a start, on a continent of a billion people.

How soon the passports will be implemented will depend on each country and their preparation to distribute widely, the AU says.

But political will for pan-African initiatives mooted on political platforms is in short supply at home in most cases. Even Ethiopia, the home of the AU, requires visas for African visitors.

There are many well-intended AU initiatives that have stalled on the issue of sovereignty and local protection. An often cited one is the Yamoussoukro Agreement to free up African skies. It was signed in 1988 and was due to come into force by 2002. Rather than leading to open skies, the African Airline Association reports that levels of protectionism have increased to protect domestic carriers, where they exist.

Although it is no longer necessary to fly via Europe to access certain African destinations, it can require a time-consuming complicated timetable and extortionate air fares. The concept of an African passport may be a popular symbolic gesture. But it is a red herring for the actual problems on the ground that plague Africans.

There are many things that can be done to make it easier and cheaper to move around the continent that do not require such an ambitious solution.

It is those who want to bring their money in, either to shop, go on holiday or invest, who are bearing the brunt of visa hassles. Many Africans now prefer to take their money to countries that welcome them and give them long-term visas. Some countries cite security. But the Rwandan government, which has introduced visas on arrival for African visitors, says the benefits of bringing new talent and visitors with money to spend far outweighs the potential problems.

Africa's development challenges, high unemployment rates and security issues are factors used to determine immigration policy. But some of these may be attended to by making it easier to investors, students and others to travel.

There is a rumour that Dangote will be a recipient of an African passport. That might keep him quiet, but it will not change the underlying problem that has become a significant cost to African development and progress. (BD 26-09-2016)

SENEGAL: JULY CONSUMER PRICES UP BY 0.9%

Consumer prices in Senegal were up by 0.9 percent month-on-month in July 2016, the Department of Forecasting and Economic Studies (DPEE) informed APA on Thursday.

This is due to “the rising cost of beef (plus 1.9 percent), fresh fish (plus 13.6 percent) and fresh vegetables, fruits or roots (plus 9.1 percent),” the DPEE noted.

On an annual basis, the overall price level rose by 0.2 percent in July 2016, in conjunction with higher prices of food and non-alcoholic drinks (plus 1.3 percent), health services (plus 0.8 percent) and education (plus 0.5 percent).

Meanwhile, core inflation (excluding fresh food and energy products) increased by 0.4 percent month-on-month and by 0.5% percent year-on-year.

As to the origin of these products, prices of imported goods fell by 0.3 percent month-on-month, and by 0.6 percent compared to the same period in 2015, the DPEE explained.

However, prices of local products have respectively increased by 1.4 percent and 0.5 percent month-on-month and year-on-year.(APA 22-09-2016)

BOTSWANA AIMS TO DIVERSIFY ECONOMY THROUGH EXPORTS

Botswana, through the National Aid for Trade Strategy, aims at building a diversified export-led economy, state-run DailyNews reported here Thursday. The paper quotes the Acting Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Sadique Kebonang as saying that his ministry took into account the development aspirations of Botswana as outlined in key policy documents such as the Keynote Policy Paper for National Development Plan (NDP 11).

Kebonang said the strategy also identified key national development objectives which could be achieved through international trade such as eradication of poverty and reduction in inequality, employment creation, diversified export-led economic growth and strengthening human development.

“The implementation of the strategy will be concurrent to that of NDP 11 to ensure its contribution to national development objectives,” Kebonang is quoted as saying.

He added that the strategy would be implemented by different ministries, the private sector and parastatal organisations.

“We all need to own it and ensure that we mainstream the initiatives in our respective strategies and plans,” he said.(APA 22-09-2016)

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MONETRAY FUND

Angola, Nigeria - <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=44281.0>

Cabo Verde -<http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/21/PR16417-Cabo-Verde-IMF-Staff-Completes-2016-Article-IV-Mission>

Central African Republic - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/13/PR16404-Central-African-Republic-IMF-Staff-Team-Concludes-Visit>

Djibuti - <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=44123.0>

Guinea - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/07/pr16395-IMF-Staff-Completes-Review-Mission-to-Guinea>

Jordan - <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=44267.0>

Kenya - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/13/sp091316-Monetary-Policy-and-the-Future-of-Central-Banking-Implications-for-Africa>

Mozambique - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/15/PR16411-Mozambique-IMF-Statement>

Mozambique - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/29/PR16436-Mozambique-IMF-Staff-Concludes-Visit>

Namibia - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/21/PR16415-Namibia-IMF-Staff-Completes-2016-Article-IV-Mission>

Senegal - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/08/30/PR16384-IMF-Staff-Completes-Review-Mission-to-Senegal>

Senegal - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/21/PR16414-Senegal-Statement-by-Mr-Furusawa-at-the-Conclusion-of-a-Visit>

Sierra Leone - <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2016/09/27/PR16428-Sierra-Leone-IMF-Staff-Completes-Review-Mission>

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The dates of the U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Conference have changed. We are rescheduling the conference by two months and I hope that you will be able to join us at the U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Conference in New Orleans on our new dates, **December 4-6, 2016**.

The primary reason for this change is that prior to the UN General Assembly this past week in New York, we were asked by various interests (U.S. Government, African governments and other interests) to organize a series of events in New York during the General Assembly. Not only did these events divert key staff and resources, the timing also proved to be difficult for government agencies and other business partners on the continent that would have been forced to return to the U.S. just three weeks after the UN meetings and the second U.S.-Africa Business Forum.

CCA's U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Conference is a one-of-a-kind conference in that it is the first and only conference in the United States focused solely on U.S.-Africa Infrastructure. The 2016 conference will be hosted in New Orleans for the first time and we recognize this as an opportunity for greater engagement with companies in America's bustling southeast region. We are confident that with these new dates, we will be able to attract even more businesses, investors and entrepreneurs, as well as key government agencies ready to do business in Africa.

Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you in New Orleans this December.

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