

MEMORANDUM

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The Memorandum is issued daily, with the sole purpose to provide updated basic business and economic information on Africa, to more than 4,000 European Companies, as well as their business parties in Africa.

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*The Memorandum will not be published from May 25th to June 10th, for a short period of holidays
We will come back afterwards, with the selection of daily relevant African news*

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MEA LTD SECURES US\$ 10M TO ESTABLISH A NEW FERTILIZER PLANT

Mea Ltd which is based in Nakuru, Kenya has successfully secured approximately US\$ 10m loan from International Finance Corporation (IFC) for the establishment of a [fertiliser](#) granulation (making grains) factory for the East African region.

The plant which is projected to be complete by end of this year will employ the latest technology to produce crop-specific fertiliser, helping address soil nutrient deficiencies and crops nutrient needs.

Mea Ltd subsidiary, Fertiplant East Africa Executive Director, Mr. Titus Gitau confirmed the news and said that the new factory would start producing specialty fertiliser blends for tea, coffee, potatoes and maize tailored for different regions in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi.

“The plant will start producing specialty fertiliser blends for tea, coffee, potatoes and maize tailored for different regions in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi,” said Mr. Gitau.

Mr. Gitau spoke when he hosted IFC vice president for development economics Hans Peter Lankes who toured the plant before proceeding to sign a memorandum of understanding for the factory that will create employment for 100 people.

Mr. Lankes said the investment in the firm was informed by IFC’s strategy to promote the development and competitiveness of East Africa’s agricultural sector. He said the project would empower farmers to grow crops for subsistence and commercial purposes.

“Boosting crop yields and closing the gap between actual and attainable yields can be achieved by the implementation and advancement of various practices and technologies, including mechanisation, seed development and fertiliser technologies,” noted Mr. Gitau.

The plant is a Vision 2030 flagship project seeking to build on Mea’s 40-year business of selling fertiliser and other farm inputs in Kenya and beyond.

Fertiplant is also expected to help ease prices, enabling farmers to enjoy access to high quality locally processed fertiliser.

Over the years, Mea Ltd has expanded their service capacity from importation and distribution to blending / bagging of custom fertilizer formulation, farmer education and extension support services, as well as testing and research services. (CRO 15-05-2017)

BOTSWANA’S BEEF EXPORTER SCORES HIGH PERFORMANCE MARKS

Botswana’s national beef exporter, the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC), has performed exceptionally well on the audits conducted by SAI Global on behalf of international fast food restaurant chain, McDonalds, APA learned in Gaborone on Friday.



A statement from BMC stated that its Lobatse abattoir (78 kilometres from Gaborone and the Francistown abattoir 465 kilometres from Gaborone) contributed to this exceptional performance.

The statement added that Lobatse abattoir improved from 90 to 93 percent, while Francistown plant improved from 93 to 97 percent.

The audit was conducted from 24th to 27th April 2017, and was against McDonald's Asia, Pacific, Middle East and Africa (APMEA) standard for Beef Audit Report Master, which includes Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and Animal Welfare.

According to BMC, this exceptional performance affords Botswana Meat Commission to be among McDonald's suppliers in South Africa.

The McDonald's APMEA group includes markets as diverse as Taiwan and South Africa. (APA 19-05-2017)

CONGO SUFFERS EIGHTH EBOLA OUTBREAK

The UN's health agency has confirmed a second case of Ebola in Democratic Republic of Congo after an outbreak this week of 17 other suspected cases.



A man is treated for Ebola in The Democratic Republic of Congo

Health officials were trying to trace 125 people thought to be linked to the cases identified in the remote northeastern province of Bas-Uele, near the border with Central African Republic, World Health Organisation (WHO) Congo spokesman Eugene Kabambi said.

Three people have so far died among the 19 suspected and confirmed cases, he added.

Experts say to prevent the spread of the virus they must quickly track down, test, isolate and treat suspected cases. They also need to protect health workers and educate the population about hygiene measures.

"The first case and possibly the index case, a 39-year-old male, presented onset of symptoms on 22 April, 2017, and deceased on arrival at the health facility," a WHO statement [said on Saturday](#).

