

# MEMORANDUM

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**EXTRA WEEKEND EDITION**  
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## EUROPEAN COMMISSION AT THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA IN JORDAN

EU High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini**, Commissioner **Stylianides** and Commissioner **Bulg** will participate in the [World Economic Forum](#) on the Middle East and North Africa in Jordan on 19-21 May. This forum will bring together over 1,000 public, business and civil society leaders from over 50 countries to discuss common responses to economic, geopolitical and humanitarian challenges in the region, focusing on public-private cooperation, innovation and business development. Focus will also be placed on providing support to countries in the region in managing the impact of the conflict in Syria and working towards regional peace and stability. The HR/VP **Mogherini** will notably participate in the sessions 'Rebuilding for Peace' and the 'Future of Europe' and will discuss relations between the EU and Middle East in a session on 'Europe and the Middle East: from Neighbourhood to Common Destiny'. Commissioner **Stylianides** will participate in a televised panel-discussion 'Protecting Refugees: From Middle East to Europe'. Commissioner **Bulg** will take part in several sessions on infrastructure and investment and meet with Mr. Hussein Souab, Minister of Transport of Jordan. In the margins of the forum, the three members of the College will have a joint audience with H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan, in the presence of Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Hani Mulki and the Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. Ayman Al Safadi. (EC 10-05-2017)

## REPRESENTATIVES OF PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES ATTEND INTERNATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND CONSTRUCTION FORUM

Representatives of Portuguese-speaking countries will attend the 8th International Forum on Investment and Infrastructure Construction (IIICF), due to be held in Macau on 1 and 2 June, announced the Macau Institute for Trade and Investment Promotion (IPIM).

IPIM said in a statement that the representatives of the invited countries will participate in the Seminar for Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries on Productive Capacity and Financial Services, which will address the cooperation between China and these countries.

Under the theme "Building diversified, innovative and sustainable infrastructure together," the IIICF will bring together international personalities from political, economic and academic life and will be attended by representatives from various multilateral institutions and from China.

According to IPIM, the meeting will be attended by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the African Export-Import Bank, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the Development Bank of China (CDB), the Export-Import Bank of China, China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation, China-Africa Development Fund, China-Latin America Cooperation Fund and China-Africa Fund for Industrial Cooperation (CAFIC).

As part of China's Belt and Road initiative, thematic sessions will be held during the two days of the Forum to discuss, among other topics, infrastructure construction and industrial development, financial innovation and industrial investment cooperation, smart cities, and the development of sustainable infrastructure.

The IPIM statement also said that during the Forum, a further step will be taken in the establishment in Macau of the headquarters of the Fund for Development Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries announced in Macau in November 2010 during the 3rd Conference of Forum Macau. The IIICF is organised with the guidance of the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, the Government of the Macau Special Administrative Region (MSAR) and the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Macau, and jointly organised by the China International Contractor's Association and the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM). (19-05-2017)

## **IMF RAISES GROWTH FORECAST FOR SOUTH AFRICA**

The International Monetary Fund raised its forecast for economic growth in SA, saying the end of the worst drought in more than a century will lift agricultural production and rising commodity prices will boost the mining sector.

The Washington-based lender forecast growth of 1% for Africa's most-industrialised economy in 2017, up from the 0.8% prediction it made in April.

The consumer inflation rate would probably fall below the 6% upper limit of the Reserve Bank's target band in the second half of this year, it said in a statement after a so-called Article IV visit by officials from May 3 to May 16.

"Following last year's near-stagnation, there are signs that a modest improvement in the pace of economic growth is under way," Paolo Mauro, who led the IMF team, said in the statement.

However, he warned: "The pace of recovery this year and the next is unlikely to prevent a further increase in unemployment and a continued decline in per capita incomes."

Mining production surged 15.5% year on year in March, beating analysts' estimates and compared with growth of 4.6% in February.

Manufacturing output rebounded in March from a decline the previous month.

The economy grew 0.3% last year, the slowest since a 2009 recession.

The government faced a dual challenge of stimulating growth while making the economy more inclusive, the IMF said.

That would require reforms of the labour market as well as state-owned companies, it said.

The lender welcomed the government's affirmation of fiscal goals following the appointment in March of Malusi Gigaba as finance minister, replacing Pravin Gordhan. (Bloomberg 19-05-2017)

## **CHINA GRANTS LOAN TO FUND E-GOVERNANCE PROJECT IN CABO VERDE**

The government of Cabo Verde (Cape Verde) approved a loan agreement with the Export-Import Bank of China amounting to 84.5 million yuan (1.2 million escudos or US\$121,000) at a cabinet meeting held on Thursday in Praia.

