

# MEMORANDUM

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## **12 YEARS OF PUBLICATION**

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## MALGRE LES BONNES PERFORMANCES DU MAROC, LE FMI PRONE UNE CROISSANCE PLUS RAPIDE ET PLUS INCLUSIVE



Des manifestants dans le nord du Maroc en 2017

Dans son récent rapport au titre de l'article IV de ses statuts, le Fonds monétaire international souligne la bonne performance macroéconomique du Maroc, mais défend des réformes qui visent à rendre la croissance plus élevée et plus inclusive afin de réduire les tensions sociales.

Publié le 12 mars, le dernier rapport du FMI sur le Maroc s'inscrit dans le cadre de l'article IV des statuts de l'organisation qui stipulent que le Fonds « exerce une ferme surveillance sur les politiques de change des États membres et adopte des principes spécifiques pour guider les États membres en ce qui concerne ces politiques ». Au terme des consultations qui se sont achevées en décembre 2017, le FMI estime ainsi que la croissance marocaine a rebondi en 2017, avec une hausse de l'activité estimée à 4,4 %, principalement tirée par une augmentation de la production agricole.

Du côté de la demande, la croissance a principalement été soutenue par la consommation privée, tandis que l'investissement privé se redresse progressivement après une baisse ces dernières années (de 35,4 % à 27,4 % du PIB entre 2008 et 2016). Malgré une économie dynamique, [le chômage a augmenté à 10,6 % au troisième trimestre 2017, contre 10,4 % un an auparavant](#), et reste élevé parmi les jeunes (29,3 %), en particulier en zone urbaine (45,2 %).

Le déficit public s'est réduit, selon les estimations du Fonds, à 3,5 % du PIB en 2017 (contre 4,1 % en 2016). Cela s'explique principalement par une bonne performance des recettes publiques et des efforts continus pour contenir les dépenses courantes, tandis que les dépenses d'investissement ont décéléré. La dette publique est estimée à 64,4 % du PIB, soit un niveau « soutenable » pour le FMI.

Le policy mix actuel [...] est approprié, estime le FMI

« Le policy mix actuel, qui combine une consolidation budgétaire graduelle et une politique monétaire accommodante, est approprié », note le FMI. L'inflation a continué à chuter, estimée à 0,6 % en 2017, reflétant de la baisse des prix alimentaires. En raison de la baisse du taux directeur de Bank Al-Maghrib à 2,25 % en mars 2016, les taux débiteurs ont chuté et la croissance du crédit a augmenté à 4,8 % en novembre 2017 par rapport à novembre 2016, tiré par les prêts pour investissement aux entreprises publiques et les emprunts des ménages (immobilier et consommation).

Le déficit du compte courant a chuté à 3,8 % selon les estimations du FMI, contre 4,4 % en 2016. Cette amélioration est la forte croissance des exportations (7,2 %), liée à la bonne performance des exportations de phosphates et de produits agricoles, ainsi qu'à la reprise économique en Europe. Les importations n'ont augmenté qu'au rythme de 5,6 %, avec une hausse des importations de matière premières et des prix énergétiques plus élevés. Les recettes touristiques et les transferts des migrants sont restés élevés, et les flux nets d'IDE ont augmenté modérément à 1,9 % du PIB.

### ***L'expansion des banques marocaines en Afrique est porteur de risque***

Dans le domaine bancaire, le taux de prêts non-performants reste élevé à 7,7 % (octobre 2017), mais les niveaux de provisions sont confortables (70 %), et augmentent. Selon le FMI, « l'expansion continue des banques marocaines en Afrique (plus récemment en Afrique) assure une diversification et des opportunités économiques mais est aussi un canal de transmission du risque », les pays hôtes étant plus risqués et moins régulés.

Pour le Fonds monétaire international, « le gouvernement nommé en avril 2017 s'est engagé à mettre en place de bonnes politiques et les réformes ont repris », après une longue pause suite aux élections d'octobre 2016. Une priorité accrue est donnée à la réduction des inégalités et à l'augmentation de l'accès aux services publics.

Les tensions sociales se sont accrues en 2017, en particulier dans la région du Rif. Bien que le gouvernement ait pris des mesures, notamment en matière de programmes sociaux et de projets d'investissements, « s'attaquer aux sources de mécontentement social nécessitera probablement du temps ».

