

MEMORANDUM

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LA BEI FINANCE LA MODERNISATION ET L'EXTENSION DU RESEAU D'ALIMENTATION EN EAU POTABLE DE LA VILLE DE COTONOU



Mr Ambroise Fayolle, Vice-Président de la BEI - M. Patrice Talon, Président de la République du Bénin - M. Romuald Wadagni, Ministre de l'Economie et des Finances du Bénin

Lors de sa visite de travail à Bruxelles, M. Patrice Talon, Président de la République du Bénin, a présidé la cérémonie de signature entre la République du Bénin et la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI), d'une convention de financement pour le développement et la modernisation du réseau d'alimentation en eau potable de la ville de Cotonou.

Le contrat de financement d'un montant de 30 millions d'euros a été signé par M. Romuald Wadagni, Ministre de l'Economie et des Finances du Bénin et M. Ambroise Fayolle, Vice-Président de la BEI. Ce financement s'inscrit dans l'action prioritaire de l'Europe pour le déploiement et la modernisation d'infrastructures de base permettant d'améliorer la vie quotidienne des populations locales. Il s'agit du deuxième financement de la BEI dans ce secteur après celui octroyé (13 M€) en 2007 et achevé en 2015. L'Union européenne contribue également au financement du projet par un don de 6 millions d'euros.

« C'est un financement très important qui aura un fort impact social sur les populations locales, a souligné le Vice-Président de la BEI pendant la cérémonie de signature. Grâce à ce financement, de nombreux quartiers élargis à ceux périphériques de Cotonou bénéficieront d'un service de distribution en eau potable et d'assainissement de qualité. Ce qui contribuera à améliorer la vie quotidienne des Béninois dans ces quartiers. Nous sommes très heureux de financer un tel projet qui s'inscrit dans notre action prioritaire en faveur du développement durable. »

Il s'agit en effet d'un projet d'importance pour le Bénin avec à la clef un accès à l'eau potable pour 600 000 personnes à Cotonou. Ce financement permettra très concrètement de renforcer et de moderniser le système d'alimentation en eau potable des zones urbaines et péri-urbaines de Cotonou, dans l'objectif de répondre aux besoins croissants des habitants jusqu'en 2025. Il permettra de créer un service d'assainissement adapté et de qualité, avec notamment l'installation d'une station de traitement des boues de vidange.

Ce projet bénéficiera également d'un financement parallèle de la KfW et de la Banque Africaine de développement (BAD).

Fort du partenariat de confiance qui la lie avec le Bénin, la BEI a financé des projets importants pour le développement économique et social du pays notamment dans le secteur de l'eau, de l'énergie et du soutien aux entreprises, totalisant un investissement de 138 millions d'euros. (EIB 12-12-2016)

BUSINESS CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT IN GUINEA-BISSAU "MASKED" BY POLITICS



Guinea-Bissau has been improving its business climate and is an under explored “gateway” to a large regional market, but internal political risks have driven investors away, according to the first investment guide to the country.

Published by the newly formed Portugal-Guinea-Bissau Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the guide presented in Lisbon emphasises the importance of the integration of the African country in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with a population of 320 million people, as well as the “advantages for relationships with investors,” derived from membership of the regional monetary union (UEMOA).

This membership, it said, provides exchange rate stability due to the fixed parity between the CFA franc, used by 80 million people in seven countries, and also “freedom of capital repatriation and profit,” with greater regional integration held back only by a lack of basic infrastructure, including ports, roads and energy.

“The challenges for the competitiveness of Guinea-Bissau include strengthening of basic public services in health, education, basic infrastructure for water, sanitation, energy, transport and communications; and primarily the recovery of the manufacturing sectors, which requires private investment stimulus,” the Guide said.

In the last edition of the World Bank’s ranking “Doing Business” report, the country was, along with Sao Tome and Principe, the country that recorded the most positive performance among Portuguese-speaking countries, rising to 172nd place.

The improvement was achieved thanks to the introduction of a new conciliatory procedure for companies in financial difficulties and a preventive settlement process that helps insolvency situations, something that is also noted in the Guide put together by the Portugal-Guinea-Bissau Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

But despite progress on “simplifying administrative and legal procedures and the creation of a system of incentives for internationally competitive investment”, affecting the speed of opening new businesses, “investors’ perception of the ease of doing business is very hampered by political instability,” it said.