The loan amount will be used to finance the second stage of an eGovernance project, according to a statement released on the official website of the Cape Verdean government.

Meanwhile, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will take part in a meeting with his Cape Verdean counterpart Luís Filipe Tavares on 20 May in Cabo Verde, which will be officially opened by Prime Minister José Ulisses Correia e Silva.

The meeting will be attended by the Chinese Deputy Director General of the Africa Department, Lin Songtian, the Director General of the Department of International Organisations and Conferences, Li Junhua, the Chinese ambassador to Cabo Verde, Du Xiacong and the Deputy Director General of the Information Department, Geng Shuang.

On the Cape Verdean the meeting will be attended by the ambassador to China, Tânia Romualdo, the national director of Foreign Policy, Ambassador Júlio Morais and the political and diplomatic adviser to the Prime Minister, Ambassador Júlio Herbert.

Also on Saturday, the President of the Republic is due to receive a courtesy visit from Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. (19-05-2017)

## **CHINESE FIRM TO OPEN CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS "SUPERMARKET" IN KENYA**

A Chinese company is rushing to complete a precast concrete factory in Kenya to supply ready-made elements for residential construction.

The company, China Wu Yi (Kenya) Precast, claims it will revolutionise construction in the African country.



Its deputy general manager Lin Yihua said his company has invested \$100m to set up its three-storey “supermarket for construction materials” that opens this year on the outskirts of the capital, Nairobi, state news agency Xinhua reports.

Lin called the facility a “modern building industry hub” that will carry out manufacturing, research and demonstration of construction materials.

The factory will produce interior wall panels, slabs and beams, columns and stair cases for apartment buildings.

The factory will start selling precast elements in July, Lin told reporters.

China Wu Yi (Kenya) Precast Company Limited was incorporated in August last year and aims to “revolutionise the real estate sector in Kenya and the wider eastern African region through adoption of precast technologies to construct houses”, Xinhua reported.

“The technology is currently evolving and we are keen to introduce it to Kenya and other African countries. High quality, cheaper and environmentally friendly construction materials will fuel Kenya's growth,” said Lin. (BD 17-05-2017)

## **CABO VERDE’S FINANCE MINISTER SAYS PUBLIC DEBT IS “HUGE”**

Cabo Verde’s (Cape Verde’s) public debt is “huge and excessive” but “not unsustainable,” said Finance Minister Olavo Correia, adding the government was working to reduce its value as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), according to the Inforpress news agency.

Figures released by weekly newspaper A Semana showed that Cabo Verde’s public debt increased from 200.013 billion Cape Verdean escudos (US\$2.015 billion or 127.8% of GDP) in 2015 to 210.726 billion escudos (US\$ 2.124 billion or 128.6% of GDP) by 2016.

The 2016 debt can be broken down into external debt in the amount of 158.210 billion Cape Verdean escudos (96.5% of GDP) and domestic debt of 52.516 billion Cape Verdean escudos (32.0% of GDP). Domestic debt consists of Treasury Bonds (96.6%) and Other Loans (3.4%) and long-term foreign debt, in its entirety, can be broken down into multilateral (46.9%), bilateral (22.6%) and commercial (30.5%). The Minister of Finance also told Inforpress that the archipelago’s public debt “is not unsustainable” and added that its reduction, as a percentage of GDP, involves “economic acceleration and further streamlining in selection of public investments.”

Correia also said that debt sustainability “is essential”, in order to have a more economic and stable fiscal framework, which in his view “is essential” for the growth of the Cape Verdean economy. (19-05-2017)

## RDC : POURQUOI LA LOI SUR LA PREFERENCE NATIONALE FAIT PEUR AUX ENTREPRISES PRIVEES?



Le port de Kinshasa, capitale de la République démocratique du Congo

Une loi, votée au parlement congolais et promulguée en février, prévoit dans un délai de 12 mois l'instauration d'une préférence nationale dans les contrats de sous-traitance privée. Une disposition qui suscite beaucoup d'inquiétudes au sein des entreprises, d'autant plus que son périmètre et ses modalités d'application demeurent très flous.

Plusieurs centaines. C'est en théorie le nombre d'entreprises, détenues majoritairement par des actionnaires internationaux et actives dans la fourniture de services en République démocratique du Congo (RDC), qui pourraient être concernées par l'application de la loi du 8 février 2017, entrée en vigueur le 17 mars, qui fixe les règles applicables à la sous-traitance privée. Celle-ci prévoit que « l'activité de sous-traitance est réservée aux entreprises à capitaux congolais promues par les Congolais, quelle que soit leur forme juridique, dont le siège social est situé sur le territoire national », et ce dans « tous les secteurs d'activités ».

