

MEMORANDUM

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ZAMBIA TO GET FOURTH MOBILE NETWORK OPERATOR, PART-OWNED BY ISABEL DOS SANTOS

Zambia has awarded licences to start a fourth mobile network operator to a company, part-owned by Isabel Dos Santos, the daughter of Angola's former president whose influence is waning in her home country.

Unitel International Holdings, in which Dos Santos owns a 25% stake, has pledged to invest more than \$350m through a local unit and will compete with market leader MTN Group and Bharti Airtel.

The expansion comes less than four months after new Angola President João Lourenço announced an auction for a new operator in the oil-rich African nation and the part-privatisation of a state-owned telecommunications provider, challenging Unitel in its home market.

Dos Santos, Africa's richest woman with a net worth of about \$2.4bn, was stripped of her role as chair of Angola's state-oil company last year as Lourenço sought to reduce the influence of the family of his predecessor. This month, she was forced to deny wrongdoing related to a transfer of \$38.2m from the oil company Sonangol, following allegations by its chair, Carlos Saturnino.

For Zambia's part, the country's telecommunications regulator concluded after a two-year review that more competition is needed to improve services and lower prices. Two companies, including Unitel, expressed an interest in the licences, the Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority said in a statement on Monday.

During the first half of 2017, active cellphone subscriptions in Zambia increased by 3.4% to 12.4-million, according to the finance ministry, compared with a population of about 16.5-million. Johannesburg-based MTN had about 48% of the market at the end of 2016. (Bloomberg 20-03-2018)

DELIVERING ON COMMITMENTS: NEW PROGRAMMES TO PROTECT MIGRANTS AND SUPPORT RETURN AND REINTEGRATION IN AFRICA WORTH €150 MILLION ADOPTED

The European Union is adopting today three new programmes worth over €150 million under the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, directly following up on the commitments made by the Joint African Union – European Union – United Nations Task Force to address the migrant situation in Libya.

The new programmes complement ongoing efforts of the European Union to protect migrants and provide them with sustainable reintegration options in Libya, along the Central Mediterranean Route and in Ethiopia.

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, said: *"The EU stands by the many African migrants and refugees in need. With these new measures worth over €150 million we continue to save and protect lives and tackle the root causes of migration. Because we also want to support people in improving their lives in their home countries and look into the future with hope. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa allows us to swiftly address the needs of people in despair, and together with our partners, we focus on protecting and supporting return and reintegration of especially vulnerable migrants and refugees."*

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**, affirmed: *"With today's new programmes we are delivering on the commitments made in the framework of the joint [EU-AU-UN Task Force](#) and increase our already significant on-going support to those in need in Libya. We are actively working to save lives, protect people, as well as offering humane alternatives for people to leave the country and return back home. Equally important, we are working on new measures to support Libyan municipalities enhance the delivery of basic social services and improve local governance for both local and migrant population"*.

As announced by High Representative/ Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the [Joint Task Force meeting last December](#), an additional €115 million have been made available to support migrants in Libya. This programme will be implemented together with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It complements an already existing measure worth €162 million. This new regional programme aims at protecting and evacuating additional 3 800 refugees from Libya, as well as providing protection and voluntary humanitarian return

to 15 000 migrants stranded in Libya and support them with reintegration assistance in their countries of origin, as committed by the EU in the framework of the Joint Taskforce. It will also support the resettlement of more than 14 000 people in need of international protection from Niger, Chad, Cameroun and Burkina Faso.

Another measure worth €20 million will be dedicated to improve the assistance provided to vulnerable migrants, particularly young people and women, in transit countries in the Sahel region and the Lake Chad Basin. It will improve access to social and protection services, such as access to health care, education, security, housing, civil status, legal support or psychosocial assistance.

Through an action worth €15 million, the EU will expand its support to sustainable reintegration for Ethiopian citizens. They will benefit from social and psychosocial assistance at individual and community levels, as well as economic support such as business skills training or access to microcredits. The programme will in addition train relevant regional and local government organisations involved in the reintegration process to better support and empower returnees. This initiative complements the work done under the already existing [Facility on Sustainable and Dignified Return and Reintegration](#).

Background

The [EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) was established in 2015 in order to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.

The Joint Initiative on migrant protection and reintegration by the EU and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) launched already more than a year ago (December 2016) has already provided significant results, by enabling, in particular:

the rescue of more than 3 600 migrants in the desert;

the voluntary return of more than 15 800 migrants to their countries of origin;

the post-arrival assistance and reintegration to more than 23500 migrants returned by the EU-IOM Initiative or with the support of other donors.

The Joint Task Force was set up with the African Union and United Nations on 29 November 2017, committed to accelerate ongoing efforts to assist migrants and refugees in Libya and advance the programme of the International Organisation for Migration for assisted voluntary returns from Libya to countries of origin and the emergency transit mechanism of the UNHCR, to evacuate people in need of international protection. (EC 26-02-2018)

[EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#)

EU REMAINS COMMITTED TO CLIMATE ACTION IN SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

Cooperation between the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean is fundamental to tackle the climate challenges faced by the region. This has become a priority of the **European Neighbourhood Policy** (ENP), which aims at promoting growth, sustainable living conditions, and ultimately stability and security in the region. Following the commitments outlined in the Paris Agreement, national and local authorities in the Southern Neighbourhood have been working together with the EU to enhance strategic planning towards low-carbon development and climate resilience.

As the effects of climate change surpass frontiers, a regional approach is needed in order to provide common answers. Three regional projects were set up to tackle these challenges: "[ClimaSouth](#)" supports the elaboration of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies in the region; "[CES-MED](#)" provides assistance to local authorities to respond more actively to sustainable policy challenges; and "[SUDEP South](#)" supports local energy actions leading to energy savings, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources.

The **Regional Conference on Climate Action & Sustainable Energy in the EU Neighbourhood South** gives the opportunity to take stock of the relevant EU policies in the region, mark the completion of three current regional projects – ClimaSouth, CES-MED and SUDEP South – and share lessons learned.

The event will take place on **20th-21st March 2018 in Brussels** (Charlemagne Building, Sicco Mansholt room). Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of the Energy Union, **Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ**, will deliver a keynote speech on 20th March at 17h. (EC 19-03-2018)

[European Neighbourhood Policy And Enlargement Negotiations](#)

EU CIVIL PROTECTION FORUM 2018: EU AND TUNISIA AGREE TO BOOST COOPERATION

The European Commission signed an administrative arrangement with Tunisia to boost ties in civil protection and disaster risk management.