The worst outbreak of Ebola killed more than 11,300 people in the West African countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia and infected more than 28,000. It peaked in late 2014 causing global alarm but active virus transmission ended last year.

The latest Ebola outbreak is Congo's eighth, the most of any country. The deadly haemorrhagic fever was first detected in its dense tropical forests in 1976 and named after the nearby river Ebola.

That experience helped Congolese authorities respond effectively to an outbreak in 2014 that killed dozens of people.

The GAVI global vaccine alliance said on Friday some 300,000 emergency doses of an Ebola vaccine developed by Merck could be available in case of a large-scale outbreak and that it stood ready to support the Congo government on the matter. (Reuters 15-05-2017)

MALAWI, TANZANIA AGREE TO JOINTLY SECURE US\$829M FOR PROGRAMMES

Malawi and Tanzania have agreed to secure US\$829 million from international donors to jointly implement several projects under the Songwe River Basin Development Programme (SRBDP).



Speaking Wednesday during the official opening of the donors conference on the SRBDP in the capital Lilongwe, Malawi's Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Goodall Gondwe, said the programme if implemented will help the people of both nations in their social and economic development.

"This is a viable project and it can easily uplift the livelihoods of people who live along the basin in terms of irrigation, tourism, rural electrification and small-scale businesses, among others."

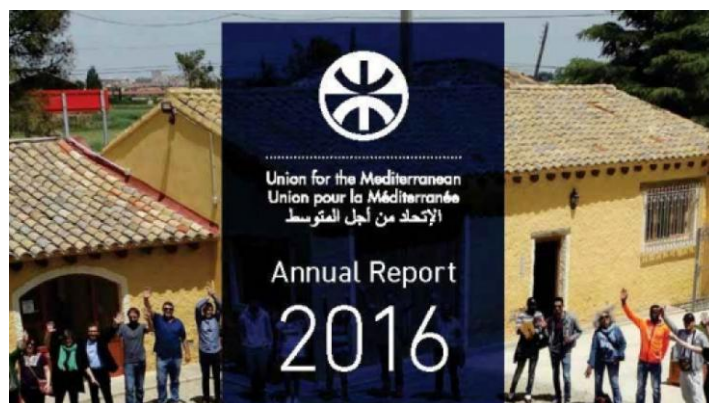
He announced that Malawi has already sourced some funds from African Development Bank (AfDB) and private investors to fund the irrigation component.

Tanzania's Minister of Water and Irrigation, Hosea Lwenge, said his government was committed to partner with Malawi in uplifting the living standards of people around the basin through several projects.

"Investing in such projects raises chances of addressing challenges which many people this area face like food shortage and lack of electricity, among others," he said.

The SRBDP has several components, including construction of a dam, hydro-power plants, rural electrification, river course stabilization, irrigation, water supply and fisheries. (APA 19-05-2017)

MEDITERRANEAN IN ACTION: UFM REPORT 2016 SHOWS STRENGTHENED REGIONAL COMMITMENT



The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat has published the UfM's annual report for 2016 presenting the work achieved throughout the past year and the results reached. *"With 47 labelled projects and over 200 ministerial and expert fora gathering 20,000 stakeholders since 2012, UfM activities illustrate the strong belief that regional challenges call for regional solutions and that there is no security without development. In this regard, young people are at the heart of the Mediterranean agenda"*, said UfM Secretary General Fathallah Sijilmassi. The UfM 2016 Annual Report showcases 10 new labelled projects during the last year aimed at SME development, job creation, women's empowerment, renewable energy and depollution, infrastructure development and education, bringing

the number of UfM-labeled projects to 47 with a total budget of €5.3 billion. The tangible positive impact from the first wave of projects is already visible involving over 200,000 beneficiaries in the region, mainly women and young people.