In the current term, which began in 2014, Guinea-Bissau has had five governments and the most recently nominated one is not part of the party that won the last elections, undermining its chances of success.

Nevertheless, some investors have persisted with their investments in the country, notably China, which is investing in the construction of infrastructure in the country.

At the end of November, China’s ambassador in Bissau, Wang Hua, announced that his country will finance the construction of a highway between the city of Bissau and Safi, a town which is 14.4 kilometres north of the capital, and that Chinese technicians were already in the Guinean capital to prepare the start of the work.

The project, worth US\$16.5 million, will make it easier to transport commercial products from interior of the country to the capital.

The government of Guinea-Bissau on Thursday signed an agreement with Chinese businessman Xuguang Li, the president of the Shenyang Lan Sa Trading Co Ltd, for the construction of a biomass power plant to supply the cities of Bissau and Mansoa in the centre of the country.

In the introduction to the Investment Guide, the president of CCIPGB, Jorge Sousa, emphasised the authorities’ efforts to encourage foreign investment and the country’s situation as an “excellent gateway” to the regional market.

“By focusing on Guinea, risks are being taken, but are others are diluted, in markets where we have always focused. Diversification of risk is a strategy for companies not to be dependent on one or another market,” Sousa said. (13-12-2016)

JAPANESE CONSUMER HEALTH-CARE FIRM VENTURES INTO KENYAN MARKET

Japanese consumer healthcare company, Rohto Mentholatum Group, has launched operations in Kenya after signing a Sh100 million investment deal.

The giant pharmaceutical company launched Rohto Mentholatum Kenya and unveiled a new range of products named Rootia. The firm will use the entry into the Kenyan market as a launching pad into the larger East African region.

Japanese Ambassador to Kenya Toshitsugu Uesawa said at the launch the move is an illustration of growing ties between Kenya and Japan.

“We have always emphasised that our relationship will be enhanced by private sector development,” he said. The company’ launch comes in the wake of increased Japanese investments in Kenya.

It comes months after the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) where Japan pledged to support flagship projects in the country. Japan also committed to a \$30 billion (Sh3 trillion) investment to transform Africa. (Standart Digital 07-12-2016)

COMPLETION OF WORK ON TWO HYDRO PLANTS IN MOZAMBIQUE POSTPONED TO JANUARY 2017

The completion of rehabilitation work on the Chicamba and Mavuzi hydropower plants in the central Mozambican province of Manica, has been postponed until January 2017 because of problems with some of the equipment, an official from state electricity company EdM said.

The Deputy Director of Electrification and Projects of EdM, Abraão Rafael, told daily newspaper Diário de Moçambique that the delay was due to a fault in the transformer turbines in the Chibata substation.

Rafael said that of the seven generators that were covered by this project five have been recovered and are going to work perfectly when everything is finished, producing 20 megawatts of electricity.

The rehabilitation work on the two power plants began in November 2013 and is being carried out by French and Norwegian consortium Cedelec and Hidrokarst Rain Power, respectively, and cost US\$120 million.

The Mavuzi dam was built in the 1950s and the Chicamba dam was built 10 years later. The installed generator units were obsolete because of their age. (06-12-2016)

CHINESE COMPANY CRCC MODERNISES CABINDA AIRPORT, ANGOLA

Work has begun on the expansion and modernisation of the Maria Mambo Café airport in Cabinda, Angola, awarded to the China Railway Construction Corporation Limited (CRCC) Angolan news agency Angop reported.

The work will include extension of the runway to 3,400 metres long and 60 metres wide, which allows Boeing 777 aircraft to land, the construction of a new 19,000 square-metre terminal to accommodate 900 passengers at peak times, and construction of a new hanger to accommodate the Boeing 737 and 777.

The work, budgeted at US\$185 million US, should be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

The Minister of Transport, Augusto da Silva Tomás, present at the ceremony to launch the project said that the start of work is key to creating more jobs, for the economic and social stability of the region and its economic growth.

The governor of Cabinda, Aldina Matilde Catembo said, in turn, that the airport work will strengthen local businesses, especially in those in the hospitality and tourism sectors. (12-12-2016)

ALGERIA COULD BE A KEY STRATEGIC PARTNER FOR EUROPE

Algeria could be a strategic partner for the EU in the fields of energy, security, R&D and more.