A fortiori, la loi limite le volume des activités pouvant être sous-traitées à 40% de la valeur d'un marché, et oblige à recourir à des appels d'offres pour des marchés supérieurs à 100 millions de francs congolais (75 000 dollars).

Un périmètre a priori très large qui « pourrait obliger un certain nombre de sous-traitants, dans les mines, mais aussi dans les transports et les infrastructures, à structurer davantage leur présence dans le pays, via une filiale, là où jusqu'à présent ils ne disposaient que d'une représentation ou d'une succursale », analyse Romain Battajon, avocat aux barreaux de Paris et de Kinshasa, selon qui ces nouvelles règles censées être appliquées dans un délai de 12 mois « suscitent beaucoup d'inquiétudes dans le monde économique congolais ».

### Des amendes de 105 000 dollars

Et gare aux contrevenants qui ne respecteraient pas la préférence congolaise prévue par le texte : ils pourraient être sanctionnés de la nullité des contrats conclus et d'une amende de 50 millions à 150 millions de francs congolais (jusqu'à 105 000 dollars).

Reste que si l'objectif du texte est de favoriser les entreprises à capitaux congolais et les emplois locaux, [dans un contexte de fort ralentissement de la croissance l'an dernier](#) son application et ses retombées en faveur des entreprises congolaises sont incertaines. « L'idée d'une participation plus active des Congolais à l'activité économique du pays est louable, mais la mise en œuvre sera très difficile », estime Juvénal Munubo, député de l'opposition au sein de [l'Union pour la nation congolaise](#).



« Il y a de grosses interrogations quant à l'application de cette loi, confirme Edwine Endundo », avocate associée au cabinet Liedekerke Africa à Kinshasa. « Qu'est-ce que 'sociétés congolaises' veut dire ? Celles dotées d'une majorité de salariés et de cadres de nationalité congolaise ? Celles à capitaux majoritairement congolais ? » Tout l'enjeu est là : le périmètre d'application et ses modalités.

Nous sommes incités fortement par l'administration à donner la priorité à des entreprises congolaises. Ce que confirme, sous couvert d'anonymat, le cadre d'une grande entreprise minière active en RDC qui a recours à 250 sous-traitants, en partie locaux et en partie étrangers, dotés ou non de filiales dans le pays. « Il n'y a pas encore de changements de contrats mais nous sommes incités fortement par l'administration à donner la priorité à des entreprises congolaises même si a priori nous ne pourrions pas trouver parmi les sous-traitants congolais toutes les compétences nécessaires à notre activité », dit notre source.

### **Une loi contre-productive sur le plan fiscal ?**

Enfin, la loi pourrait passer à côté de l'un de ses objectifs centraux, l'élargissement de l'assiette fiscale au profit du Trésor, alors que [Kinshasa a réduit drastiquement ses dépenses](#). « La loi pourrait induire indirectement un effet contraire à celui recherché » puisque que « les entreprises étrangères engagent souvent des expatriés qui sont alors soumis à un impôt extraordinaire de 25% », selon un projet de note du cabinet Liedekerke sur la loi, consulté par *Jeune Afrique*.

Pire, met en garde ce même texte, les « sous-traitants étrangers sont considérées comme ayant un établissement stable en RDC et sont donc taxés en RDC comme si ils étaient des entreprises résidentes congolaises » à condition d'avoir une activité sur six mois consécutifs. Or c'est justement sur cette période de six mois que la loi introduit une exception permettant de recourir à une société étrangère en cas d'« indisponibilité ou inaccessibilité » des services de sous-traitance recherchés.

« Il faudra attendre les décrets d'application », résume Romain Battajon. La Fédération des entreprises du Congo (FEC), notamment, serait vent debout contre la loi, tâchant d'obtenir des circulaires ministériels qui en réduiraient la portée. (JA 12-05-2017)

## **SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE POSTS TRADE DEFICIT OF US\$28 MILLION IN FIRST QUARTER**

São Tomé and Príncipe reported a trade deficit of 620.1 billion dobras (US\$28.1 million) in the first quarter of this year, according to figures accessed on Wednesday in São Tomé from the National Statistics Institute (INE).

The deficit was due to the fact that the value of exports was limited to US\$ 1.7 million while imports reached US\$29.9 million.

Figures provided by INE showed that between January and March, exports and imports declined by 15% and 6.6%, respectively, in relation to the nominal values in dobras (Sao Tome's currency) recorded in the same period of 2016.

The deficit recorded in the quarter was down 6% on the same period of 2016, with the rate of import-export coverage at 5.9% (6.5% in the first quarter of 2016), added INE.