### ***Augmenter la croissance et la rendre plus inclusive***

En plus de mesures destinées à préserver la soutenabilité budgétaire et de renforcer le système financier, le Fonds recommande des réformes qui permettraient [d'augmenter la croissance et de la rendre plus inclusive](#). L'institution met ainsi en cause la faible participation au marché du travail. « Le taux de participation à la population active était 46,4 % en 2016, contre 51,3 % en 2006. La participation des femmes à la population active est très faible à 23,6 %, reflétant d'une combinaison d'un faible niveau d'éducation, de l'informalité et des normes sociales » note le Fonds.

Le FMI suggère notamment que « mettre en place des réformes structurelles qui se renforcent mutuellement dans l'éducation, le marché du travail et l'environnement des affaires pourrait augmenter significativement la croissance potentielle sur le moyen à long terme, tandis que le coût à court terme de ces réformes, y compris en termes de croissance et d'emploi, est limité ».

En effet, « des facteurs intentionnels peuvent peser sur le mouvement efficace des emplois et la création d'emplois dans les secteurs à forte productivité, y compris la gouvernance, la réglementation du travail, les restrictions sur le commerce et l'ouverture, la qualité de l'éducation, l'infrastructure et l'accès à la finance » note le Fonds. Enfin, « un meilleur ciblage des programmes sociaux est clef pour réduire davantage la pauvreté et les inégalités et limiter le risque de mécontentement social ». (JA 19-03-2018)

## **GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA FACILITATES FOREIGN INVESTMENT**

The proposal to revise the Private Investment Law that the Angolan government plans to submit to parliament removes the requirement for national partners to hold a stake of at least 35% in the share capital of the companies, a measure intended to improve the attraction of foreign direct investment, according to the document.

“It should be noted that the draft of the new law eliminates the mandatory limits of the participation of nationals in the capital stock stipulated in article 9 of the current law, because it is intended to highlight the freedom of shareholders to decide on the capital structure of their enterprises,” the Angolan government document said, quoted by Portuguese state news agency Lusa.

Article 9 of the Private Investment Law, which has been in force since 2015, expressly states that foreign investment in Angola “is only permitted in the case of partnership with Angolan citizens, public capital companies or Angolan companies, which hold at least 35% of the share capital and participate effectively in the management reflected in the shareholders’ agreement.”

The guarantee by the State of “non-public interference in the management of private companies” and “non-cancellation of licenses without administrative or judicial process” is also assumed.

With regard to the transfer of profits and dividends, article 16 of the draft law grants foreign investors “the right to transfer abroad” dividends or distributed profits, the proceeds of the liquidation of its investments, capital gains, the proceeds of indemnities and royalties, or other income from remuneration of indirect investments related to technology transfer.

The proposal keeps in place the regime for granting tax benefits to investors, such as reducing tax payments for up to 10 years, depending on the amount of investment, sectors of activity and development zones, but provides, as does the current law, for a minimum investment, in this case of US\$1 million. (13-03-2018)

## COTE D'IVOIRE : POURQUOI LE CAFE EST-IL BLOQUE ?



Triewues de café dans l'unité de torrification de Chocô Ivoire à San Pédro, Côte d'Ivoire.

Manque de bateaux et de magasins de stockage, difficultés administratives... À ces explications avancées par le Conseil café-cacao pour justifier les longues files de camions chargés de café devant le port d'Abidjan, les professionnels du secteur en ajoutent d'autres.

Alors que les opérations d'exportation de café sont bloquées depuis plus d'un mois dans le port ivoirien d'Abidjan, la direction du Conseil café-cacao (CCC) a changé son fusil d'épaule. Son président, [Yves Koné](#), avait en effet indiqué à l'AFP, le vendredi 9 mars, que [la situation était due à un « manque de bateaux »](#).

Désormais, l'organe de gestion de la filière attribue ce phénomène inhabituel à un manque de magasins de stockage, et aux difficultés administratives que le gendarme de la filière ne détaille pas, se bornant à indiquer qu'il n'y a pas de raison de s'inquiéter car tous les contrats sont couverts.

