



MEMORANDUM

N° 166/2014 | 04/09/2014

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PIEBALGS: AID TO CONFLICT ZONES ‘BECOMING THE RULE, RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION’

SPECIAL REPORT: Europe’s engagement with fragile and conflict-prone states is increasingly becoming the mainstay of its developmental work, the EU development commissioner, Andris Piebalgs, has told EurActiv in an exclusive interview.

For the first time ever, four countries were last month classified by the UN as facing severe ‘Level 3’ emergencies – the highest classification of a humanitarian crisis: Syria, Iraq, South Sudan and Central African Republic.

“The world is changing,” Piebalgs told EurActiv. “A number of countries are progressing towards development and democratic reforms and others are facing or falling back into violent conflicts, poverty and underdevelopment.”

“Our engagement in those last ones, the fragile and conflict-affected countries, is increasingly becoming the rule, rather than the exception,” he said.

Piebalgs words paralleled those of the UN’s assistant secretary-general, Kyung-wha Kang who on 28 August [told the UN Security Council](#) that “grave human rights violations have become the norm in Syria”.

Kang said that the real death toll in Syria was “likely to be much higher” than the official figure of 191,000 people. She also said that close to a million people in Aleppo were being deprived of water access, and that almost one Syrian in two was now a refugee or an internally displaced person (IDP).

The UN High Commission for Refugees says that [three million Syrians are now registered refugees](#) and a further 6.5 million are IDPs, making the country’s plight “the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era.”

“We do have a renewed sense of emergency,” Piebalgs affirmed. “Aid to refugees and internally displaced people needs to be delivered fast and efficiently.” It also had to be put in the perspective of longer-term development principles, he argued.

In Syria, these have been challenged by the advance of the fundamentalist Islamic State (IS) group, which now controls vast swathes of Syria and Iraq.

Beheaded or crucified

In one Syrian town, Deir-Ez-Zor, up to 700 members of the Al-Sheitaat Arab tribe, whom the IS accuse of apostasy, were reportedly kidnapped or killed last month. Some were beheaded or crucified. Women from the tribe are said to have been sold on markets in Iraq.

The IS’s lightning offensive in Iraq garnered world attention and triggered US air strikes against the militia’s positions around Mount Sinjar – where [thousands of Yazidi tribespeople were besieged](#) - and [Mosul](#).

It also poses questions for the EU. Since 2003, the bloc has contributed [more than €1 billion](#) to Iraq in recovery, reconstruction and humanitarian aid, with [€75 million already pencilled in](#) for the coming budgetary period.

But EU aid delivery has been affected by the issue of aid disbursement within Iraq’s sectarian, fractious and often corrupt political structures which are thought to have increased support for IS among disaffected Iraqi Sunnis, and alienated many of the country’s majority Shias, as well as Kurds.

A senior EU source told EurActiv that in future, “EU projects will target the development of democratic [Iraqi] institutions compliant with the rule of law and human rights principles, and support access to national public education and to energy for the poor and for remote areas.”

The EU is already Iraq’s largest trade partner – after the US – with bilateral trade totalling €17.5 billion in 2012, €4.7 billion of which was made of European exports such as machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, food and live animals.

Iraq: A strategic energy partner?

Oil made up 99.7% of the €12.8 billion of EU imports from Iraq that year, and [the bloc sees](#) “substantial potential” for Iraq to become a “strategic energy partner”.

Political instability is a barrier to such developments – as well as being a transmission line for strife and humanitarian duress.

The European Council on 30 August called for “all Iraqi leaders to form a truly inclusive government,” following the resignation of the country’s prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, last month, and his succession by Haider al-Abadi, who has US support.

The council conclusions offered support to a reformist Iraqi government, and said that the bloc “remains committed to provide humanitarian assistance” to populations affected by the IS group.

Piebalgs said: “A political solution is needed in Iraq [involving the] formation of an inclusive Iraqi government that addresses the legitimate needs of all Iraqis and avoids sectarian bias in order to resolve outstanding disputes, protect minority groups, and create the conditions for poverty alleviation.”