The document, which was signed at this year's [European Civil Protection Forum](#) in Brussels, outlines key areas of cooperation on disaster prevention, preparedness and response on issues such as forest fires, floods, and search and rescue missions. The signature of this arrangement is an important step in the reinforcement of the [EU-Tunisia Privileged Partnership](#).

On the occasion, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said: *"Global challenges such as natural disasters require joint efforts and strong partnerships. The agreement is a win-win for both sides and will mean practical results for people during times of need. It is a tangible sign that EU cooperation with Tunisia is deep and strong. We are ready to support Tunisia as a key civil protection partner in our wider southern neighbourhood. This year's EU Civil Protection Forum has been a great success and this is one of the concrete outcomes."*

Under the new arrangement, Tunisia will benefit from training for experts, the setting up of joint emergency response plans as well as closer cooperation with the EU's Copernicus satellite system. The move is part of the EU's increasing cooperation with Tunisia in a number of fields.

This year's Civil Protection Forum gathered together a wide community of decision-makers, disaster management experts and first-line responders to exchange best practices and enhance their cooperation at all levels. Participants in the Forum also discussed the Commission's [rescEU proposal](#) to further strengthen Europe's ability to tackle disasters that was presented in November 2017.

Background

Whenever the scale of an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a country, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism enables coordinated assistance from its Participating States. These include all EU Member States, as well as Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. Cooperation arrangements signed with additional countries, such as Tunisia, formalise cooperation and thereby strengthen joint response to natural and man-made disasters.

Following the agreement with Algeria in December 2016, this is the second time that an Administrative Arrangement has been signed with a country from the southern neighbourhood of the EU. (EC 06-03-2018)

SOUTH AFRICA: RAMAPHOSA TO JOIN OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS IN SIGNING THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA AGREEMENT

President Cyril Ramaphosa is joining other African leaders for the inauguration of what is billed as the world's largest free-trade zone, due to take place on Wednesday, when heads of state in the African Union (AU) sign the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement.

Presidents, prime ministers, high-level officials and private-sector stakeholders are all in Rwanda's capital for the AU's 10th extraordinary summit of the heads of state and government. The meeting includes a business summit of panel discussions to be held on Tuesday under the theme, "Leveraging the power of business to drive Africa's integration".

The AfCFTA looks to facilitate the free movement of goods and services as a precursor to the establishment of the African Customs Union. It features a host of measures and institutional frameworks to foster intra-Africa trade through the elimination of tariffs, the harmonisation of customs protocols, and the development of regional supply chains.

"AfCFTA will make Africa one of the largest economies in the world and enhance its capacity to interact on equal terms with other international economic blocs," commented AU Commission chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat.

The AU's executive council met over the weekend to finalise the legal and institutional frameworks for the free-trade zone, including a dispute settlement mechanism and protocols pertaining to the liberalisation of 90% of goods in the customs union.

About 46 countries are expected to sign on, comprising 29 presidents and 17 vice-presidents as signatories. Ramaphosa is expected to be in Kigali, along with International Relations and Co-operation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, the Department of Trade and Industry's Rob Davies, and his deputy Gratitude Magwanishe.

After Wednesday's signing, phase two of the negotiations will kick off towards the end of 2018 and will entail thrashing out the details of investment requirements, rules of services trading, competition, and intellectual property rights.

The AfCFTA will be the second flagship project signed this year after the Single Air Transport Market, and forms part of the body's larger continental economic integration plan enshrined in the AU's developmental Agenda 2063.

The free-trade zone will span all the AU's 54 member states, comprising 1.2-billion people and a combined GDP of \$3.4-trillion. Intra-Africa trade accounts for a mere 16% of the continent's total trade, compared to more than 70% of intra-regional trade seen in Europe.

The UN's Economic Commission for Africa reckons that eliminating import duties alone could see AfCFTA boosting intra-continental trade by 52.3%.

Implementation of AfCFTA will go hand in hand with the union's action plan on Boosting Intra-Africa Trade (BIAT), which aims to double trade flows by 2022. (BD 20-03-2018)

WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN: A MANAGEMENT PLAN TO FORTIFY THE FISHING SECTOR OF THE REGION

A multi-annual plan to bring more stability, transparency and sustainability to western Mediterranean fisheries.

Today the European Commission has proposed a multi-annual plan for fish stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea. The proposal covers demersal fish stocks, i.e. fish that live and feed at the bottom of the seabed, and bring a significant income to the fisheries sector in the region. According to the latest data, it is [estimated](#) that in 2015, French, Italian and Spanish vessels landed around 100 000 tonnes of demersal fish, valued at €675 million. Catches for these stocks have significantly decreased by around 23 % since the early 2000s. At this rate more than 90 % of the stocks [assessed](#) would be overfished by 2025. Without the collective pooling of effort foreseen by this plan, around 1 500 vessels would be at financial risk by 2025. Today's proposal aims to restore these stocks to levels that can ensure social and economic viability for the fishermen and the more than 16000 jobs that depend on it.

Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu **Vella** said: *"Today's proposal for a multi-annual plan is a direct follow-up to the MedFish4Ever Declaration from 2017. It aims to reach a healthy level of fish stocks needed to prevent a loss of jobs and to sustain important economic sectors that depend on fisheries. It brings us one step closer to making Mediterranean fisheries more sustainable. We need to act, and we need to act with urgency. Only then can we secure our common objective to allow fisheries to sustain fishermen and the economy for years to come"*.

Main elements of the proposal include:

- Setting fishing targets for the most commercially important demersal stocks: hake, red mullet, deep-water rose shrimp, Norway lobster, blue and red shrimp and giant red shrimp.

- Simplifying fisheries management under one main regulatory framework. The plan will be coordinated at EU level and apply for all trawlers operating in the region. Each year, on the basis of scientific advice, the Council would decide the maximum number of fishing days, also referred to as allowable fishing effort, for each fleet category by Member State.
- Reducing fishing activities in the first year of the plan in line with the scientific advice, given the worrying situation of most demersal stocks.
- Restricting trawlers from operating in sea beds up to 100m deep, from 1 May to 31 July each year, to reserve the coastal zone for more selective gears. This will protect nursery areas and sensitive habitats, and enhance the social sustainability of small-scale fisheries.
- Establishing regional cooperation among France, Italy and Spain. Provisions for the [landing obligation](#) and [technical conservation measures](#) could be put forward by the Member States concerned, in close collaboration with the fishing sector.