Les explications du CCC sont certes valables, mais bien insuffisantes, estiment des sources proches des acheteurs. Ces derniers avancent une autre piste, un système de caution – à hauteur de 120 % des cargaisons – que vient de mettre en place l'Algérie sur les bateaux qui transitent par ces eaux, dans le cadre de sa lutte contre le blanchiment d'argent. Or, 75 % du café ivoirien transite par l'Algérie. « Une délégation du CCC doit prochainement se rendre en Algérie pour trouver une solution », nous confient nos sources.

### Bonnes récoltes

Enfin, une dernière explication pourrait venir des bonnes récoltes de cette année. « À cause des cours internationaux, très bas, le CCC a vendu juste une partie de la récolte. Aujourd'hui, on se retrouve sur le port d'Abidjan avec beaucoup de stocks, mais les exportateurs n'ont pas de contrats pour acheter », confie un connaisseur du dossier.

Après avoir produit [plus de 59 000 tonnes de café en 2017](#) – un chiffre en baisse de plus de 50 % par rapport à l'année 2016 (103 909 tonnes) -, la Côte d'Ivoire compte sur une production de plus de 110 000 tonnes en 2018.

La baisse de la récolte, la saison précédente, était due au phénomène de réchauffement climatique et à la résurgence de la contrebande, réalisée au niveau national, vers les pays voisins de l'Ouest comme la Guinée et le Liberia, plus proches des principales zones de production. La Côte d'Ivoire a élaboré un ambitieux [programme de relance de la caféiculture](#) estimé à 13,8 millions de dollars, avec pour objectif en 2022 d'atteindre un volume de 200 000 tonnes, encore loin des 300 000 tonnes annuelles obtenues au cours des années 1980.(JA 15-03-2018)

## CHINA FINANCES ROAD REPAIR IN SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Road repair and drainage work have started in São Tomé and Príncipe under the US\$146 million in funding opened by China for the West African archipelago, at a ceremony attended by the Chinese ambassador, Wang Wei and the São Tomé prime minister, Patrice Trovoada.

The work, which will be carried out by Chinese company Top International within 12 months, consists of repairing a set of roads between the capital of São Tomé and the district of Mezochi, over a distance of more than 20 kilometres, including digging drainage ditches.

Trovoada announced in April 2017, following a visit to Beijing, that China had decided to grant a donation of US\$146 million to São Tomé and Príncipe and to pardon a debt of US\$28 million that the archipelago owed to the Chinese State.

The cooperation programme signed a little over a year ago with China covers economic, scientific, cultural and technical assistance as well as health and agriculture, with specific agreements on infrastructure, energy, increasing income in rural areas and malaria control. (13-03-2018)

## OPERATION SEDUCTION DU PATRONAT MAROCAIN A DESTINATION DE LA CEDEAO



Miriem Bensalah Chaqroun, la présidente de la CGEM

La CGEM, le syndicat patronal marocain, prévoit une série de rencontres avec ses homologues des principaux pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Objectif : défendre le dossier d'adhésion marocaine au groupement régional de la Cedeao.

Tandis qu'une deuxième étude d'impact de la demande d'adhésion marocaine à la Cedeao, devrait être lancée dès ce mois de mars, le patronat marocain s'apprête à lancer une vaste opération de charme destinée aux principales économies des pays de cette communauté économique. Selon des sources au sein de la Confédération générale des entreprises du Maroc (CGEM), une réunion est prévue prochainement avec la Fédération des organisations patronales de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Fopao) afin de sensibiliser au sujet du dossier marocain.

[Abdou Diop](#), président de la Commission Afrique et Sud-Sud de la CGEM prépare également des missions économiques à destination des quatre plus grands pays de la Cedeao, à savoir le Nigeria, la Sénégal, le Ghana et la Côte d'Ivoire.

### Étude d'impact

Pour rappel, la CGEM avait déjà rencontré, en août 2017, une délégation de la Cedeao, alors chargée d'examiner les implications de la demande d'adhésion marocaine sur les économies de ce groupe-intergouvernemental composé de 15 pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest.