For a long time, Europe has underestimated the crucial role Algeria could play in providing balance in the Mediterranean region. Our dialogue is still based essentially on imports of natural gas from Algeria to European countries.

My view is that a great change is taking place today, from scientific modernisation and political reforms to security cooperation in the region.

The turning point in our relations was the coming into effect of the association agreement, as part of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in 2005.

More recently, a set of priorities regarding our relations were jointly established in the framework of the European neighbourhood policy (ENP) in 2013 and its review in 2015, covering strategic areas of mutual interest such as migration and mobility, and security dialogue, in order to enhance regional stability and cooperation in the fight against terrorism and radicalisation.

As previously mentioned, a key component of our exchange with Algeria is represented by an energy-based economic relationship. The country is one of the most relevant suppliers of natural gas to Europe and the critical situation between the EU and Russia over the Ukrainian conflict has reinforced Algeria's strategic position to offset European dependence on Russian gas.

If we look at trade figures in detail, 99.7 per cent of Algerian exports in 2015 came from energy and petroleum-derived products. EU exports to Algeria are more diversified, based on industrial and chemical products, and its investment is estimated at 40 per cent of foreign direct investment in the country.

According to a recent study by Oxford University researcher Ali Aissaoui, until now Algerian government policies pushed low domestic prices, neither encouraging rationalisation of demand nor providing incentives for upstream investment, resulting in a deterioration of national gas balances.

However, recent high-level policy talks about investing in renewable energy development, political modernisation and support of technological research and innovation could lead the country to a new stage, especially in its relationship with the EU.

Since 2009, the government has implemented a strategy to improve R&D: the number of publications and patents registered has grown significantly over the last years and partnerships have been established between research centres and economic enterprises, in part thanks to financial incentives and tax exemptions.

Cooperation programmes between Brussels and Algeria are aiming to develop the fisheries and agriculture sector, and ultimately reduce dependence on the hydrocarbon sector.

In February, the Algerian Parliament adopted a reformed constitution limiting the presidential mandate to two terms and introduced significant policies to promote gender equality and easier access for women in the labour market, as well as safeguard for the freedom of press, and created a national body for fighting corruption.

In terms of European and international security affairs, Algeria has a pivotal role in the stabilisation of north Africa and the fight against jihadist terrorism.

Despite its reluctance to accept external intervention, Algeria has always proved its commitment in the fight against Al Qami and Al Qaeda, also by establishing in 2010 the regional defence command for joint counter-terrorism operations with Mali, Niger and Mauritania (CEMOC).

The Algerian government played a strong role in achieving a fragile peace between the Mali people and today is a relevant actor in dialogue among the opposing factions in Libya, seeking a solution for the crisis in Maghreb.

As regards Algerian relations with neighbouring countries, I would like to highlight how Algeria has always expressed its unconditional support to Sahrawi people's right to self-determination and independence in western Sahara. Occupied by Morocco since 1975, western Sahara has been waiting for a referendum, initiated by the UN, for over 25 years.

In a recent mission of our EU delegation for the relations with the Maghreb countries to Alger, the President of the Assemblée populaire nationale Mohamed Larbi Ould Khelifa reaffirmed such commitment towards Sahrawi.

The EU's duty should be to share the same position and to defend internationally the right of Sahrawi people to decide about their future.

European institutions have undervalued how Algeria could be a decisive player in providing stability in the region and I believe it is time to strengthen our cooperation. Algeria and Europe share a common identity represented by the Mediterranean, and are linked by close historical, economic and cultural ties.

The outbreak of conflicts and changes that are shaking the international landscape along southern borders of the European Union absolutely call for a strengthening of bonds with Algeria.(EParl. 06-12-2016)

EGYPTIAN APEX BANK SIGNS \$2.5BN AGREEMENT WITH CHINESE BANK

The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) on Tuesday signed a bilateral currency swap agreement with the People's Bank of China (China's central bank) at the value of 18 billion yuan (\$2.6bn).

The CBE stated in a press release issued here Tuesday that this agreement is valid for three years and can be extended.

The agreement achieves mutual benefit for both parties and asserts the strong relationship between the two countries, as well as showing China's support to Egypt's economic reform programme.