Today's proposal, with its long-term approach, creates more stability and more transparency as the three Member States concerned would jointly adapt current fishing targets to sustainable levels through the Council. It also ensures a consistent approach with other EU multi-annual plans, especially with regard to the recent [agreement](#) reached by the European Parliament and Council on the North Sea plan.

The Commission's proposal is now submitted for discussion to the European Parliament and the Council of the EU.

Background

Today's multi-annual plan is the fourth proposal adopted in line with the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), after the Baltic Sea, North Sea and Adriatic Sea. It covers the western Mediterranean Sea waters, which extend along the Northern Alboran Sea, the Gulf of Lion and the Tyrrhenian Sea, covering the Balearic archipelago and the islands of Corsica and Sardinia and concerns mainly France, Italy and Spain. In 2015, the fleet covered by this multiannual plan includes almost 10 900 vessels, where 50% are Italian, 39% Spanish and 11% French ([Annual Economic Report, 2017](#)).

Under the CFP, multi-annual plans should contribute to achieving fishing at sustainable levels. They should also contain measures to implement the landing obligation, technical measures, as well as safeguards for remedial action where needed.

The proposal has been subject to a thorough impact assessment and is based on the best available scientific advice from the [Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries](#) (STEF). The Mediterranean Sea Advisory Council was extensively consulted and released its [opinion](#) in November 2017. In addition, a 4-month public consultation was carried out in 2016. (EC 08-03-2018)

[Multi-annual plan for demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea & Annex](#)

ZIMBABWE: EMMERSON MNANGAGWA NAMES COMPANIES THAT HAVE FAILED TO RETURN FUNDS

President Emmerson Mnangagwa's administration on Monday named 1,687 companies and 157 individuals accused of failing to heed his call to return funds taken out of Zimbabwe.

This follows the expiry of a three-month amnesty announced in December last year to return the funds.

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe estimates that the country could have been prejudiced of nearly \$1.4bn by the companies and individuals. The central bank said that companies and individuals had returned \$591m in funds illegally stashed abroad after a 90-day amnesty to bring back the money expired last week, but \$827m was still unaccounted for.

The externalised funds in part are responsible for the cash squeeze that currently persists in the country. Battling an acute shortage of cash in the country, which is almost in its third consecutive year, companies have had to turn to the parallel market to access the scarce US dollar for payments of raw materials and to also settle their dues to debtors outside the country.

The backlog of unprocessed foreign payments estimated to now be about a year, resulted in the central bank forced in 2016 to prioritise payment in the scarce US dollar of goods and services.

In the past, some companies have also admitted that they were increasingly finding it difficult to repatriate the funds due to their shareholders as dividends.

The companies named on Monday are involved in mining, agriculture, manufacturing and cross-border freight business in a list made available to the public that shows that the externalised funds that amounted to about \$362m.

The individuals named, mostly of Chinese origin, externalised about \$464m.

Mnangagwa said that despite concerted efforts by authorities and banks to request these entities to account for the externalised funds, the entities or individuals failed, ignored or neglected to respond to the amnesty.

"It is against this background that the authorities have no other recourse to cause these entities and individuals to respond, other than to publicise the names of the entities and individuals so that the concerned parties take heed of the importance of good corporate governance and the legal obligations of citizenry and where necessary to ensure that those responsible for such illicit financial inflows are brought to justice," he said.

At the top of the list are five mining companies namely: African Associated Mines; Marange Resources; Canadile Miners; Mbada Diamonds; and Jinan Mining.

Last year, the state became the sole shareholder of mining in the diamond fields of Marange, following a decision by the former ruler, Robert Mugabe that diamond resources must be nationalised.

Under Mugabe's presidency, complaints from officials in the treasury often surfaced that revenues from diamond mining were not reaching the state coffers.(BD 19-03-2018)

EU'S PAP-ENPARD ALGERIA LAUNCHES TRAINING OF TRAINERS IN 4 PILOT PROVINCES

A programme of training of trainers has been launched in four pilot Algerian provinces (Tlemcen, Laghouat, Aïn Temouchent and Sétif) in the framework of the implementation of the Pilot Actions Programme for rural development and agriculture in Algeria « PAP-ENPARD-Algeria ».

The objective of these trainings in training engineering and pedagogical engineering is to meet the needs of support in terms of integrated rural development in the fields of valorisation and diversification of local resources, as well as in terms of development of entrepreneurship in the agricultural, forestry, handicraft and tourism sectors.

These trainings aim at enhancing the specific skills of the trainers in organising and carrying out training actions for a rational transmission of knowledge, know-how and soft skills to adults.

The training programme will take place in different stages. It started on 4 March and will be pursued until October 2018.

PAP ENPARD ALGERIA is a bilateral cooperation programme between Algeria and the European Union, initiated in the framework of the European Initiative ENPARD. Based on an innovative approach to revitalize the territories through sustainable development projects, PAP-ENPARD contributes in the pilot provinces to:

- implementing a participatory process to identify sustainable rural development projects;
- showcasing local products and resources and enhancing their quality before bringing them to market;
- reinforcing the communication and information on the entrepreneurial initiatives of local actors.(EC 19-03-2018)

RENCONTRE A NIAMEY SUR LA MIGRATION - DECLARATION CONJOINTE SUIVANT LA REUNION DE COORDINATION DE LA LUTTE CONTRE LE TRAFIC ILLICITE DE MIGRANTS ET LA TRAITE DES ETRES HUMAINS

Les Ministres de l'Intérieur et des Affaires étrangères d'Allemagne, du Burkina Faso, de la Côte d'Ivoire, de l'Espagne, de la Guinée, de la France, de l'Italie, de la Libye, du Mali, de la Mauritanie, du Niger, du Sénégal, du Tchad, ainsi que l'Union européenne, l'Organisation des Nations unies, la Commission de l'Union africaine, les Secrétariats du G5 Sahel et de la CENSAD, se sont réunis à Niamey le 16 mars 2018, à l'invitation du Niger assurant la Présidence du G5 Sahel, pour améliorer la coordination de la lutte contre le trafic illicite de migrants et la traite des êtres humains entre les Etats d'origine, de transit et d'arrivée de migrants. Ont participé à cette réunion l'Organisation Internationale des Migrations et le Haut- Commissariat aux Réfugiés des Nations Unies et l'Office des Nations unies contre la drogue et le crime.