UfM initiatives aim to consolidate human development (26 projects) and promote sustainable development (21 projects) as the main drivers for stability and integration in the region. The first pillar of action includes initiatives linked to job creation, entrepreneurship and gender equality, such as the [Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs \(Med4Jobs\)](#). More than 50,000 women benefit from women's empowerment programmes. In terms of sustainable development, in 2016 the UfM launched emblematic projects such as the [depollution of Lake Bizerte](#), under the EU's Horizon 2020 Initiative for a cleaner Mediterranean Sea, and the [SEMed Private Renewable Energy Framework \(SPREF\)](#), developed in cooperation with the EBRD to encourage the growth of private markets for renewable energy in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

Reinforcing their commitment to work together for a deepened and effective Euro-Mediterranean regional cooperation agenda, the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the UfM Member States endorsed a new action-oriented Roadmap in January 2017 entitled "[The Union for the Mediterranean: an action-driven organisation with a common ambition](#)".

Furthermore, three UfM Ministerial Meetings were held in the past year on [Regional Cooperation and Planning](#) (Jordan, June 2016), [Employment and Labour](#) (Jordan, September 2016) and [Energy](#) (Italy, December 2016). The UfM Secretariat follows up on decisions taken at the political level through regional sectoral policy dialogue platforms, thereby following through on Ministerial commitments and implementing concrete initiatives and projects. Since 2012 these platforms have involved over 20,000 stakeholders from around the Mediterranean region including parliamentarians and representatives of international organisations, NGOs, civil society organisations, international financial institutions, development agencies, the private sector, universities and think tanks.

In the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UfM has intensified its cooperation with all global, regional and sub-regional initiatives and organisations. The UfM attended as UN observer the United Nations General Assembly (September 2016) and the COP22 Climate Change Conference in Marrakech (November 2016). (UfM 15-05-2017)~

[UfM 2016 Annual Report](#)

MINISTERS GANG UP AGAINST AIR NAMIBIA

Namibian Finance Minister Calle Schlettwein and his counterpart at public enterprise, Leon Jooste seem to have lost faith in the national flag carrier.



The two senior ministers cast their doubt over the loss-making Air Namibia, following a report by a United Kingdom-based consultancy that concluded that the existence of Air Namibia is important to the Namibian economy.

Despite a positive verdict in the company, Jooste has issued an ultimatum to loss making Air Namibia to breakeven within three years.

"I want to see air Namibia reach a breakeven position within three years and I am convinced that this can be done, but I am convinced that it can be done unless calculated adjustments are made to improve the financial performance of the airline," Jooste is quoted as saying by Windhoek Observer.

Finance Minister Schlettwein raised his doubt, especially recommendations by the report that Air Namibia should maintain the Windhoek-Frankfurt route.

The minister has requested to the ministry of works and transport, the custodian of air Namibia to the scrapping direct route to Frankfurt to save money.

The route is said to be bleeding the national flag carrier of N\$30 million (\$2.2 million) annually.

Meanwhile, Works and Transport, Minister Alpheus Naruseb has guaranteed that the government will not meddle in the affairs of the airline. Speaking at air Namibia stakeholders meeting, Naruseb noted that: "We have no intention to mingle in Air Namibia operations. You have my commitment on that".

However he rapped Air Namibia on the knuckles and called it to turnaround its fortunes. "Stop asking for subsidies, because for as long you are asking for subsidies, your government will also want to know what the funds will be used for. That is the only time we can be viewed as interfering". (APA 19-05-2017)

EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY REPORT: REENERGISING RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES THROUGH TAILOR-MADE PARTNERSHIPS



The European Commission today published a neighbourhood-wide Joint Report on the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Today's report demonstrates that the new policy approach ensures stronger joint ownership and more flexibility by recognising different aspirations and diversity of each partner. The report is a follow-up to the European Neighbourhood review which was adopted in November 2015.

Within the new political framework, the EU is acting with more **flexibility** and sensitivity towards its partners, deploying its resources with more impact as regards the implementation of the key priorities. The reviewed ENP has mobilised significant support to reforms in four priority areas: **good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights; economic development for stabilisation; security; migration and mobility.**

"One year and a half after the review of the European Neighborhood Policy, we have managed to build - in cooperation and full partnership - a tailor made approach with each and every country, to ensure it addresses the real needs and interests, for the sake of all our citizens." said Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, upon publication of the joint report.