"This agreement demonstrates the strong international support that the Arab Republic of Egypt has garnered with respect to its home grown reform programme. Additionally, it complements a series of measures taken which aim to unleash the vast potential of Egypt's economy," the statement noted. (APA 06-12-2016)

CHINA ROAD AND BRIDGE CORPORATION BUILDS BRIDGE IN MOZAMBIQUE

The opening of the Macaneta Bridge, which connects the Marracuene district and the town Macaneta in Mozambique by road, is expected to boost the development of the local tourism sector, with its white sand beaches and crystal clear water, according to the Mozambican press.

So far the only way to cross the Umbelúzi River was using small boats or barges, but although the river crossing took just 10 minutes waiting time for a place was three or four hours and the stopped closed at 6 pm every day.

The region currently has 17 resorts, high quality beaches for recreation and water sports, a great variety of flora and fauna and a population of about 5,000 people making a living from agriculture and fishing. Work on the bridge, which was built by the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), which is part of the Maputo ring road, began on 15 January 2015 and cost US\$15 million. The bridge is 300 metres long and 11 metres wide and accepts vehicles up to 50 tonnes. (06-12-2016)

STANDARD AND POOR'S MAINTIENT LA NOTE SOUVERAINE DU BURKINA FASO



Mine d'or de Semafo au Burkina Faso.

L'agence de notation reste positive sur la situation économique du pays après une élection présidentielle pacifique et en raison de la production minière d'or en forte hausse. Mais le PIB par habitant du Burkina reste faible et la situation sociale et sécuritaire préoccupante.

Standard and Poor's maintient la note souveraine du Burkina Faso à B-/B avec une perspective positive, selon un communiqué rendu public le 5 décembre. Pour l'agence de notation américaine, le pays évolue dans la bonne direction depuis l'élection pacifique à la présidence de la République de Roch Marc Christian Kaboré l'année dernière et grâce à l'exploitation croissante des mines d'or. Cette note reste cependant contrainte par la faiblesse du revenu par habitant et l'absence de flexibilité monétaire.

Alors que le pays connaît un retour au calme, deux ans après la fin de l'ère Baise Compaoré, au pouvoir pendant vingt-sept ans, S&P s'attend à ce que le nouveau gouvernement « reste engagé dans la conduite de réformes politiques et économiques afin d'améliorer le climat des affaires ». En octobre 2015, [l'agence de notation avait maintenu sa note de B-/B en dépit de la tentative de coup d'Etat du général Diendéré](#).

« Grâce aux élections pacifiques de l'an dernier et compte tenu de l'importance stratégique du Burkina Faso dans la région », S&P table sur un soutien accru des bailleurs de fonds ces prochaines années. Le Burkina Faso émet régulièrement des bons du Trésor et a également émis quelques obligations de moyen terme. Autre signe encourageant : adopté en mai dernier, [le Plan national de développement économique et social \(PNDES\) pour la période 2016-2020](#) visera notamment à moderniser l'administration mais aussi promouvoir les secteurs clé tels que l'agriculture et l'énergie.

L'or devant le coton

Sur la même période, entre 2016 et 2019, la croissance du PIB devrait se chiffrer à 6,4 % par an en moyenne et être portée en grande partie par [la hausse de la production minière d'or](#). Celle-ci est passé d'à peine de cinq tonnes par an environ en 2008 à plus de 35 tonnes l'année dernière grâce à l'entrée en service de nouvelles mines. De nouvelles mines d'or devraient également entrer en exploitation ces prochaines années et, ajoute Standard and Poor's, « le métal jaune a dépassé le coton comme principale source de recettes d'exportation ». En 2015, l'or représentait ainsi 63 % du total des exportations, contre 17 % pour le coton.

Cependant, si la croissance tendancielle du PIB réel par habitant se situe à 2,8 %, celui-ci restera d'environ 600 dollars en 2016, soit l'un des plus bas parmi tous les pays que note S&P. Par ailleurs, la situation sociale et sécuritaire reste préoccupante, rappelle l'agence de notation, comme le prouve [l'attaque revendiquée par des militants islamistes](#) qui a fait 30 victimes dans la capitale le 15 janvier dernier. [Le chômage est élevé, notamment parmi les jeunes, qui représentent la majorité des sans-emplois burkinabè](#).