São Tomé and Príncipe's trade with the rest of the world in 2016 resulted in a deficit of US\$124.5 million, with imports amounting to US\$134 million and exports to US\$10.1 million. (19-05-2017)

## **INTERACTIVE GUIDE: EXPLORING EUROPEAID'S FUNDING PRIORITIES**

The European Union institutions are the world's fourth biggest donor of official development assistance, disbursing about \$13.7 billion in net aid in 2015. That figure rose by more than 14 percent last year, [according to the OECD](#) — just as the world's biggest donor, the United States, looks set [to take a step back](#).

Given the importance of the EU to global development, Devex is embarking on an analysis of early-stage EuropeAid funding commitments, enabling our community to examine its priorities and projects. We've created a dataset with analyses and [visualizations](#) of EuropeAid funding, similar to our work around [Asian Development Bank](#), [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) and [World Bank](#) funding.

This time, however, we go deeper. This data is unique — while it comes from public documents, it is not available in this aggregated, [interactive format](#) anywhere else. Devex has created a series of analyses and dashboards allowing you to explore the data region by region — [click here](#) to see our first visualization, giving you a global overview of where and on what EuropeAid money is being spent. If you're new to EuropeAid, it's crucial to first understand more about the organization, its funding management and project cycle to make the best use of this data. Read guide [here](#).

### **What has Devex done, and what does the data tell us?**

Devex has gathered and analyzed EuropeAid Action Fiches — operational documents for development projects — published between January 2016 and April 2017. We extracted the budget figures and used them to create an [interactive dashboard](#), breaking down information about the funding's geographic destinations, sectors of focus, financing instruments, management modalities and implementation modalities. All the funding details are accessible through Devex's [Funding Activity Feed](#).

Our data offers a snapshot in time of EuropeAid planned funding. It is important to remember that Action Fiches represent the point in the project cycle at which EuropeAid gives indicative budget figures; a first indication of how much it believes it will spend on different development activities, rather than a closed budget. We should also remember that the data analyzed is not comprehensive across the 2014-2020 programming period but shows us the distribution of the most recent EuropeAid planned funding commitments over a period of more than a year.

The total dataset covers 1,250 planned activities, each with a budget line item, detailed in 274 Action Fiches. Together they account for nearly 5.1 billion euros (\$5.6 billion) in planned funding contributions from EuropeAid. This funding is broadly distributed across geographies, sectors and other dimensions.

### **Geographic Analysis: Where in the world is the money going?**

Of the 5.1 billion euros (\$5.6 billion) covered by the dataset, sub-Saharan Africa will receive over 2 billion euros (\$2.2 billion), the most of any region. Over one billion euros (\$1.09 billion) of that will go to the sub-region of West Africa — much of it funneled through the [EU's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) to catalyze social and economic development in migration-prone countries. Asia will also receive over one billion euros (\$1.09 billion), although it will be distributed more equitably across its sub-regions. The Middle East and North Africa will receive just over 316 million euros (\$346 million), with 73 percent of that earmarked for Sudan and Yemen. However, much EU-funded development work in this region falls under the purview of the European Neighbourhood Instrument, or ENI, a funding instrument managed by the Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. It operates separately from EuropeAid and is not included in this analysis.

Large amounts of funding are also being allocated to what we call “Worldwide” or “Multicontinental” programming. These are thematic programs targeting certain issues rather than geographies, such as the 10 million euro (\$11 million) [Aid for Trade programme](#), promoting the integration of least developed countries into international trade networks. Similarly, most regions have a sub-region called “Multiregional” — this denotes programming that cuts across multiple sub-regions. These programs often address regional integration, as with the 40 million euro (\$43.8 million) [Asi@Connect Programme](#), which works across Asia's sub-regions, or the 32 million euro (\$35 million) [EUROsociAL+ programme](#) across Latin America.

### **Financing Instrument Analysis: Which instruments is the money going through?**

The EU's spending plan for the period 2014-2020 — known as the Multiannual Financial Framework — allocated over 66 billion euros (in 2017 terms; \$72 billion) to the external relations of the EU, most of which is administered by EuropeAid. This funding is disbursed through External Financing Instruments, which can be thought of as geographic or thematic “budgets” to which EuropeAid can allocate its funding.

The funding for one instrument — the European Development Fund, or EDF — does not come from the MFF, but from voluntary contributions made by EU member states. It has been allocated 30.5 billion

euros (\$33.4 billion) for the period 2014-2020, bringing the EU's total allocation for external actions to over 95 billion euros (\$104 billion).