2. Rappelant que le Niger, le Tchad, la Libye, l'Union européenne, la France, l'Allemagne, l'Italie et l'Espagne ont affirmé, dans une déclaration conjointe adoptée à Paris le 28 août 2017, leur volonté de lutter contre les réseaux de passeurs afin de limiter les migrations irrégulières vers l'Europe et de protéger les migrants contre les atteintes aux droits de l'Homme et les conditions dégradantes qu'ils subissent. Ils sont également convenus à cette fin de renforcer leur soutien opérationnel aux efforts des pays de transit des migrations.

3. Soulignant que ces objectifs ont été réaffirmés lors du Sommet Union européenne-Union africaine d'Abidjan le 29 novembre 2017 qui a permis l'adoption d'un plan en neuf points pour renforcer la coopération entre les services de police et de renseignement pour lutter contre les réseaux de trafiquants et des passeurs et mettre ainsi un terme à leurs activités, y compris les circuits financiers et leurs avoirs, et aux crimes subis par les migrants.

4. Reconnaissant les efforts en vue de la réinstallation des réfugiés identifiés et évacués de la Libye, en coopération étroite avec le Haut-Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés et ce conformément aux priorités de l'UE, de l'Allemagne, de l'Espagne, de la France et de l'Italie qui avaient convenu de mener des missions de protection au Niger et au Tchad, en étroite concertation et en accord avec leurs gouvernements.

5. Se basant sur les engagements pris dans le cadre du Plan d'action conjoint de la Valette, des Processus de Rabat et de Khartoum, de la Déclaration de Malte et se félicitant des résultats atteints dans ces cadres ;

6. Soulignant la nécessité d'une approche globale et solidaire pour la gestion intégrée de la migration et ce, à travers notamment le partage équitable des responsabilités entre les pays d'origine, de transit et de destination, et selon leurs capacités nationales, en l'occurrence par le financement de projets d'investissement, en particulier dans les zones d'origine et de transit des migrants ;

7. Rappelant la volonté de poursuivre une approche coordonnée au développement durable dans le but de s'attaquer aux causes profondes de la migration irrégulière et des déplacements forcés dans les pays d'origine ;

8. Relevant les efforts consentis par les différents pays se trouvant sur la route de la Méditerranée centrale, en particulier par les communautés locales dans les pays de transit, pour lutter contre les passeurs, prévenir la migration irrégulière, assister et rapatrier les migrants bloqués et coopérer à l'identification et à la protection des demandeurs d'asile et réfugiés ;

9. Mettant en exergue la nécessité de développer les conditions d'émergence d'une économie alternative à l'économie souterraine du trafic illicite des migrants et de la traite des êtres humains par la création de nouvelles sources de revenus au profit des communautés affectées par le trafic ou en passe de l'être dans les pays de transit.

10. Saluant les efforts déjà fournis dans la gestion et la gouvernance de la migration par les pays africains, l'UE et ses Etats membres à travers la mise en œuvre du Plan de la Valette et les dialogues politiques migratoires nationaux et régionaux.

11. Rappelant le soutien continu offert par l'UE et ses Etats membres qui ont déjà permis, entre autres, en partenariat avec l'Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations et le Haut-Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Réfugiés, le retour volontaire et la réintégration de 15 000 migrants et l'évacuation de plus de 1000 réfugiés de Libye en accord avec les engagements pris lors du Sommet Union Africaine - Union Européenne d'Abidjan.

12. Les participants ont convenu d'engager ensemble les actions suivantes :

1) Renforcer les cadres législatifs nationaux en matière de lutte contre le trafic illicite et la traite d'êtres humains

13. Continuer de soutenir l'élaboration de stratégies migratoires nationales cohérentes visant à garantir les droits des migrants et permettant de judiciariser l'ensemble des formes de criminalité associées au trafic illicite de migrants et à la traite des êtres humains, de lutter contre le blanchiment d'argent et de saisir les avoirs criminels.

14. Promouvoir notamment la Convention des Nations Unies contre la criminalité transnationale organisée et en particulier la ratification de ses deux protocoles, l'un visant à prévenir, réprimer et punir la traite des personnes, en particulier des femmes et des enfants, l'autre à lutter contre le trafic illicite de migrants par terre, air et mer.

15. Faciliter davantage le partage d'expériences, la conduite de missions techniques d'assistance menées par les Etats déjà parties à ces protocoles et l'établissement d'un mécanisme de suivi de l'élaboration des cadres législatifs nationaux visant à cette ratification.

16. Encourager la ratification par les Etats membres de la CEDEAO impliqués dans la lutte contre le trafic de migrants de tous les protocoles et conventions de cette organisation contre la traite des Personnes et le Trafic illicite de Migrants, afin de disposer d'un arsenal juridique uniforme pour développer la coopération policière entre ces Etats.

2) Renforcer les outils nationaux de lutte opérationnelle contre le trafic illicite de migrants et la traite des êtres humains et mieux coordonner ces outils nationaux au niveau régional

17. Soutenir, dans les pays africains d'origine et de transit des migrants la création d'équipes conjointes d'investigation (ECI), coordonnées étroitement avec les forces de police et de gendarmerie nationales, les forces armées et les gardes nationales, ainsi que la Force Conjointe du G5 Sahel, ayant pour mission d'identifier et d'interpeler les membres de réseaux d'immigration irrégulière et de traite des êtres humains, et assurer un financement pérenne du fonctionnement de ces structures.

18. Soutenir, dans les mêmes pays, la création de groupes d'action rapide - surveillance et intervention (GAR-SI), destinés à stabiliser les zones isolées et les régions transfrontalières pour faire cesser les trafics de migrants et lutter contre la traite des êtres humains. Assurer la durabilité et la bonne intégration de ces dispositifs par les autorités nationales dans le maillage national des forces de défense et de sécurité, ainsi que la coordination régionale de ces dispositifs nationaux, afin de pouvoir lutter efficacement contre les réseaux transnationaux.