"We consulted widely before updating the Neighbourhood Policy – and this report shows how we are really putting into action the results of that consultation: a stronger focus on mutual interests, greater differentiation to reflect the diversity of our partners, a greater sense of shared ownership of the policy and more flexibility in how it is implemented," added Johannes Hahn, EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

The report highlights that 2016 saw progress on reenergising the relations with the neighbouring countries through new forms of tailor-made partnerships. This has included work on new country-specific frameworks for bilateral cooperation in the form of Partnership Priorities and updated Association Agendas.

Partnership Priorities with **Lebanon** and **Jordan** were adopted at the end of 2016. In order to help both countries address the impact of the refugees following the Syrian conflict, Compacts containing priority actions and mutual commitments were agreed and annexed to the Partnership Priorities.

Partnership Priorities with **Algeria** were adopted in March 2017. Dialogues took place on energy and migration; an agreement was signed on civil protection and cooperation programmes have been adopted on renewable energy, economic diversification and public financial management, responding to the major economic and fiscal challenges Algeria currently faces.

Draft Partnership Priorities with **Egypt** were provisionally agreed in December 2016. With **Tunisia**, 2016 has seen an intensification of existing forms of cooperation. A Joint Communication was adopted in September 2016 that set out further actions to promote long-term stability, including good governance, justice reform, socio-economic development and security. It also provided a basis for the creation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee EU-Tunisia in September 2016 and for the EU's substantial contribution at the Tunisia 2020 investors' conference in November 2016.

In **Morocco**, the EU has supported the country's reforms agenda in a wide range of social (education, health, social protection, gender, Technical Vocational Education and Training - TVET), economic (regulatory approximation, green growth, agriculture, and public financial management) and justice sectors. Technical and financial cooperation with Morocco continued throughout the period of legal uncertainty pending the European Court of Justice (ECJ) decision on the EU Morocco Agriculture Agreement.

EU cooperation has adjusted to the very particular circumstances of the situation in **Libya**, including by channelling support through municipalities. The EU is committed to fully implement the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) and to continue to mediate preserve the country's unity and tackle terrorism and irregular migration.

The EU Strategy for **Syria** sets out the EU's strategic goals, immediate objectives and lines of action for the resolution of the war in Syria and dealing with its immediate and long-term humanitarian impact. In 2016 the EU increased considerably its non-humanitarian assistance combining cross-border assistance with support from inside Syria with the aim to address the needs of the population and strengthen local resilience. The EU's assistance is also used to support significantly the five million Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and their host communities.

As regards **Israel** and **Palestine**, the EU remains firmly committed to a two-state solution. The EU has invested considerably in strengthening the capacity of the Palestinian Authority, above all in the implementation of key reforms in areas such as fiscal consolidation, regulatory framework, and civil service integration. EU funding has also focused on investments that can contribute to sustainable improvements of living conditions, particularly in the Gaza Strip. (ENP 18-05-2017)

Full [Report](#)

[Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy \(ENP\): stronger partnerships for a stronger neighbourhood](#)

20 COMPANIES EYE NIGERIA'S \$6BN OIL-FOR-PRODUCTS SWAP DEAL

Twenty companies have expressed interest in the revised plan by the Nigerian Government to reinstate the crude swapping contracts for petroleum products.

The crude swapping contract worth about \$6 billion entails exchange of more than 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil for imported petrol and diesel.

According to a report by Nigeria's Independent newspaper on Friday, the deal involves allocating agreed crude oil volume to an orga The crude swapping contract worth about \$6 billion entails exchange of more than 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil for imported petrol and diesel.

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The report added that the government was currently compiling a shortlist of the companies that would be given crude oil in exchange for petroleum products to be distributed through about 20,000 retail stations in the country.

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It disclosed that 20 Nigerian and foreign trading firms are on the shortlist of these new swap contracts.

The report disclosed that a Nigerian trading firm would be paired with a foreign trader in the new deal and that most of the companies on the shortlist are also on the list for Nigeria's crude allocations announced earlier in the year.