Enfin, si l'appartenance du Burkina Faso à l'UEMOA le protège des chocs externes, elle constitue cependant un handicap, estime Standard and Poor's. L'arrimage du franc CFA à l'euro contribue à contenir l'inflation, avec toutefois des flambées temporaires de prix causées par les fluctuations des cours des matières premières et des variations de la production agricole liées aux conditions météorologiques. L'agence de notation estime toutefois que ce régime de parité fixe et l'appartenance à une union monétaire réduisent la flexibilité monétaire du Burkina Faso. (JA 06-12-2016)

EGYPT'S TRADE EXCHANGE WITH SLOVENIA RECORDS €161 MILLION

Egypt's trade exchange with Slovenia grew by 12 percent in 2015 to record around €161 million, Egypt's Trade Minister Tarek Qabil stated Tuesday.

Egypt-Slovenia trade exchange soared by 344 percent since signing the EU-Egypt Association Agreement in 2004, the minister noted, adding that this increase reflects the deep trade ties between Egypt and Slovenia.

Qabil made these remarks during his speech at the Egyptian-Slovenian business forum held on Tuesday in Cairo with the attendance of Slovenian President Borut Pahor, Slovenian Infrastructure Minister, Peter Gašperšič, members of the Slovenian mission visiting Egypt, in addition to representatives of Egyptian

and Slovenian business societies.

Minister Qabil said that Egypt's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reflects the global society's trust in decisions made by Egypt's government towards economic reforms. (APA 06-12-2016)

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION: MOROCCO LAUNCHES NATIONAL PLAN AND SECTORIAL PLANS ON BUILDING AND FOOD



Morocco has finalised its National Framework Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production and two sectorial plans on Sustainable Building and Sustainable Food, with the support of the EU-funded SwitchMed programme.

The [National Framework Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production](#) gives a new impetus to the dynamics introduced by the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) in order to consolidate a development pattern that is capable of meeting the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

The implementation of the sectorial [Plan on Sustainable Building](#) seeks to promote a global ecodesign approach to buildings in Morocco and the progressive development of a public and private park of sustainable buildings.

The [Plan on Sustainable Food](#) aims at strengthening Moroccan agricultural policy and the setting up of instruments and mechanisms for the development of a sustainable agriculture and the awareness of the consumers for purchasing more environmentally friendly food.

The **SwitchMed sustainable consumption and production programme** aims to promote a switch by the Mediterranean economies towards sustainable consumption and production patterns and green economy, including low-emission development, through demonstration and dissemination of methods that improve resource and energy efficiency. It also seeks to minimise the environmental impacts associated with the life cycle of products and services and, where possible, to promote renewable energy. (Switch Med 06-12-2016)

DREDGING IN THE PORT OF MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE, ALLOWS IT TO RECEIVE LARGER SHIPS

The dredging of the access channel to the port of Maputo has allowed the port to receive a large ship, the MV Mineral Belgium, which is 289 metres long and 45 metres wide, according to a statement from the Maputo Port Development Company (MPDC).

The statement said the ship, carrying 90,000 tonnes of ferro-chrome and chrome, left the port of Maputo on Thursday, which was only possible because of the deepening of the access channel from 11 metres to 14.2 metres at high tide.

Dredging of the Maputo port channel began in May this year and is scheduled for completion in January 2017. It is being carried out by Jan de Nul Dredging Middle East FZE, an international company that was awarded the project and is using three dredgers to complete it.

“The entire loading operation was based on mobile cranes, which were part of the investments made by MPDC in equipment that have increased productivity and also improved the competitiveness of the port, as the navigation lines can charter lower cost ships without cranes” the statement said.

The statement said that, along with dredging the channel, the port of Maputo has recently started providing bunkering services to all vessels berthed or in the anchorage zone. The service is offered based an agreement between the MPDC and Petromoc Bunkering and is part of a number of schemes to improve the services offered by the port, making it more competitive in regional and international markets.

The port of Maputo was handed over under concession by the government of Mozambique to MPDC in 2003 but gained new momentum in 2008 when South African group Grindrod and DP World, of the United Arab Emirates, acquired a majority stake in Portus Indico, the largest shareholder (51%) and sponsor of the project. (06-12-2016)

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: EU REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE



On the eve of Human Rights Day (10 December), EU High Representative Federica Mogherini stressed on the need to redouble efforts to defend the rights of all people, reaffirming that the EU stands up for human rights worldwide, and will commit its full support to every individual who does the same. She called upon people to stand up for human rights.