[Une étude d'impact](#) qui avait été remise aux chefs d'États des pays membres lors du [52<sup>e</sup> sommet de l'organisation régionale](#), réuni le 16 décembre à Abuja. Ces derniers avaient décidé de mettre en place un comité composé des présidents togolais, ivoirien, ghanéen, guinéen et nigérien pour superviser une études plus approfondie sur les retombées d'une adhésion marocaine.(JA 08-03-2018)

## ANGOLA ISSUES MORE DEBT TO RESOLVE BAD DEBTS IN THE BANKING SECTOR

The Angolan government will issue 50 billion kwanzas (US\$233 million) in Treasury Bonds to finance Recredit, a state-owned company with “the specific objective of supporting the recovery of the national banking system, particularly public banks,” according to a presidential order.

This debt issue will have a maturity of 10 years and annual interest of 7.5%, according to the order signed by the President of the Republic, João Lourenço, authorising this issue of Treasury Bonds.

Recredit is negotiating the bad loans of five Angolan commercial banks, savings and loans, Banco Poupança e Crédito, Banco de Comércio e Indústria, Banco Angolano de Investimentos, Banco Keve and Banco de Negócios Internacional.

Figures released by Recredit showed that about 300 billion kwanzas (US\$3.177 billion) of the total non-performing loans had been resolved, three quarters of which or 225 billion kwanzas (US\$1.138 billion) expected to be resolved by 31 December.

The total value of the Angolan banking system under Recredit’s management was initially estimated at 500 billion kwanzas (about US\$2.528 billion), 200 billion kwanzas of which were settled by December last year. (13-03-2018)

## RDC : JOSEPH KABILA RESTE INFLEXIBLE SUR LE CODE MINIER, QUI SERA PROMULGUE « INCESSAMMENT »



La mine de cuivre Frontier à Sakania, à la frontière avec la Zambie, à l'extrême sud-est de la province minière du Katanga, en République démocratique du Congo.

Après avoir reçu les représentants des principales compagnies minières du pays, mercredi, Joseph Kabila a annoncé que le code minier sera promulgué « incessamment », avec la possibilité d'effectuer des changements à la marge via les textes d'applications.

La rencontre fut longue. Plus de sept heures de réunion. Joseph Kabila a reçu [les représentants de l'industrie minière mercredi 7 mars à leur demande](#), après avoir reporté une première rencontre, prévue la veille. « Le but de la demande était de clarifier certains aspects du nouveau Code minier récemment adopté par les deux Chambres du Parlement, qui devra être promulgué incessamment », selon un communiqué de la présidence, qui affirme que « leurs préoccupations seront prises en compte à travers un dialogue constructif ».

Le ministre des Mines [Martin Kabwelulu](#), des ajustements pourront avoir lieu au cas par cas, une fois que le nouveau code minier sera promulgué, grâce au règlement minier qui viendra régir son application. Le ministre a cependant souligné que ces aménagements ne pourront pas venir contrevenir aux dispositions inscrites dans le texte de loi.

Les représentants des principales compagnies intervenant dans le pays ont participé à cette réunion : Mark Bristow (Rangold Resources), Kalidas Madhavpeddi (CMOC International), Ivan Glasenberg

(Glencore), Srinivasan Venkatakrishnan (Anglo Gold Ashanti), Lars-Eric Johansson (Ivanohe Mines), Qixue Fang (Gold Mountain International / Zijin Mining Group) et Mark Davis (MGG Limited).

### **Accroître les recettes publiques**

L'objectif affiché du gouvernement est d'accroître les recettes publiques issues des ressources minières du pays. Selon le directeur de cabinet de Joseph Kabila, cité par le communiqué de la présidence, « il est bien possible de faire passer les recettes budgétaires [...] provenant de l'exploitation minière de 800 millions actuellement à 2 milliards de dollars américains demain ».

Parmi [les changements introduits par le nouveau code minier](#) figurent notamment la hausse des royalties de 2 à 3,5 % du chiffre d'affaires sur les minerais « classiques » (tels que le cuivre ou l'or) et de 2 à 10 % sur les minerais « stratégiques », et en particulier le cobalt. Ces changements pourraient être applicable immédiatement, y compris aux entreprises déjà présentes dans le pays, selon certaines dispositions du texte.