The new deal, according to the report, will eliminate all the cost elements of middlemen and allow the state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to take control of sale and purchase of the crude oil transaction with its partners. (APA 19-05-2017)

THE ISLAMIC CORPORATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR (ICD) SIGNS MOU WITH CHINA-AFRICA DEVELOPMENT FUND

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on the sidelines of the landmark IsDB 42nd Annual Meeting in Jeddah, between the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), the private sector arm of Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group and China-Africa Development Fund (CADFund), a Beijing-based private equity firm and subsidiary of the China Development Bank which focuses on Africa



The MoU was signed by Mr. Khaled Al Aboodi, the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of ICD, and Mr. Shi Jiyang, President and Chief Executive Officer of CADFund. (Source: Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD))

The MoU reflects the ICD and CAD Fund's goal of developing and establishing a strategic framework that focuses on improving the efficiency and efficacy of resource mobilisation with third-party investors interested in participating and investing in the African Islamic Infrastructure Financing Fund (AIIF). In addition, CADFund plans to work with ICD in the establishment of the AIIF and/or with the AIIF (following its incorporation) on promoting and financing infrastructure development projects in Africa. The MoU was signed by Mr. Khaled Al Aboodi, the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of ICD, and Mr. Shi Jiyang, President and Chief Executive Officer of CADFund.

Mr. Khaled Al Aboodi expressed his strong support for the partnership at the event, stating: "ICD and CADfund share the vision of promoting foreign direct investment, trade, and inclusive economic growth on a continent which is full of potential. By joining forces, we can better combine our expertise and commitment to achieve greater economic prosperity for the benefit of all. Additionally, ICD's commitment to accelerate infrastructure development in Africa and specifically sub-Saharan Africa will bring the at least the basic level of energy, transportation, medical and educational needs of citizens of African member countries."

Mr. Shi Jiyang said, "It certainly comes as no news that Africa's rating on the global infrastructure development index is significantly behind. By driving investments targeting infrastructure development projects in Africa, we will not only improve infrastructure and address the huge chasm, but we will also be contributing to economic growth thus further transforming the region. We look forward to a long-term partnership with the ICD."(AR 17-05-2017)

BOTSWANA TO RECEIVE US\$145M WATER LOAN FROM WORLD BANK

Botswana's Finance Minister Kenneth Matambo said World Bank has given the Botswana government over US\$145.5 million loan to build water infrastructure after it suffered a severe El Nino-induced drought in the past two years, Yarona FM radio station reported here Friday.



In 2015, overall dam levels in the semi-arid southern African nation fell below 20 percent of their design capacity during the country's worst drought in more than three decades, and ground water sources dried up or became saline.

Matambo reportedly said the loan would partly finance the Botswana emergency water security and efficiency project estimated at US\$160 million and that the remaining US\$14.5 million will be contributed by Botswana from domestic resources.

Matambo is further quoted as saying that in addition to mitigating drought impacts, the project will include waste water treatment and prevent pollution of vital downstream water resources. (APA 19-05-2017)

EU4YOUTH: EU DELEGATION IN TUNIS AND EU NEIGHBOURS SOUTH GIVE TUNISIAN YOUTH A VOICE



The EU Delegation in Tunisia, with the support of the EU Neighbours South project, organised an event focused on the EU's support to youth in the areas of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, which gathered over 200 participants on 13 May in Tunis.

The event, opened by the EU Ambassador in Tunisia Patrice Bergamini, included 3 thematic discussions during which young entrepreneurs, civil society actors, students and EU projects and officials exchanged on the needs of Tunisian youth in the areas and how the EU could support them.

The event also saw the presentation of successful stories achieved through EU-funded projects and concluded with musical and artistic performances. (EEAS 18-05-2017)

EU Neighbours South

SOUTH AFRICA, IRAN FOR DEEPER RELATIONS WITH NAMIBIA

South Africa and Iran have committed to deepen relations with Namibia. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, special envoy of President Jacob Zuma told President Hage Geingob on Thursday at State House in Windhoek that South Africa is working toward enhancing trade with Namibia.



"We are looking at specific projects which both presidents (Geingob and Zuma) referred to for joint exploration, exploitation so as to benefit from our own resources," Nkoana-Mashabane, South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation told the media after a closed-door meeting with President Geingob.