Conflict-sensitive programming

“Development aid in Iraq will support this political process by tackling the roots of the current violence and bolstering long term structural stability,” he added.

The EU is now using conflict-sensitive programming to ensure that aid projects do not single out clans, or ethnic or religious groups for benefits. The EU’s development directorate has also ear-marked €1.5 billion for national resilience strategies in the Sahel and West Africa.

Responding to criticisms that the EU should focus more on conflict prevention, reported by EurActiv yesterday, Piebalgs said that stability and development were two sides of the same coin.

“In an ideal world we would be focusing only on conflict prevention but in reality we have to address crises as well and in parallel,” he said. “The greatest opportunity for conflict prevention lies in tackling the root causes of conflict, fostering development and resilience of social and political networks and institutions on the ground.”(EurActiv 02-09-2014)

PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA MEETS LESOTHO'S FEUDING POLITICIANS

South Africa's President Jacob Zuma has summoned Lesotho’s political leaders for emergency talks, following this weekend’s coup which saw Prime Minister Thomas Thabane fleeing to South Africa amid fears for his safety.

Thabane left his Maseru home early on Saturday, hours before the army surrounded the property and overran police stations in the city.

South Africa's Sunday Times later reported that the country's Special Forces rescued the Lesotho

Premier.

The feud is between Thabane, who is supported by the police, and Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing, who has the loyalty of the army.

Metsing on Monday confirmed that he is the acting Prime Minister.

Clayson Monyela, spokesperson for the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, confirmed that talks between officials of both governments were held in Pretoria "throughout the night" and are expected to continue later on Monday, with President Zuma mediating.

In addition, the Foreign Ministers of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe have also met to find a solution.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has urged "all parties to refrain from violence and work together towards a peaceful and lasting resolution to their differences", while the AU has rejected any unconstitutional change of government in Lesotho. (Pana 02/09/2014)

ZIMBABWE SLAPS SURTAX ON SOUTH AFRICAN WASHING POWDER

South African maker of washing powder MAQ, Bliss Brands, has decided to cease exports to Zimbabwe after the introduction of a surtax of 40%.

The tax was imposed at the start of August without any prior notification. The tax is charged on the packaged product, while bulk washing powder exports do not appear to attract the tax.

Jacqueline Jacobs, marketing director for Bliss Brands, on Sunday said the initial tax of 10% was suddenly increased to 40%. "We have been exporting to Zimbabwe for at least eight years, and although we have been subjected to surtaxes before, it has never been to this extent."

Xavier Carim, deputy director-general for international trade and economic development in the Department of Trade and Industry, on Sunday confirmed that information from exporters on the surtax on washing powder, cooking oil and laundry soap bars had been received.

"We are assessing how the surtax is being applied," he said.

Asked if it was not a violation of the Southern African Development Community (Sadc) free trade agreement, he said: "It is a little bit of a grey area."

The Sadc Protocol on Trade established a free trade area for 15 member countries including South Africa, Botswana, Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Mr Carim said the agreement disciplined tariffs at the border and there had been no increase in tariffs.

"A surcharge that is applied internally, such as a tax on imports and domestic products, could not be challenged. Even if there is no local production, and the tax is applied equitably, then it would not be a violation of the trade agreement. They may be doing it to generate revenue."

Perceived discriminatory measures could be taken up through a dispute-settlement process, but he acknowledged it was not effective at the moment.

Ms Jacobs said the company had been exporting at least 200 tonnes per month to Zimbabwe, and had been growing in the market up to now. It had been exporting to other Sadc members without attracting a similar tax.

Francois Dubbelman of FC Dubbelman & Associates based in Pretoria, said South African exporters could lodge an objection with the Sadc desk at the department if they felt they were being discriminated against and that the trade agreement was being violated.

He said it could be a "luxury tax" aimed at increasing revenue for Zimbabwe. No prior notification was necessary for the tax to be introduced. (BD 01-09-2014)

ZB REINSURANCE ZIMBABWE PLANS TO EXPAND INTO MOZAMBIQUE

ZB Reinsurance, a subsidiary of ZB Financial Holdings (ZBFH) of Zimbabwe plans to expand its reinsurance business to Mozambique in 2015, the group's chief executive, Ronald Mutandagayi said in Harare.