The European Commission is due to present a mid-term review on these External Financing Instruments by the end of 2017, which might include decisions on the renewal, modification or suspension of certain types of actions and programming permitted under each instrument. In other words: There may be some important changes in store this year for EuropeAid. These are the instruments up for review.

Breaking down the funding by instrument, the Development Cooperation Instrument, or DCI, has been allocated 19.6 billion euros (\$21.4 billion) for the period 2014-2020. Of that, 1.7 billion euros (\$1.9 billion) appeared in the data we analyzed — the largest allocation to any funding instrument in our dataset. The DCI funds programs in 47 developing countries in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and South Africa. Traditionally, most of Africa has been covered by the EDF; however, the 845 million euro (\$925 million) Pan-African Program was created in 2014 under the DCI, as part of the [Africa-EU Strategic Partnership](#), so as to include all African countries.

The EDF is the second most funded instrument, and is dedicated to funding programming in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, with a thematic focus on economic development, social development and regional cooperation and integration. It has been allocated 30.5 billion euros (\$33.4 billion) for the period 2014-2020, of which 1.5 billion euros (\$1.6 billion) is included in our data. It is also worth noting that 80 percent of EDF funding captured in our data will be under indirect management — meaning that other institutions, not EuropeAid, will be responsible for managing procurement.

The EU [Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) is one of the newest EuropeAid funding instruments. Created in November 2015 specifically to promote stability and to address the root causes of irregular migration and displacement in Africa, following the arrival of large numbers of migrants and refugees in Europe, the EUTF has approved 1.5 billion euros (\$1.6 billion) so far, in addition to a further [59 million euros \(\\$64 million\) of funding for EUTF projects](#) announced in April.

### What next?

In the coming weeks, we will share further insights from the data, introducing three more analyses and [visualizations](#). These will examine EuropeAid's indicative funding commitments and priorities in Africa, Asia, and other developing regions, respectively. In these pieces, we'll seek to answer three important, macro-level questions that many of our members have about funding: Where is the funding going? How is the funding being used? And who is responsible for distributing it?

(DEV 15-05-2017)

[Click here to see Devex's visualization of EuropeAid funding activities](#)

## BANJUL SECURES \$50M BEIJING GRANT FOR INT'L CONFERENCE CENTRE

The Gambia has secured a \$50 million grant from China to build a new state of the art International Conference Center.



The signing ceremony in Banjul between Gambian Foreign Affairs minister Ousainou Darboe and the Chinese ambassador to Banjul, Zhang Jiming on Friday was witnessed by President Adama Barrow.



Under the terms of the grant construction work for the proposed centre will start in August 2017 and will take two years to complete.

It is not known where the centre would be built in The Gambia which does not have an official international conference facility.

The proposed centre would be the first major undertaking in The Gambia by Beijing since the Independence Stadium was built in 1983.

Speaking at the signing ceremony President Barrow disclosed that local labour to build the centre will be provided by young Gambians, thus creating job opportunities for skilled youth.

He said the centre will help boost tourism and facilitate cultural exchanges, thus serving as a symbol of the true bilateral commitment between Banjul and Beijing.

He commended the Chinese government for its confidence in the new Gambia under his leadership.

After severing ties in 1995 over Banjul's recognition of Taiwan, The Gambia and China reestablished diplomatic relations last year. (APA 19-05-2017)

## ENTREPRENEUR LINKS SMALL-SCALE AFRICAN FARMERS WITH VENTURE CAPITALISTS



There are millions of small-scale farmers locked out of Kenya's formal economy.

Alex Muriu had a vision. The Kenyan native wanted to find a way to help farmers who were struggling financially. In 2014, Muriu, 29, created [Farm Capital Africa](#) with the goal of generating wealth through investing in profitable business ventures in the underfunded agricultural sector.

Farm Capital Africa uses the internet to raise funds and mobile money to disburse to agripreneurs — mostly youth and women. The aim is to connect these agripreneurs with investment groups that can help them access funds they need to scale up their agricultural ventures.

Farm Capital Africa helps small-scale farmers between ages 25 and 35. Through its investor networks, Farm Capital Africa participates in a profit- and loss-sharing arrangement between the agripreneur and the investor.

Alex Muriu talked to *AFKInsider* about how Farm Capital Africa works.

**AFKInsider: What made you want to launch Farm Capital Africa?**

**Alex Muriu:** From a conversation with a farmer back in 2011 that got me curious about financing (or lack thereof) in the small-scale agriculture industry. I started thinking of a solution and in 2013 decided to put these ideas to practice. The rest is history.

**AFKInsider: Is it true that at university, you ran a successful computer hardware shop?**

**Alex Muriu:** I used to sell flash disks back when people didn't know what they were. This then morphed into a web design and web hosting company which I ran for five years until I graduated from university.