Mogherini underlined that in 2016, the EU provided financial support through the EIDHR Emergency Fund to more than 250 human rights defenders and their families who are at risk because of their daily work, assuring that the EU *“will continue to play a leading role in promoting a rules-based global order, with respect for human rights at its core.”*

“In the coming year, the EU will be pursuing the follow up to the new Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy, launched in June 2016, in which we pledged to foster respect for human rights both within and outside the EU. This includes ensuring the highest level of human rights protection for migrants and refugees in all EU action on migration and development,” she said, adding: *“We will also be assessing progress on our ambitious Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for 2015-2019. Equally, we will renew our commitment to combatting torture and ill-treatment and protecting the rights of the child by reviewing our EU guidelines and further strengthening the impact of our policies on these issues.”* (EC 09-12-2016)

[Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015 - 2019](#)

ZIMBABWE MINISTER UNVEILS US\$4.1 BILLION BUDGET FOR 2017

Zimbabwe's Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa on Thursday announced a US\$4.1 billion national budget for 2017 that pins the country's economic recovery prospects on robust growth in agriculture and mining.

Presenting the 2017 budget before parliament, Chinamasa said total revenue for 2017 is projected to be US\$3.7 billion, leaving a budget deficit of US\$400 million.

The minister revealed that the government wage bill is expected to chew up US\$3 billion or about 75 percent of the total budget for 2017.

He said the economy was expected to grow by 1.7 percent in 2017, up from a projected 0.6 percent this year.

The anticipated upswing in economic growth is expected to be underpinned by projected strong performances by the mining and agriculture sectors, which are both seen expanding by 0.2 percent and 12 percent next year, respectively.

The minister noted that Zimbabwe's economic recovery process requires the conclusion of current efforts to restore cordial relations with international donors, good rains during the current 2016/17 agricultural season and tranquillity ahead of general elections set for 2018.

Chinamasa also revealed that annualised inflation was projected end 2017 pegged at 1.1 percent, up from a forecast minus 1.5 percent this year.

The government debt stock stood at US\$11.2 billion on 31 October 2016, which was 79 percent of Gross Domestic Product. (APA 08-12-2016)

NIGERIA: DANGOTE, MOROCCAN GROUP SIGN MOU ON FERTILISERS PRODUCTION

The Nigeria's agricultural sector has received a major boost as the Dangote Group and the OCP Group of Morocco signed an agreement to boost fertiliser production and business in the country.

The OCP Group is a global leader in phosphate and phosphate derivatives markets.

The partnership is expected to lead to the creation of an integrated African platform and a global leader in fertiliser production,

A statement from the Dangote Group announced this on Sunday in Abuja.

It said that the collaboration between the two African conglomerates would help the Dangote mix the mass deposit of phosphate in Morocco with the gas potential in Nigeria to produce fertiliser for the development of the agriculture sub-sector in Africa.

President of the Dangote Group and Africa's richest man, Mr. Aliko Dangote, said the agreement would support Nigeria's effort to attain food security, create jobs and address rural urban drift.

Both the OCP of Morocco and Dangote, during the meeting, indicated that more than two million tonnes of customised fertiliser would be imported from Morocco in the next three years.

Dangote said out of the 2.8 billion dollars total investment, 2.5 million dollars had already been committed to the project by the Group.

It will ensure a growth from 3.6MT fertiliser capacity in 2018, to 4.6MT in 2020.

He said by the time it would start operation in December 2017, the three million tons capacity Urea Plant would be the biggest in Africa, and as well the second largest in the world.

According to him, the effort will bolster Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings, improve government revenue, create jobs, increase yield per hectare and further grow the GDP in the agriculture sub sector.

"The Joint Venture shall become the powerhouse of fertilisers to make Africa self sufficient in fertilisers," he added.

Gov. Abubakar Badaru of Jigawa, who witnessed the ceremony, said the deal would enable fertiliser to be sold to farmers in Nigeria at cheaper rates.

According to the Governor, 250,000 fresh jobs will be generated from the agreement.