Cette annonce intervient dans un contexte favorable pour le secteur minier au Congo, marqué à la fois par un redressement des prix internationaux et une hausse de la production.(JA 13-03-2018)

### **ANGOLA APPROVES CREATION OF REGULATORY COMPETITION AUTHORITY**

Angola will have a Regulatory Competition Authority, which will be charged with preventing and sanctioning actions of economic agents that do not comply with the rules and principles of competition under the proposed Competition Law, which will be discussed at the next plenary session of the Angolan parliament, state news agency Angop reported.

The Regulatory Competition Authority will promote and defend competition and establish priorities for dealing with the issues it is called upon to analyse, according to the draft bill.

The draft bill states that the Regulatory Competition Authority should exercise its powers to apply sanctions whenever competition rules are broken.

The draft Competition Law, unanimously approved on Friday by the Constitutional and Legal Affairs and Economy and Finance Committees of the National Assembly, intends to introduce for the first time a system to defend competition through a law that covers the principles and rules of sound competition, morality and ethics. (12-03-2018)

### **THREE COMPANIES INTERESTED IN RECOVERING MOZAMBICAN AGRO-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX**

Three companies have responded to the public tender launched by the Mozambican state stakeholding institute, Igepe in December 2017 to select a strategic partner to recover the Chókwè Agro-industrial Complex (CAIC), the Mozambican press reported.

The CAIC, which cost Mozambican taxpayers US\$60 million, financed by a loan from the Export Import Bank of China, “currently produces almost nothing, and is only a burden on the state coffers, which has to secure the wages of workers and the costs related to the maintenance of machinery.”

The Mediafax newspaper quoted Raimundo Matule, the managing director of Igepe, as saying that after the launch of the public tender, the Institute was contacted by several companies in January and February, and only three of them, whose identity was kept confidential, submitted proposals.

The three companies, Matule continued, are now in a second phase where they will have to submit technical and financial proposals, and this stage is expected to end on 23 March.

CAIC, located in Gaza province, southern Mozambique and inaugurated in 2015 by President Filipe Nyusi, has never been able to produce more than 12% of its installed capacity, and despite having the necessary machinery to process rice, tomato and cashew, it has never received enough raw materials from farmers to do so. (12-03-2018)

## **BP/KOSMOS CONSORTIUM SIGNS CONTRACTS FOR OIL PROSPECTING IN SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE**

The consortium of British companies BP Exploration Operating and US-based Kosmos Energy signed two oil block prospecting contracts with the São Tomé and Príncipe National Petroleum Agency (ANP-STP), the agency's director said in São Tomé on Friday.

Orlando Pontes said the consortium will pay a signing bonus of US\$5 million for each contract, with payment to be made within 30 days of signing the contracts.

Under the contracts, the BP group will become the operator of blocks 10 and 13, leaving the São Tomé and Príncipe state with a 15% stake in each of them.

These contracts are valid for 28 years, with the first eight being for seismic surveys and the remaining 20 for development and production.

Block 10 has an average depth of 2,500 metres and an area of 6,839.6 square kilometres, while block 13 has an average depth of 3,000 metres and covers an area of 6,776.9 square kilometres.

In addition to the exclusive economic exploration zone, São Tomé and Príncipe also has another joint operation with Nigeria, under a treaty that grants 60% of revenues to the Nigerian state and 40% to the archipelago. (12-03-2018)

## **MUSTANG RESOURCES TRANSFERS SALE OF MOZAMBICAN RUBIES FROM MAURITIUS TO THAILAND**

Mustang Resources has decided to close its office in Mauritius for the sale of Mozambican rubies and open one in Chanthaburi, Thailand, under a new strategy for the promotion and sale of the precious stones, the Australian company said in a recent statement.

The office in Mauritius was intended to organise large-scale auctions but, according to the statement, the company's current level of production meant this no longer made sense, and the office in Thailand has lower costs and is a better fit for the company's project for Mozambique.

This decision comes after a very disappointing ruby auction last November, which resulted in the sale of stones worth just US\$713,000 when the company expected to raise over US\$7 million.

The company also reported that the inventory of 333,184 carats stored in both Mauritius and Mozambique has been transferred to Chanthaburi, the "ruby capital of the world," where it will be processed for sale under the new permanent marketing strategy.