**AFKInsider: Please explain what Farm Capital Africa does?**

**Alex Muriu:** We provide input financing to small-scale farmers. This we do by partnering with local agrovet (places where farmers can buy agricultural and veterinary products). Once a farmer joins our program they can then pick inputs from the agrovet on credit and pay upon harvest.

**AFKInsider: What were some startup challenges?**

**Alex Muriu:** In the process of devising a working financing model we lost substantial amounts of money through bad debts. We also had human resource issues. Getting the right talent in the agri-space can be quite a challenge.

**AFKInsider:** What have been some obstacles in growing your business?

**Alex Muriu:** Not obstacles per se; more like stumbling blocks. I do not have an agricultural background so the learning curve was quite steep. We have also had some challenges with raising capital as social-impact investors are not as rampant as profit-making investors.

**AFKInsider:** Does Kenya have many resources for small business?

**Alex Muriu:** The government has funding initiatives for small business like the Uwezo Fund and Youth Fund. I believe there is some work to be done in incentivizing small businesses whether it's tax incentives or business regulation laws. There have been strides in this space. In Kenya, you can now register a business in a day.

**AFKInsider:** What are the pluses of doing business in your country?

**Alex Muriu:** We have a relatively stable political climate which allows business to run without political interference for the most part. Kenya has high literacy and education levels so getting talent — affordable talent at that — is not an uphill task.

**AFKInsider:** What are some disadvantages of doing business in your country?

**Alex Muriu:** I think we have a few too many unscrupulous entities in Kenya. (It's) very easy to get conned or played while trying to get business partnerships. Anyone setting up a business here should double and triple check who you choose to do business with. But otherwise, (it's) a great place to do business.

**AFKInsider:** What are your long-term goals for your company?

**Alex Muriu:** We will become the largest financial player in the small-scale farming space. There are millions of farmers locked out of the formal (economy).

**AFKInsider:** What do you like best about what you do?

**Alex Muriu:** I see lives changing through the work we do. People take their kids to school, have money for medicine when they fall sick and even more important the dignity of being financially self-reliant. I love that. (AFKI 16-05-2017)

## ETHIOPIA IN ALL-OUT MOVE TO STEM ARMYWORM INVASION

An all-out effort is underway to control the fall armyworm that has infested some parts of Ethiopia, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources on Friday.



The armyworm known as *Spodoptera* is native to South America and has attacked maize crops in 13 zones of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, and seven zones in Oromia as well as two in Gambella states, it added.

Plant Health Care Director at the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Zebdios Selato told journalists on Friday that the government has been exerting efforts to control the pests.

As a result, 32,000 hectares of land of the over 49,000 attacked is now protected from the pest, the director added.

According to Zebdios, the ministry has also deployed teams of expert to the areas affected by the armyworm, in addition to spraying more than 47,000 liters of chemical to destroy them.

He stressed that more effort is expected from farmers, agriculture extension workers and other stakeholders to fully control the armyworm.

Fall armyworm was detected in Ethiopia in March, 2017 in Bench Maji and Sheka Zones of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional state.

The fall armyworm attacked over 80 plant species, including maize, sorghum and cash crop, it was learned.

The pest native to the Americas can fly a long distance sometimes over 100kms per hour. (APA 19-05-2017)

### **MALAWI PLANS TO TAKE LAKE DISPUTE WITH TANZANIA TO THE HAGUE**

Malawi is planning to take its dispute with Tanzania over Lake Malawi, with its potentially huge reserves of oil and gas, to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, its Foreign Affairs Minister Francis Kasaila said on Wednesday.

Malawi, at the west of Africa's third largest lake, claims the entire northern half of the lake, while Tanzania to the east, says it owns half of the northern area. The southern half is shared between Malawi and Mozambique. Gas finds in the region have made the 50-year-old row over territory between Tanzania and Malawi more intense.

"The government of Malawi has been committed to the mediation process and peaceful resolution of the dispute through contact and dialogue, but we are now ready to take Tanzania to the International Court of Justice because they have been stalling the mediation efforts since 2012," Kasaila said.

Kasaila told Reuters that Malawi is particularly worried by Tanzania seeking a postponement of mediation talks scheduled this month, saying this will delay the conclusion of the matter. Tanzanian officials could not be reached for comment.

Two former African presidents, Joachim Chissano of Mozambique and Thabo Mbeki of SA, are mediating. (Reuters 17-05-2017)

### **SUDAN SEEKS WTO MEMBERSHIP**



Sudan's Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Ghandour had held talks with the director of World Trade Organization (WTO), Roberto Azevêdo in Switzerland's city, Geneva over Khartoum's future membership.