19. Appuyer l'évolution des mandats des missions EUCAP SAHEL Niger et EUCAP Mali, ainsi que EUBAM Libye, dans le cadre d'une approche coordonnée aux actions de l'Union Européenne de sécurité et de défense commune dans la région, en vue de renforcer le soutien aux forces de sécurité intérieure contre les réseaux de passeurs.

20. Sur la base d'AFIC (Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community), renforcer la coopération avec l'Agence Européenne de Garde-Frontières et de Garde-Côtes (Frontex) et établir des partenariats opérationnels entre les pays d'origine et de transit des flux migratoires et l'Agence Européenne de Garde-Frontières et de Garde-Côtes, notamment en développant davantage l'échange d'informations et le travail analytique conjoint concernant la gestion des frontières, y compris la lutte contre le trafic illicite de migrants, la traite des êtres humains et d'autres activités illicites affectant la sécurité des frontières..

21. Assurer une coordination régionale entre équipes nationales d'investigation pour assurer le démantèlement effectif des réseaux transnationaux. En particulier, établir une matrice recensant des points de contacts nationaux en charge de la lutte contre les réseaux de trafic de migrants et de traite des êtres humains, pour assurer des échanges réguliers entre services de sécurité intérieure.

22. Assurer la bonne appropriation et le fonctionnement des systèmes d'échanges et de partage d'information- qui pourront être favorisés par la mise en place dans chaque pays d'un système électronique centralisée d'information policière pour assurer la coordination de la lutte contre la criminalité organisée, y compris en matière de trafic de migrants et de traite des êtres humains, qui sont actuellement développés en Afrique de l'Ouest, tels que la plateforme de coopération en matière de sécurité (PCMS) du G5 Sahel et le Système d'Information Policière pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest (SIPAO/WAPIS).

3) Renforcer les capacités technique et matérielle des Forces de défense et de sécurité en charge de la lutte contre le trafic illicite et la traite de personnes dans les pays d'origine et de transit.

23. Développer et intensifier des formations des membres des Forces de Défense et Sécurité chargées de la lutte contre le trafic de migrants dans tous les pays pour qu'elles développent un savoir spécifique

dans le domaine. Les activités de formation menées par EUCAP Sahel Niger et Mali peuvent servir de référence pour l'élaboration et la conduite de ces programmes de formation (détection de faux documents, enquêtes sur réseaux, etc.).

24. Soutenir la mise en place des infrastructures et l'équipement des Forces de Défense et de Sécurité dans le cadre du contrôle des frontières dans des zones névralgiques sur la route de migration irrégulière de la Méditerranée centrale (Nord Niger et Nord Tchad).

4) Renforcer la coopération judiciaire

25. Soutenir la mise en place et le renforcement de dispositifs de coopération judiciaire à l'échelle de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. En particulier, assurer la consolidation du réseau d'Autorités Centrales et de Procureurs d'Afrique de l'Ouest (WACAP), établi au sein de la CEDEAO et qui associe la Mauritanie, notamment en appuyant financièrement le développement du dispositif.

26. Travailler à la coordination des réseaux judiciaires avec les mécanismes d'entraide judiciaire qui existent dans les pays de destination des migrants et des victimes de la traite afin de disposer d'un cadre cohérent associant pays d'origine, de transit et de destination des migrations irrégulières. Promouvoir des mécanismes d'entraide judiciaire et d'extradition entre les Etats où de tels mécanismes n'existent pas.

5) Renforcer le contrôle des frontières

27. Renforcer les dispositifs nationaux de contrôle des frontières, associant à la fois les forces de défense et les forces de sécurité intérieure, pour identifier les voies empruntées par les flux migratoires irréguliers et permettre l'interception des moyens de transport utilisés par les réseaux de trafic illicite de migrants et de traite des êtres humains.

28. Renforcer les dispositifs régionaux de surveillance des frontières dont l'action doit contribuer à la lutte contre l'activité des réseaux de trafic de migrants et de traite des êtres humains. A cet égard, appuyer la pleine mise en œuvre du mandat de lutte contre les trafiquants de migrants et la traite des êtres humains au sein du G5 Sahel, en particulier par le développement au sein des PC de fuseau d'une composante police et justice afin d'assurer la continuité de la chaîne pénale et un traitement judiciaire approprié des personnes interpellées.

6) Protéger les migrants irréguliers et les victimes de la traite

29. Appuyer le travail conjoint de la Task Force tripartite UA-UE-ONU mise en place au Sommet d'Abidjan afin de faciliter la protection internationale des demandeurs d'asile actuellement en Libye et au Niger, en vue de leur prise en charge dans les meilleures conditions humaines et matérielles par le HCR et l'OIM et dans ce cadre, soutenir les programmes de retour volontaire assisté des migrants

30. Respecter les termes des engagements pris dans la déclaration conjointe adoptée à Paris le 28 août 2017 et réaffirmés lors du Sommet Union européenne-Union africaine d'Abidjan le 29 novembre 2017 concernant la réinstallation par les pays européens des réfugiés et des demandeurs d'asile évacués hors de Libye.

31. Mettre en place des mécanismes de référencement, d'orientation et de prise en charge des victimes de la traite des êtres humains afin d'éviter qu'elles soient à nouveau la cible de réseaux criminels de traite. Mettre en place des dispositifs d'accompagnement des migrants interpellés avec les passeurs afin d'éviter de nouvelles sollicitations ou tentatives de migration irrégulière.

32. Continuer de soutenir les migrants vulnérables sur le chemin du retour pour faciliter leur intégration économique dans leurs communautés locales;

7) Assurer le développement durable et la promotion d'une économie alternative pour la maîtrise des flux migratoires.

33. Continuer la mise en œuvre effective du plan de la Valette par la prise en compte des programmes de développement durable pour s'attaquer aux causes profondes de la migration irrégulière et des programmes pour la maîtrise des flux migratoires et le développement d'une économie alternative.

34. Promouvoir des alternatives économiques au trafic dans la région et développer la résilience des populations locales à travers l'amélioration de l'accès aux services de base et la création d'opportunités d'emploi, notamment pour les jeunes.