The Montepuez Ruby project in the Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado consists of four licenses covering 19,300 hectares adjacent to the largest ruby deposit in the world, operated by London-based Gemfields.

The company also has a controlling stake in two diamond exploration licenses along the Save River in central Mozambique, downstream of the Murowa and Marange diamond fields in Zimbabwe.



Alongside this, Mustang Resources holds the exploration rights on graphite near large deposits discovered by Syrah Resources and Triton Minerals. (09-03-2018)

## **WORK AT THE MOZAMBIKAN PORT OF MAPUTO WILL INCREASE CARGO HANDLING CAPACITY**

The cargo handled at the port of Maputo will increase by 1.5 million tons per year from December 2019, when work that is now underway to refurbish and modernise four docks is complete.

The Mozambican capital's port can handle 25 million tons of cargo per year, and in their current condition docks 7, 8 and 9 handle 1.8 million tons per year.

Dock 6 is virtually inoperative, serving only to accommodate vessels in need of technical assistance.

The rehabilitation work was awarded to Portuguese construction company Mota-Engil by the port's concession holder the Maputo Port Development Company (MPDC) and will cost US\$64 million.

Paulo Mata, the project manager, said that the work on dock number 9 will be the first to be completed, in February 2019.

The project also involved dredging, with a view to increasing the depth of the dock from 12 to 15 metres, reinforcing the dock's piers, as well as demolishing a number of warehouses on that dock and the others covered by the project.

The work along the 536 metre length of docks 6, 7 and 8, will continue until December including increasing their depth from 12 to 16 metres, installing new stakes and improving the pavement.

At the end of 2017, the general dredging of the port's access channel was completed, which allowed a 22%

increase in the volume of cargo handled, reaching 18.2 million tons in 2017 compared to 14.9 million tons in 2016. (20-03-2018)

## **SOUTH AFRICA ON TENTERHOOKS AS MOODY'S PREPARES TO ISSUE A REPRIEVE OR DROP THE AXE**

South Africans will know by midnight on Friday night whether the country has entered the downward spiral of an across-the-board junk rating of government debt, or won another reprieve.

If Moody's joins Fitch and S&P Global Ratings in downgrading SA's rand-denominated government bonds as junk, one outcome will be SA's removal from the Citi world government bond index — leading to a heavy outflow from the bond market as many fund managers will be obliged to put their money elsewhere.

That outflow could amount to as much as R100bn.

Moody's put SA on review in November.

In SA's favour is a positive reception of February's budget, by all three of the main rating agencies — something recently reappointed Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene highlighted during a recent roadshow to convince international investors of the government's plans to get SA back on track.

Also in the plus column is a surprisingly strong set of economic growth data for the fourth quarter of 2017 — with growth for the year coming in at 1.3% against the Treasury's forecast 1%.

Moves under President Cyril Ramaphosa to rein in corruption and state capture — including the suspension of Tom Moyane as commissioner of the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and the National Prosecuting Authority's (NPA's) decision to reinstate corruption charges against Jacob Zuma

that date back to before he became president — are also signs that things are moving in a positive direction.

However, there is nervousness over the government's commitment to expropriate land without compensation to speed up the glacial pace of land reform.

BMI Research, a unit of Fitch, has also expressed reservations about how divisions within the ANC will affect Ramaphosa's ability to effect policy change.

And the current account deficit, which is also watched closely by rating agencies, widened more than expected in the fourth quarter of 2017 — to 2.9% of gross domestic product (GDP) from 2.1% the previous quarter, despite the pickup in growth.

Reuters noted in a recent analysis that Moody's hardly ever spares a country on review twice — and SA was given a reprieve in December.

But it also pointed out that SA would still belong to the GBI-EM index, which could help counteract some of the forced selling by trackers of the Citi fund.

Analysts have mostly been optimistic, in the run-up to the decision, that SA has done enough to stave off a downgrade.

FNB chief economist Mamello Matikinca said if Moody's had not downgraded in December, after October's medium-term budget policy statement and before the ANC elective conference, "what justification would they have now given how much the political environment and confidence levels have improved?"

Wichard Cilliers, head of dealing and a director at TreasuryOne, said: "For now we are of the opinion that SA has done enough not to be downgraded and bought itself a little extra time.