Meanwhile, Farhad Zargari, the managing director and chairman of Iran Foreign Investment Company (IFIC) told President Geingob on Thursday that his country seeks to expand economic cooperation with Namibia.

“We would like to explore more on the potential of Namibia, and see how we can expand our investments here,” Zargari, who chairs the IFIC board, told Geingob.

The IFIC has business interests in Namibia since 1976, including a 15 percent stake in the country’s first commercial uranium mine – Rössing Uranium, near Arandis in the Erongo region. (APA 19-05-2017)

WORLD BANK PROBES CONTROVERSIAL WATER PROJECT IN KENYA

The [World Bank](#) has begun to look into the complaints about social and environmental impacts of a controversial water project in Kenya that involves digging a water tunnel as lodged by residents of Murang’a County in Kenya.

It comes even as residents of Nairobi and its environs continue to have dry taps for close to a month now.

There have been issues raised about a 11.3km long northern collector tunnel (NCT) seeking to divert water to Ndakaini dam that services Nairobi and its environs.

The building of the tunnel commenced on February 24 2015, collecting water from Rivers Maragua, Gikigie and irate for purposes of increasing the water supply to Nairobi by approximately 140m cubic metres per day.

The chairman of the panel Gonzalo Castro de la Mata said 47 residents of Murang’a fear experiencing water shortages for domestic, agricultural and coffee processing when the aberdares river system is diverted to NCT.

International Development Association on December 20, 2007 approved \$150 million for the Water and Sanitation Service Improvement Project in areas served by Athi Water Services Board (AWSB), Lake Victoria North Water Services Board and Coast Water Services Board.

The controversial water project in Kenya was scaled up in May 2012 with an additional financing of \$300 million from IDA to increase access to water supply and sanitation services.

The inspection team said the 44km-long gravity pipeline, with capacity of 1.6 million cubic metres of water per second, has to be built up to Kabete reservoir through Ngethu and Gigiri water treatment plants to meet demand by 2017.

NCT I was to be completed by December 2015 but additional financing needs resulted in a change of World Bank’s environmental assessment category to reflect significant environmental and social impacts.

“The assessment prepared for NCT I indicated that the main environmental and socioeconomic impacts would be related to diversion of water; resulting in reduction in downstream flows in the rivers,” said the inspection panel.

The Kenyan opposition had also raised the red flag, saying the project could turn Murang’a County into a desert.

The Murang’a residents also argued the Ndakaini Dam, which receives water from Thika River, spills over twice a year and additional volumes from NCT I will result in spillage that could have replenished Murang’a’s lowlands water table. (CRO 07-05-2017)

MOZAMBIQUE SEEKS US\$250M FOR ROADS PROGRAMME

The chairperson of the Road Fund in Mozambique, Angelo Macuacua says the government is short of US\$250 million of the US\$403 million budgeted for the country’s road construction, maintenance and rehabilitation in 2017.



“In 2016, our achievements were heavily conditioned by the availability of resources and with the budget cut by 60 per cent, many road plans for the year had to be scrapped or drastically modified.

The means work that could not be done in 2016 for lack of funds had to be pushed into the future,” Macuacua told a meeting to review the Integrated Road Sector Programme that was held in Maputo late on Thursday.

In response, the Minister of Economy and Finance, Adriano Maleiane, told the meeting that the scarcity of resources meant that the government needed to be creative in seeking alternative sources of funding for its road programme.

This could entail seeking assistance from additional foreign partners, and identifying new sources of revenue internally.

Maleiane, who was representing Public Works Minister Carlos Bonete said the matter was urgent given the crucial role in the economy played by the roads sector.

“It is inconceivable to have a developed agricultural system, if there is no means by which crops can be moved,” he said.

Despite the shortage of money, interventions were made in 2016 in 15,600 kilometres of roads. But a further 8,000km, which should have been built or improved, were not touched.

The government hopes to intervene in 22,000km of roads. Much of the financing for roads and bridges comes from foreign partners, notably the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank.

Mozambique is facing a deepening crisis after the International Monetary Fund suspended funding to the southern African nation following the discovery of up to \$2 billion in previously undisclosed government debt.

The scandal is heaping pressure on Maputo, which is dependent on donors to finance about a quarter of its budget.