In a statement reaching APA on Friday, Ghandour vowed to continue with efforts aimed at satisfying the requirements for joining the WTO.

He further praised the organization for its technical assistance to Sudan saying its director had promised to back his country's request to join the organization.

Ghandour's meeting on Tuesday was attended by Sudan's permanent representative in Geneva, Mustafa Osman Ismail, and the head of the Europe Department at the Foreign Affairs ministry, Yusuf Al Kurdufani,

Ghandour who has been in Geneva since last week for an official visit had met his Swiss counterpart, Didier Burkhalter on Wednesday.

According to him, they had discussed bilateral relations, issues related to tackling terrorism, human trafficking and illegal migration. (APA 19-05-2017)

### NEW BITCOIN REMITTANCE SERVICE AVAILABLE IN NIGERIA, KENYA



New Bitcoin remittance services available in Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania

Remitano, a Vietnamese platform that enables international transfers using Bitcoin. Using its current Escrow platform, Remitano users will be able to transfer funds quickly and securely across borders.

Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania are the African countries which will be able to take advantage of the service with more countries expected to be added. Vietnam, Malaysia, China, Australia, and India are some of the other countries where Remitano has expanded into.

Remitano helps to protect bitcoin trades by providing a marketplace where people can buy and sell Bitcoin securely and quickly. Where bitcoin trades normally function in a step by step fashion, Remitano's new offering makes the transaction of money across international boundaries quick and easy.

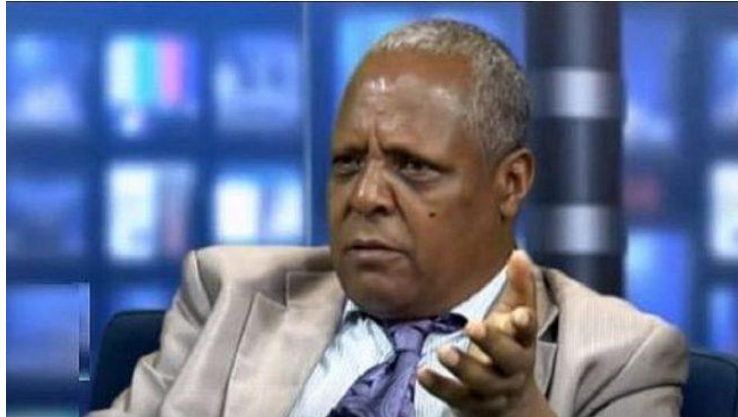
"Let's say you want to send money from Vietnam to Australia," explains Remitano co-founder Dung Huynh. "Previously, users would have to buy bitcoin from a trader in Vietnam, then sell bitcoin to an offer in Australia. Now with the new feature, the process basically does not change but a wizard is introduced to guide people to buy and sell seamlessly with estimated sending and receiving amount of money."

Bitcoin is a form of digital currency that is created and held electronically. Encryption techniques are used to regulate the generation of units of bitcoin and verify the transfer of funds, operating independently of a central bank, such as the Federal Reserve. Unlike dollars or euros, bitcoin is decentralized, meaning that it operates independently of governments. Bitcoins themselves are 'mined' and protocol means there can only ever be 21 million bitcoins created, which can be broken down into smaller constituent parts. (ITNA 16-05-2017)



## ETHIOPIA REJECTS EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CALL TO RELEASE OROMO LEADER

The government of Ethiopia on Friday rejected the call by the European Parliament to release the opposition leader, Dr. Merera Gudina, on bail or drop the charges against him.



“The resolution issued by the European Parliament (EP) which called for the immediate release on bail and dropping of all charges against Dr. Merera Gudina was not fair and appropriate,” Ethiopia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

On 30 November 2016, Ethiopian security forces arrested Dr Merera Gudina, the chairman of the Ethiopian Oromo Federalist Congress opposition party in Addis Ababa.

It followed his visit to the European Parliament on 9 November 2016, where he shared a panel with other opposition leaders and allegedly violated the law implementing the state of emergency, by ‘creating pressure against the government’, ‘threatening society through the means of violence’ and attempting to ‘disrupt constitutional order’.

The European Parliament, in its resolution, said the Ethiopian authorities have repeatedly used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators and committed human rights abuses against members of the Oromo community and other ethnic groups, including acts of persecution, arbitrary arrests and killings, owing to their perceived opposition to the government.

Ethiopia’s government regularly accuses those who criticise government policy of association with terrorism; with journalists, bloggers, protesters, and activists have been prosecuted under the country’s tough 2009 Anti-Terrorism Proclamation, the resolution noted (APA 19-05-2017)

## NIGERIA PARTNERS WITH BI-COURTNEY FOR EXPRESSWAY PROJECT

The federal government of Nigeria is presently looking to enter a funding agreement in a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) deal with [Bi-Courtney Highways Limited](#) to ensure the timely construction and rehabilitation of the Lagos-Ibadan expressway project.