35. Renforcer les mécanismes de suivi et d'évaluation des projets FFU et des autres partenaires entrant dans le cadre de la lutte contre le trafic illicite de migrants et la traite de personnes ;

8) Assurer le suivi des engagements

36. Instituer un mécanisme permanent de suivi des engagements pris pendant la présente réunion.

37. Organiser le 18 juin 2018, à Niamey, un atelier de concertation régionale sur la lutte contre le trafic de migrants et la traite des êtres humains, qui réunira les directeurs généraux des services de défense et de sécurité intérieure, les directeurs généraux chargés de la migration, les points focaux nationaux en charge de la lutte contre les réseaux de trafic et de traite des Etats participants, pour accompagner la mise en œuvre pratique des engagements contenus dans cette déclaration.

38. Informer les pays partenaires des progrès effectués dans la mise en œuvre des engagements contenus dans cette déclaration par le biais des points de contact des participants.(EC 16-03-2018)

CHAD CONSIDERS PRESIDENTIAL TERMS BUT THE OPPOSITION IS SCEPTICAL

Anger is growing in the oil-producing African state over Idriss Deby's long, authoritarian rule and punishing austerity cuts

Chad on Monday was due to start discussing sweeping constitutional reforms including presidential term limits in a country ruled with an iron fist by Idriss Deby since a 1996 coup.

A "national forum", comprising about 700 participants that includes ruling party figures, members of civil society close to the government and representatives of the Chadian diaspora, was due to kick off in the capital N'Djamena.

It is being boycotted by the opposition. The Fonac, or the New Opposition Front for Change party has said the process is aimed at "perpetuating the power of Idriss Deby, something that is harmful and dangerous for the future of Chad". A draft of the proposals includes a presidential term of seven years through direct universal suffrage and a maximum of two terms.

The current mandate is five years and there are no limits on re-election. Deby came to power in a 1996 coup and is serving his fifth term.

There has been growing anger in the oil-producing country over Deby's authoritarian rule and protests over austerity cuts, partly prompted by a slump in world fuel prices.

A Western ally in combating jihadism in the volatile Sahara region, Chad has endured two years of severe recession worsened by a slump in oil prices.

The state is imposing cuts in public spending that the finance ministry says are vital to stave off bankruptcy, fanning discontent in a country where almost half the population of 14-million lives below the poverty line, according to the World Bank.

The other proposals aim at increasing the terms of MPs by two years to six, scrapping several state institutions including a body monitoring how oil revenues are spent and whittling down the country's 23 "regions" to 14 "provinces." (AFP 19-03-2018)

EU SUPPORTS LEBANESE SECURITY SECTOR WITH €50 MILLION

The European Union has announced a €50 million package to support the Lebanese security sector, as part of its longstanding commitment to the stability and security of Lebanon.

This package includes €46.6 million for promoting the rule of law, enhancing security and countering terrorism until 2020 and €3.5 million in support of airport security.

High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica **Mogherini** made the [announcement](#) during today's Rome II Ministerial Meeting on support to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) in Rome. She said: "*Lebanon can count on the European Union's longstanding partnership in facing its current challenges, from humanitarian aid to development cooperation, but also on economy and security. With this new package, the EU reconfirms its support to the Lebanese security sector and the strengthening of Lebanon's institutions, which are crucial to ensure the stability, security and unity of the country, for the benefit of the Lebanese people and of the entire region.*"

The new package is part of the EU's overall and longstanding support to the security sector in Lebanon where the EU has invested more than €85 million across the entire sector since 2006. EU activities have included support to the Lebanese security forces' capacity building, integrated border management, civilian oversight, as well as the mitigation of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threats and mine action. In 2018, the focus is placed on integrated border management and countering terrorism.

Background

The €46.6 million commitment to support Lebanon in promoting the rule of law, enhancing security and countering terrorism until 2020, funded under the [European Neighbourhood Instrument \(ENI\)](#), aims at supporting the security and justice sector in Lebanon.

The €3.5 million measure, adopted under the [Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace \(IcSP\)](#), specifically aims at securing Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport against illicit trafficking and the threat of terrorism. It will provide training for relevant agencies working at the airport under civilian authority, and allow for the improvements of existing security infrastructures.

In November 2016, the European Union and Lebanon adopted [Partnership Priorities](#) for the period 2016-2020, which set up a renewed framework for political engagement and enhanced cooperation. The Partnership Priorities include security and countering terrorism, governance and the rule of law, fostering growth and job opportunities, and migration and mobility. They were agreed in the context of the [revised European Neighbourhood Policy](#) and the [EU's Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy](#). (EC 15-03-2018)

THE NEXT SOCIETY CALLING ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATORS IN EGYPT

This call for applications will select talented entrepreneurs and innovative businesses in ICT (tech & software), Food, Environment, Energy, Health, and Social & Culture, in order to qualify to the Start-up Booster Track.

THE NEXT SOCIETY Start-up Booster Track offers **tailor-made support to Mediterranean start-ups** to help them go international and raise funds thanks to workshops and training sessions, immersion into foreign markets and incubation in European innovation hubs, meetings with investors and long-term coaching by committed mentors.

Closing date

20 March 2018

Opportunity type

Competitions

Share

To find out more

- [Find more information and apply here](#)

MNANGAGWA RESPONDS TO MUGABE: ZIMBABWE 'HAS MOVED ON'

Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa said on Friday that the country "has moved on" in response to claims by former president Robert Mugabe that he was ousted in an illegal "coup d'état". Mnangagwa added in a short statement that he "noted recent remarks made to the media" by Mugabe who spoke to foreign journalists at a location in Harare on Thursday. It was Mugabe's first public statement since his resignation in November, which was triggered by a brief military takeover and the threat of a no-confidence motion tabled in parliament by his own Zanu-PF party.

"I say it was a coup d'état — some people have refused to call it a coup d'état," Mugabe told the SABC. "We must undo this disgrace, which we have imposed on ourselves, we don't deserve it ... Zimbabwe doesn't deserve it."

Mnangagwa's brief response, posted on his official Twitter account and bearing the seal of the presidency, added that Mugabe "is entitled to express himself freely, as is the case for any private citizen". "The nation has moved on. Our focus at this time shall remain on preparing for free, fair and credible elections in 2018."