President Muhammadu Buhari and the Moroccan King Mohammed have also signed other bilateral agreements, including cooperation in strengthening the local blending capabilities and Agriculture Eco-System Agreement.

The OCP Group is a global leader in phosphate and phosphate derivatives markets.

It is the world's largest exporter of phosphate rock and phosphoric acid, as well as one of the world's largest producers of fertiliser.

The Dangote Group is one of Africa's most diversified conglomerates and the leading cement producer founded by the Africa's richest person, Aliko Dangote.

It is currently building the largest refinery, petrochemical and fertiliser complex in Africa with the capacity to refine 650,000 barrel a day. (Vanguard 02-12-2016)

ZIMBABWE FORECASTS 2.5 MILLION TOURIST ARRIVALS THIS YEAR, SAYS MUGABE

President Robert Mugabe says Zimbabwe received 902,345 tourists during the first half of 2016 and arrivals for the year are projected to reach 2.5 million.

The veteran Zimbabwean leader, 92, said in a State of the Nation Address in parliament on Tuesday that the high number of tourists during the period January-June 2016 was driven by the tranquillity in the country as well as increased arrivals from Asia and the United States.

By year-end, it is forecast that we would have received 2.5 million arrivals, Mugabe said.

A total of about two million tourists visited Zimbabwe in 2015.

Mugabe however revealed that the average room occupancy rate was expected to rise marginally to 42 percent in 2016 from 41 percent last year.

Zimbabwe's tourism sector has struggled to emerge from the ashes of a more than decade-long economic and political crisis triggered by Mugabe's controversial land reform programme that started in 2000 and saw more than 4,000 white commercial farmers chased off their properties.

The performance sector has also been weighed down by economic problems during the past 16 years such as shortages of food and a liquid crunch. (APA 06-12-2016)

ANGOLA EXPORTS FISH MEAL TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Angolan companies exported over 19,400 tonnes of fish meal to neighbouring countries since the beginning of the year, said Monday in Luanda, the minister of Fisheries, Victoria de Barros Neto. The minister said that fish meal exports had raised US\$7.7 million and added that the sale abroad of 3,500 tonnes of crustaceans brought in 22.5 million euros of income for exporting companies, according to Angolan news agency Angop.

“In addition to these two products, which continue to be the main fishery products for export, Angola also exported salt, dried and frozen fish,” the minister said during the 2nd Advisory Board of the Ministry of Fisheries, held on Monday, in Luanda.

Barros Neto said that in terms of structural public investment construction work on the Tômbua fishing terminal and the Cefopesca fishing school in Luanda was ongoing and noted the inauguration of the second phase of a larvae production centre in the province of Kwanza Norte, and the support centre for artisanal fishing on the island of Luanda, which will support fishermen and fishmongers.

The II Advisory Council of the Ministry of Fisheries, held under the motto “Fisheries and aquaculture – an alternative for the diversification of the economy,” was intended to take stock of the activities of the sector in 2016 and outline the agenda for 2017. (06-12-2016)

DANGOTE WANTS USE OF CONCRETE IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION ADOPTED



Africa’s richest man and Chief executive of [Dangote Group](#) Aliko Dangote has called upon all the construction companies and governments to promote the use of concrete in Road construction projects across Africa.

Dangote is currently constructing a 42.5km Obajana-Kabba Road in Kogi State being carried out by Dangote Group using the concrete in road construction.

He added that the project has already commenced and it will mark the second longest concrete road construction in Nigeria.

The project was awarded to Dangote group by the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing which signed the road project on November 22.

The project is expected to take about 24-months for it to be completed, meaning that by December 2018, the road will be fully ready for use.

It would be recalled that as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility(CRS), the Dangote Group had commissioned the 26 km Itori-Ibese Concrete Road in June this year.

The Obajana-Kabba concrete road to be built by AG Dangote Construction Company will cost the Dangote Group N11.5billion but the job was awarded to the Group on tax concession basis at N5.24billion.

The difference of N6.2 billion is part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the Dangote Group.

At the moment, Nigeria produces more cement than any other country in Africa with over 40 million metric tonnes of cement per annum, representing a massive potential to change the nation's infrastructure story, taking advantage of the abundant availability of the essential building material.

Dangote has been in the fore front to ensure that the Concrete technology is used in Africa's construction industry. (Construction Review 05-12-2016)

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