The issue was the core of discussion at a meeting held earlier this week in the National Assembly, where it was also agreed that Motorways Assets Limited would be part of the PPP arrangement for the expressway.

The reconstruction of the highway had already been handed over to Bi-Courtney in 2009 under a Build, Operate and Transfer deal, but was 3 years later revoked because of alleged violation of the terms of agreement by the company.

The meeting, which was held behind closed doors, and had in attendance the Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki, Minister of Finance, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriation, Senator Danjuma Goje, and his Finance counterpart, Senator John Enoh.

The Chairmen of Bi-Courtney Highways Limited and Motorways Asset Limited, Dr. Wale Babalakin and Mr. Abdulrasaq Oyinloye respectively were also present.

The Minister of Finance, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun said that the expressway’s completion will serve as a model for infrastructure development in the country. The new agreement will have both companies



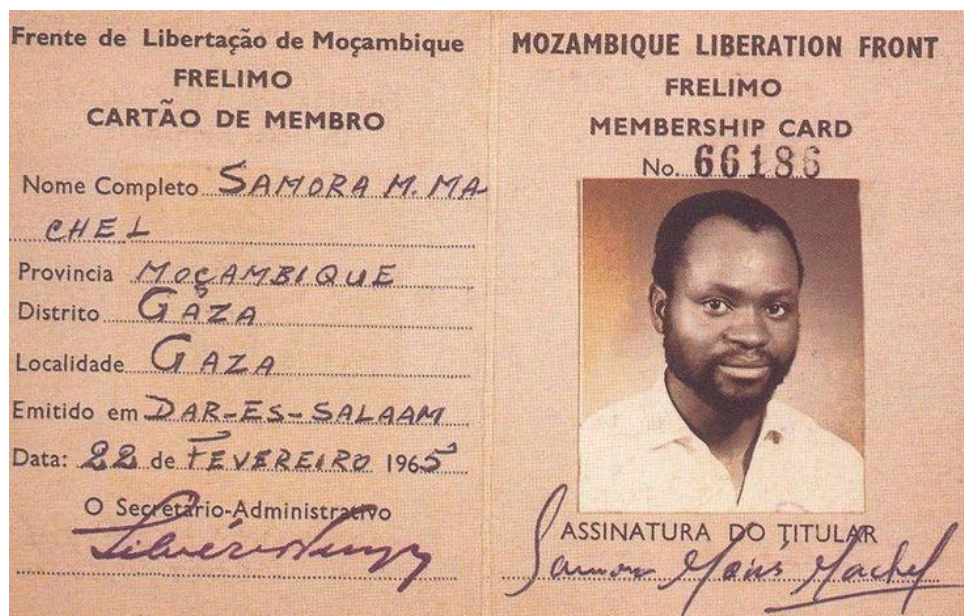
merge their current dispensations to a new company. This will then act as a special purpose vehicle for the project.

The companies will be provided with financial instruments through which they will be able to raise funds required for the project.

Apparently, the underlining objective of the new agreement is to ensure that quality work is done and completed in the shortest time possible on the road which is said to be central to the nation's economy. Very soon, all parties would sign a formal agreement on this deal. (CRO 12-05-2017)

## MOZAMBIQUE SEEKS FOREIGN FIRM TO PRODUCE NEW IDENTITY CARDS

The Mozambican government has launched a tender to select a company that will install and supply the new biometric civil document identification systems, APA learned on Friday.



According to state-controlled daily newspaper Notícias, the new company will also produce travel documents. This work was done since 2009 by the SEMLEX firm, whose contract is about to expire. Mozambique's Ministry of the Interior is looking for a new company to continue the process of producing and issuing biometric documents.

The tender is open to interested local and foreign firms as long as they meet the eligibility requirements, including SEMLEX itself.

The southern African nation has a population of 26 million of which only six million have acquired biometric IDs since their introduction in 2009.

(APA 19-05-2017)

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The Memorandum is supported by the ACP-African, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat, Chamber of Commerce Tenerife, AHEAD-GLOBAL, Business Council for Africa, Corporate Council on Africa, ELO - Portuguese Association for Economic Development and Cooperation, Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development, HTTC - Hungarian Trade & Cultural Centre, NABA - Norwegian-African Business Association, NABC- Netherlands Africa 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), ELO, HTTC, NABA, NABC (by posting selected news) and SwissCham-Africa to their Members.



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