Mnangagwa stressed that "the Zimbabwe government continues to honour all its obligations towards the former president's welfare and benefits, as provided for under the constitution of Zimbabwe".

Mugabe's golden parachute reportedly includes a pension of several thousand dollars a month, a retinue of staff, a fleet of luxury cars, and a round-the-clock protection detail. Mugabe told his interviewers he did not hate his successor, but alleged that he had "betrayed the whole nation".

The ousted leader insisted he would not work with Mnangagwa and suggested that his presidency was "illegal" and "unconstitutional". "People must be chosen in government in a proper way. I'm willing to discuss, willing to assist in that process — but I must be invited," he said.

Gideon Chitanga, an analyst at the Johannesburg-based Political Economy Southern Africa think-tank, said that Mugabe's intervention was significant "coming at a time of elections". Presidential polls are due by the end of August in which Mnangagwa will face his first major electoral test.

Mugabe's media appearance was apparently organised by the new National Patriotic Front (NPF), which hopes to unseat Mnangagwa's government in polls expected by August. Mugabe sent shock waves through the Zanu-PF ruling party when he recently met with the NPF's leader, retired general Ambrose Mutinhiri.

In response to a widely-shared image of the two, Zanu-PF Youth League supporters chanted "down with Mugabe" at a rally, a rare outburst from the normally disciplined party that Mugabe led for nearly four decades.

The military moved against Mugabe after he sacked his then-deputy and heir-apparent Mnangagwa, seemingly fearing he was grooming his wife Grace to succeed him as president. (AFP 17-03-2018)

EU BANK CONTRIBUTES FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO PROVIDE CLEAN DRINKING WATER FOR MORE THAN 2 MILLION PEOPLE IN GAZA



- EUR 7.1 million technical assistance grant to help Gaza Desalination Programme enter implementation phase
- Seawater desalination programme will provide clean water for more than 2 million people in Gaza, as well as bringing environmental and economic benefits
- EU bank's contribution is part of the Economic Resilience Initiative

At a high-level pledging conference in Brussels today, the EIB has signed a letter of intent confirming its support for the [Gaza Desalination Programme](#). This includes a EUR 7.1m technical assistance grant for

the Palestinian Water Authority, backed by the European Commission. The EIB will launch the tendering procedure for the provision of technical assistance on 15 April.

On this occasion, EIB Vice-President Dario Scannapieco, who is responsible for the Economic Resilience Initiative, said: *“The technical assistance grant for which we have signed a letter of intent today will be crucial to help the Gaza Desalination Programme enter the implementation phase. The provision of safe and clean water is vital for the more than 2 million people living in Gaza. This will help to improve people’s daily lives, reduce pollution in the Eastern Mediterranean and create local economic development and new employment opportunities.”*

The EU bank’s involvement is part of a European response to address water shortages in Gaza. Support is being provided alongside the European Commission, the Union for the Mediterranean, the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, as well as bilateral donors. It is the largest programme ever undertaken in one of the most densely populated places on Earth.

There are only a few places in the world where fresh water is as scarce as in Gaza. Two million Palestinians in Gaza at present rely on the coastal aquifer as a source of fresh water. However, this does not satisfy current demand and over 95% of the water extracted does not meet the WHO drinking water quality standards and is therefore not fit for human consumption. With water demand increasingly on the rise, the situation for the local population is set to assume dramatic proportions.

The EIB’s support forms part of the Bank’s increased financing activities in aid of vital infrastructure under the Economic Resilience Initiative. It is helping to tackle the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The seawater desalination programme is expected to make a crucial contribution to the improvement of living conditions in Gaza, notably by:

- Providing safe and clean water for more than 2 million people;
- Contributing to the regeneration of the coastal aquifer;
- Reducing pollution in the Eastern Mediterranean; and
- Enabling local economic development and generating new employment opportunities.

Background

During the past seven years, the EIB has provided technical support to the Palestinian Water Authority to prepare the desalination programme. Renewable energy components benefited in particular from the EIB’s expertise and [technical assistance under the CAMENA climate action envelope](#) (part of the [FEMIP Trust Fund](#)) backed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The Economic Resilience Initiative was requested by the 28 EU Member States in 2016 as a part of the EU response to the challenges posed by forced displacement and migration and as a follow-up to the London Syria Conference in 2016. Focused on the Western Balkans and Europe’s Southern Neighbourhood, which covers North Africa and the Middle East, the ERI substantially increases EIB financing in these regions: an extra EUR 6 billion in addition to the EUR 7.5 billion already planned to be provided by 2020. Investments under the ERI are well on track. To date, 24 projects and EUR 1.9 billion worth of financing have been approved under the new initiative. (EIB 20-03-2018)

[Gaza Central Desalination Plant And Associated Works Programme - Donor Information Handbook](#)

ANGOLA SAID TO HAVE CHARGED FORMER CENTRAL BANK CHIEF IN \$500M FRAUD CASE

Angolan prosecutors have charged former central bank governor, Valter Filipe da Silva, in relation to an alleged \$500m fraud attempted against the Angolan government in 2017, a source familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

The source said the attempted fraud occurred in the final weeks of the presidency of José Eduardo dos Santos when \$500m was transferred from the central bank to an account in the UK. It was, however, flagged as suspicious by UK authorities and frozen.

Angola's prosecutions office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Reuters was unable to contact Da Silva.

In January, in response to questions about the case sent by Reuters, the UK's NCA said: "We can confirm that the NCA's international corruption unit is investigating a case of potential fraud against the Angolan government."

According to a separate source, NCA investigators have visited Luanda and held meetings with top government officials.

On Thursday, the NCA did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The news was first broken earlier on Thursday by the blog Maka Angola, run by activist and journalist Rafael Marques.

President João Lourenço has vowed to combat an endemic culture of corruption since taking office in September, after nearly 38 years of rule by Dos Santos.

"No one is so rich and powerful that they cannot be punished and no one is so poor that they cannot be protected," he said at his inauguration. (Reuters 15-03-2018)

FIRST LONG-TENOR POLITICAL RISK INSURANCE TO UNLOCK USD 1.4 BILLION CLEAN ENERGY INVESTMENT ACROSS AFRICA

USD 1.4 billion of new clean energy investment across Africa will be supported by a new investment insurance initiative launched by Munich Re, the African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI) and the European Investment Bank (EIB). The Africa Energy Guarantee Facility (AEGF) will provide the first dedicated reinsurance for sustainable energy projects across Africa.