The southern African nation is battling to narrow a wide fiscal deficit, its currency has plummeted and its foreign reserves are dwindling. (APA 19-05-2017)

BRITISH EDUCATION FIRM TO SET UP HI-TECH CONSTRUCTION COLLEGE IN NIGERIA

A British [education company](#) has been chosen to set up a college for hi-tech construction college in Nigeria, the first of its kind in Africa, officials say.

The hi-tech construction college in Nigeria to be called Royal Academy for Construction and Fabrication in the city of Calabar, [Cross River State](#), will develop a “labor force that is skillful and mentally equipped for the 21st century construction and fabrication,” said state Governor Ben Ayade who announced the plan.

Delivering the college is the London-headquartered education management firm, Schools Company Ltd, which presently run a number of free schools and academies in England.

“The Royal Academy will be the first of its kind in Africa that will concentrate chiefly on hi-tech and heavy industrial fabrications and constructions,” said Governor Ayade to the press.

“This is the utmost thing that Cross Riverians have been waiting for because it is going to develop a new set of labor force,” Ayade said.

He added: “By establishing this great institution, Cross River State is putting in order a background that will make a new story and a new plot for the new Africa that all will be proud of,” guaranteeing that, “in the next few years, the state shall be the principal light in construction.”

Elias Achilleos, chief executive of Schools Company, said the design of the new college would pursue UK standards.

“This is a great project to the people of Nigeria and Calabar in specific,” he said, “and I plead for support from all the stakeholders for the victorious execution of this project that will turn out the very best in construction and fabrication works for this nation.

The objective, he said, was to have the academy up and operational “with the best gear and best instructors” in the coming 18 months.(CRO 06-05-2017)

MOZAMBIQUE POWER UTILITY TARGETS 200,000 NEW USER CONNECTIONS

State-owned utility Electricidade de Mozambique (EDM) plans to make 200,000 new connections to the national grid by the end of this year, which would be three times more than in 2016.



A company media statement seen by APA on Thursday says the new connections to the client base is thanks to the construction of 415 kilometers of medium voltage distribution network, and that last year 70,994 families were connected to power supply.

With the entry of 70,994 new customers last year, the electrified installations increased from 1,450,953 in 2015 to 1,511,738 in 2016, representing an increase of about 4 percent.

Thus, according to the public company, the national electrification rate rose from 25.9 percent in 2015 to 26.2 percent in the last year.

Mozambique has one of the lowest electrification rates in Africa, with the majority of the population still not linked to the national grid. (APA 18-05-2017)

CHINA TO FUND CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS IN UGANDA OIL BELT

Uganda is set to receive \$500m funding from the [China's Export-Import \(EXIM\) Bank](#) for the construction of critical oil roads in its oil belt, Albertine Graben, in South Western Uganda.

The roads in Uganda oil belt which are currently deteriorated are highly needed to boost transportation of oil when commercial production starts by 2020.

According to the Uganda's ministry of Finance they have already sent a request to receive more than \$500m (Shs1.8t) which will be supplemented by withdrawals from the Petroleum Fund and additional funding from the ongoing budgetary cuts.

Confirming the reports [Finance minister](#) Matia Kasaija said his trip to china was intended to seek funding for the project for roads in Uganda oil belt.

The delegation that headed to China also had a discussion on how the EXIM Bank will fund the multi-billion Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) but the arrangement has since suffered various setbacks.

"It is true we put in the request and discussions are ongoing; to see how they can help us," Mr. Kasaija told the media. "It is a matter of prioritizing, and we have made it clear that these roads are much needed to help us get oil out of the ground."

According to the [Uganda National Roads Authority](#) (Unra) the roads are, Hoima-Butiaba-Wanseko road (111km), Masindi-Biiso (54km), Masindi-Bugungu via Murchison Falls National Park (80km), Kaseeta – Lwera via Bugoma Forest (16km), Hohwa-Nyairongo-Kyarushesha road (25km), and Wanseko-Bugungu (23km).

The Ugandan government is currently keen on increasing the number of roads in the country with Chinese companies expected to carry out and fund the projects. (CRO 06-05-2017)

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