"We do think that Moody's will emphasise the need to keep spending under control and also for better management at SOEs [state-owned enterprises]. We also feel that the market has priced most of this in at the moment, but we can see the rand test better levels on the back of this (BD 23-03-2018)

## **RESSANO GARCIA BORDER BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE AND SOUTH AFRICA OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY**

The Ressano Garcia border, between Mozambique and South Africa, will be open 24 hours a day, starting next April.

South Africa's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, gave a joint press conference with her Mozambican counterpart, José Pacheco, after talks between the two countries' governments during a visit by President Cyril Ramaphosa to Mozambique

"The Mozambican government has requested that by April the Libombos border in Ressano-Garcia be operational 24 hours a day and we promise that this will be done," said Sisulu.

The South African foreign minister also said that one of the issues discussed, which will be resolved shortly, was the facilitation of visas for Mozambicans living in South Africa.

According to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique, José Pacheco, interest in increasing bilateral cooperation in the economic area was also made clear.

Ramaphosa was in Mozambique after visiting Angola. (20-03-2018)

## **ZIMBABWE: MNANGAGWA PARDONS 3,000 TO RELIEVE PRESSURE IN ZIMBABWE'S OVER-CROWDED PRISONS**

President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was saved from the hangman's noose as a teenager, has effectively commuted some death-row inmates' sentences to life, as part of a presidential pardon of 3,000 prisoners in over-crowded Zimbabwean prisons.

In January, there were 99 death-row inmates in Zimbabwe, with one of them being a woman — Yvonne Musarurwa, an MDC-T activist jailed for killing a police officer in 2013 before that year's general elections.

As part of the clemency, all female inmates will be released and Musarurwa will be a beneficiary.

"Commutation of the death sentence to life imprisonment is hereby granted to all prisoners who have been on death row for 10 years and above," he said. Zimbabwe last carried out an execution in 2005.

Last year, former president Robert Mugabe revealed that his cabinet was divided on the issue. "We have different views on this matter, even in our cabinet, and even among the three of us: myself I want them killed while (then vice-president Emmerson) Mnangagwa wants leniency. (Vice-president Phelekezela) Mphoko hasn't divulged his thoughts on this matter," Mugabe said, before warning that he would resume executions.

Part of the reason why there have been no executions for 18 years is that the previous hangman retired in 2006. In a country with high unemployment, there has been interest from both men and women for the "hangman's" job, but no one has been hired yet.

Mnangagwa himself was saved from the hangman's noose at the age of 17 by a Catholic priest, Father Emmanuel Ribeiro, during the colonial era, for bombing a railway line in Masvingo in 1962.

His former boss, Mugabe, in a media interview last week, referred to how he also helped save Mnangagwa from the gallows, implying that by taking power through military assistance, Mnangagwa was not being grateful.(BD 23-03-2018)

## **PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN FUND FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCING**

The Portuguese-speaking countries are very interested in infrastructure and development financing, so it is therefore necessary to think of an alternative instrument to the current China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Cooperation and Development Fund, which has other characteristics, such as longer maturities, according to the Deputy Secretary-General of Forum Macau.

Rodrigo Brum, in an interview with the weekly *Plataforma*, on the occasion of the 15 years of the Macau Forum, considered that there is a lack of knowledge of the characteristics of the Development Cooperation Fund between China and the Portuguese- of its operating mechanisms.

"The Cooperation and Development Fund is a venture capital instrument – pure and simple venture capital – with internationally recognised characteristics: capital inflow, with a minority stake, with a five, six or seven year exit plan, with return on invested capital and a pre-established rate of return," Brum said.

According to the Deputy Secretary-General of Forum Macau, "it is a financing instrument for companies with great dynamism and high profit forecast and in a short time. Even if there is an improvement in its operation, it should be used as such by dynamic projects in some of the countries with the strongest economies," he said.

Brum also said that it is expected that "from this year there will be missions of Forum Macau to all eight Portuguese-speaking countries, preventing the current situation in which there are countries that have not been visited for four or even five years. It is therefore intended to strengthen the link with each and every country by improving the knowledge of these forum mechanisms and opportunities in the Chinese market in these countries."