The joint initiative to tackle key investment challenges holding back crucial energy investment across Africa was formally launched at Munich Re headquarters in Munich by Dr. Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank, Dr. Doris Höpke, Member of the Board of Management of Munich Re and George O. Otieno, Chief Executive Officer of the African Trade Insurance Agency.

The AEGF will significantly boost private investment in sustainable energy projects, both expanding access to clean energy and contribute to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals. The scheme will support new private sector investment in eligible renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy access projects in 25 sub-Saharan African countries.

Munich Re CEO Joachim Wenning: "The Africa Energy Guarantee Facility is another example of our strategy to create new markets by pushing back the boundaries of insurability. Munich Re has become the go-to reinsurer when it comes to creating innovative solutions and forging new partnerships. The AEGF will remove a major obstacle for renewable energy investments in Africa. For Munich Re, the AEGF is a blueprint for risk-sharing between insurers, reinsurers and international financial institutions and we strive to address other impediments to the development of emerging countries with comparable solutions."

Werner Hoyer, President of European Investment Bank: "Sustainable energy investment in Africa is crucial to improve access to energy, cut energy bills and enhance deployment of renewable energy. This exciting new partnership between the EIB, Munich Re and ATI combines technical, financial and sector experience and local knowledge essential to tackle investment barriers. As the EU Bank the EIB is committed to supporting Sustainable Energy for All and the African Energy Guarantee Facility established a clear model for partners to join and others to follow."

ATI CEO George O. Otieno: "Reliable access to clean and efficient energy supply is key to building a sustainable economic base. With the increased availability of clean energy, Africa will be able to attract more investments, to create environments where companies can thrive and to build healthier communities where pollution and climate change wreak less havoc on daily life. In this sense, AEGF represents hope – and equally important, it also sends a strong signal to investors and financiers that renewable energy projects in Africa are now bankable."

Products offered under the AEGF will include insurance against sovereign or sub-sovereign non-payment under a PPA, expropriation and breach of contract, currency inconvertibility, war, civil unrest

and arbitration award default. As of yet, the commercial insurance market is cautious and shows limited appetite to issue such political risk protection for long tenors in Africa's energy sector. As a consequence, private companies are discouraged from investing in Africa's energy sector because of the discrepancy between the long-term investment needed for energy projects and the short timeframe in which the political landscape may change. Therefore we expect the AEGF to have a significant impact in catalysing new sustainable energy projects in Africa.

AEGF to be highlighted at global insurance industry meeting in Kenya

The new support for sustainable energy investment in Africa will be outlined to representatives of the global export credit and investment insurance industry at the 2018 Berne Union Spring Meeting taking place in Kilifi Kenya this week. More than 85 organisations including government-backed export credit agencies, private credit and political risk insurers and multilateral institutions are expected to attend the first ever meeting of the Berne Union in Africa.

Technical preparations to ensure energy investment gap is addressed

The Africa Energy Guarantee Facility was launched following detailed market assessment, backed by EUR 1 million of technical assistance provided through the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund. This identified market gaps holding back investment and identified partners who could help to address market weaknesses.

Additional technical assistance has also been provided by the European Investment Bank, the EU Bank, to enhance the provision of dedicated energy sector investment insurance services.

Scale of energy investment needed in Africa

Around 600 million people out of a total population of 1.3 billion in Sub-Saharan Africa currently lack access to electricity and most countries experience power shortages on a daily basis. To accommodate the expected population growth by 2030, it is estimated that annual investment of around USD 100 billion in energy infrastructure is needed.

Last year the European Investment Bank provided EUR 2.6 billion for new investment across Africa. Projects supported include improving agriculture, energy, telecom, transport and water infrastructure, as well as strengthening microfinance lending and private sector investment across the continent.(EIB 20-03-2018)

PESTS AND DISEASE HAVE DESTROYED A THIRD OF MOZAMBIQUE'S CROPS

Pests and disease sweeping through Mozambique have destroyed at least a third of the country's agricultural crops over the past 11 months, government spokesperson Ana Comoana has said.

She said more than 41,000ha of crops in Mozambique have been affected by pests, including caterpillars and fruit flies, with more than 3,000ha of maize being lost, and coconut and banana production also suffering.

On Tuesday, Mozambique's cabinet approved a 160-million metical (\$2.6m) action plan to combat pests and disease.

The country is one of the world's poorest and is in the throes of a debt and financial crisis. Much of Southern Africa, including Mozambique, is still recovering from a devastating El Niño-driven drought two years ago.

Mozambique was also one of several countries in the region invaded by an infestation of crop-damaging fall armyworms in 2017, an invasive species with a taste for maize. (Reuters 14-03-2018)

COALITION FORMED TO OUST DRC'S JOSEPH KABILA

Opposition parties in the Democratic Republic of Congo formed a coalition that will back Moïse Katumbi's candidacy for president in elections scheduled for December.

The announcement marks the start of what's expected to be a series of declarations by candidates seeking to challenge President Joseph Kabila, who has ruled the central African nation for 17 years. Congo, Africa's biggest copper producer and the world's largest source of cobalt, has not had a peaceful transfer of power since independence almost six decades ago.

"You have chosen me to lead us to the coming elections," Katumbi told a gathering of supporters in Johannesburg. "I call for unity among the opposition because we have to work together, hand in hand, to go towards free and transparent elections."

Congo was supposed to hold elections in 2016 at the end of Kabila's second term. Opposition leaders have previously accused Kabila, in power since 2001, of intentionally delaying the vote to retain power and change the constitution to enable him to stand for a third term.

The new group that will back Katumbi will be known as Ensemble pour le Changement, opposition legislator Delly Sesanga said at the rally.

Katumbi, the 53-year-old former governor of Congo's copper-and cobalt-rich Katanga province, has previously announced plans to run for president. He's lived in self-imposed exile since May 2016, when he travelled to South Africa for medical treatment. In June 2016 he was sentenced in absentia to three years in prison on what he says were politically motivated charges.

Among Katumbi's campaign pledges were plans to end armed conflict, particularly in the mineral-rich east of the country, attract greater private investment and build more infrastructure including hydropower dams and roads. (Bloomberg 12-03-2018)

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

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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