Referring to the fact that not all countries are permanently represented at Forum Macau, the Deputy Secretary-General said that what is really at stake is understanding the advantages that a platform of common interests of Portuguese-speaking countries can have in economic and trade terms.

“These eight Portuguese-speaking countries are meeting in several multilateral organisations, but no other organisation has these objectives focused on the development of their economies, the business activity of their companies, investments and the increase of trade between them. And along with this, the forum is precisely located in the main twenty-first century economy, China, which has an active presence in the Forum and its activities.”

Brum said in an interview with the Macau weekly that the platform provided by Forum Macau should not be overlooked, “either for a large group of Brazilian small and medium enterprises that can benefit from the advantages of approaching via Macau, to the increasingly structured Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Great Bay Area, or even for business development with the remaining Forum partners.”(19-03-2018)

## **BURKINA FASO: WORLD’S LARGEST HYBRID SOLAR PLANT SWITCHES ON**

The grand opening of the world’s largest hybrid solar/thermal plant, was held earlier this month in Northern Burkina Faso. The new 15 MWp photovoltaic (“PV”) power plant will supply [IAMGOLD Essakane SA](#) with competitive and carbon-free electricity.

The solar power plant has close to 130,000 photovoltaic panels. The 15MWp plant (“Essakane Solar”) will contribute to the existing 57 MW heavy fuel oil (“HFO”) power plant. This will create the largest hybrid PVHFO plant in the world as well as one of the largest solar facilities in sub-Saharan Africa.

The construction of this solar plant, under the management of Wärtsilä, began 10 months ago. The IAMGOLD Essakane S.A. gold mine is one of the largest privately-held companies in the country, producing 389,000 ounces of gold.

The mine is in a very isolated location. As a result, it is currently off-grid and relies solely on HFO. Therefore, IAMGOLD Essakane S.A. put forward a progressive sustainability agenda and moved forward with the project sponsor, Total Eren, a global renewable energy independent power producer (IPP), and AEMP, a developer and independent power producer, to add solar capacity to its existing power system.

### **Reduced fuel consumption**

The 15 MWp solar project will in a great way reduce the mine’s fuel consumption. This is by approximately 6m litres per year and reduce its annual CO2 emissions by nearly 18,500 tons. Moreover, Essakane Solar has engaged procedures to register carbon credits generated by the project at the United Nations program.

According to Stephen Letwin, the President and CEO of IAMGOLD Corporation, the transition to generating more energy from renewable sources has been central to IAMGOLD’s new energy strategy for several years now.

Furthermore, Fabienne Demol, Executive Vice-President; Global Head of Business Development of Total Eren, said that the ceremony sets a long-lasting footprint for Total Eren in Burkina Faso and confirms ability to collaborate, together with AEMP, with mining companies and address their energy needs.

According to the co-founder of AEMP, Richard Duffy, the inauguration of the Essakane Solar Plant confirms the contribution renewable energy can make to support the competitiveness of the mining sector in Burkina Faso and elsewhere in Africa.

The government of Burkina Faso has been offering full support; making this project viable and bodes well for similar future projects.(CRO 23-03-2018)

## ANGOLA DOES NOT REQUIRE FINANCIAL AID, IMF OFFICIAL SAYS

The increase in the price of oil on the international market means that Angola does not need to request a financial aid programme from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the director of the Angola department of the international financial institution said on Friday in Luanda.

Ricardo Velloso, who led an IMF mission to assess Angola's economic performance in 2017, admitted that there was no need for a financial aid programme from the institution, given the rise in the price of oil, which has increased the flow of revenues to the Angolan state coffers.

"We have not received any request for financial support from the authorities. I think, given the international scenario of higher oil prices, there is no need for IMF funding for Angola," explained Velloso.

The economist called for downsizing the state business sector, reducing the burden on the National Treasury and increasing economic efficiency by closing insolvent state-owned companies and restructuring or privatising those that are inefficient but economically viable.

The restructuring of Sonangol, he pointed out, should be done to make it "more rational, more efficient and focused on its core activities."

The International Monetary Fund mission held consultations in Angola from 1 to 15 March and concluded that the Angolan economy "is experiencing a slight economic recovery," estimating growth of 2.2% this year and average rates of expansion 5.00% over the medium term. (19-03-2018)

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