Quoted by local media, Mutandagayi said the group plans to move into Mozambique as the country is attracting a lot of foreign direct investment "so there are opportunities in terms of the reinsurance business."

The chief executive of the ZBHF group noted that Mozambique has shown the highest rates of economic growth of all member countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently released growth forecasts for Mozambique's GDP of 8.3 percent this year and 7.9 percent in 2015.

In the first half of the year the Zimbabwean group posted losses of US\$2.6 million, compared with a profit of US\$2.2 million in the same period of 2013.

However, the group's insurance business grew 2 percent and provided 15 percent of the group's total revenue. (02-09-2014)

GUNFIRE, POWER CUTS REKINDLE TENSION IN MASERU

Gunfire and power cuts rekindled tension in Lesotho's capital Maseru overnight, as the expected return to the mountain nation of the exiled prime minister appeared uncertain following an apparent coup.

An aide to Prime Minister Tom Thabane told AFP on Tuesday that the 75-year-old was unlikely to return to the country on Tuesday as planned, after regional mediators brokered a road map to ease the country's political crisis.

"We are still in Johannesburg. There is a possibility that we may not arrive in Lesotho today," Samonyane Ntsekele said in a phone interview, without giving details on the delay.

Mr Thabane had fled across the border to South Africa before dawn on Saturday, as troops attacked key police installations and surrounded his official residence.

The military denies carrying out a coup and says its raids were to confiscate weapons from police stations destined for "political fanatics".

After three days of relative calm, swathes of Maseru plunged into darkness on Monday evening.

The sound of sporadic automatic gunfire echoed off the mountains from undetermined locations.

Mr Ntsekele said he was unaware of reports of gunfire that rang in Maseru overnight.

Tensions between the military and the police mean there is no security presence on the streets, which emptied completely after dark.

"We don't know what is happening. They are just fighting for their own things they don't want to say anything to us," said Lineo Mattadi, a 28-year-old upholstery factory worker.

Fearing a power vacuum and further violence, the US ordered the families of its diplomats to leave, in case land borders and airports are closed.

By Maseru's main military base nervous and heavily armed young soldiers questioned passers-by, fearing foreign intervention could be at hand.

That seems unlikely. Mr Thabane's request that the SADC (Southern African Development Community) send peacekeeping force troops has been rebuffed.

But the SADC did force the country's rival parties to agree to a deal that will see Mr Thabane return and parliaments reopen, after two days of talks in Pretoria.

The SADC will also send an observer team to the mountainous African kingdom to monitor political, defence and security developments.

South Africa surrounds the tiny country, and is keen to make sure it does not fall into lawlessness.

Lesotho's vast dams provide much of the drinking water for Johannesburg and Pretoria, and any weapons needed in a full-scale conflict would have to flow through the "Rainbow Nation."

Mr Thabane will probably face a vote of confidence when parliament returns — one he will likely lose — but his biggest challenge in the short term will be to end doubts about who controls the army.

When asked on Monday who controls the military, acting Prime Minister Motloheloa Phooko told AFP: "That is a difficult question."

Intelligence sources have claimed that Lt-Gen Tlali Kamoli, commander of the Lesotho Defence Forces, orchestrated the coup when ordered by Mr Thabane to relinquish his command.

The commander was to be replaced by Lt-Gen Maaparankoe Mahao, who fled the country on Saturday after a pre-dawn assassination attempt.

His home was sprayed with bullets, forcing his wife and three young sons to hide, terrified for their lives during the 30-minute ordeal.

Speaking in Pretoria, Lt-Gen Mahao labelled Lt-Gen Kamoli "a renegade general who is refusing to step down". Lt-Gen Mahao claimed that Lt-Gen Kamoli was reluctant to relinquish his post for fear of prosecution.

"There are a number of criminal acts conducted by sections under his command. He is afraid that when he is removed from office, the forces of justice will come into effect," he told AFP.

Lt-Gen Mahao claimed that soldiers had also sought to seize police files relating to the deputy prime minister, the LCD's (Lesotho Congress for Democracy's) Mothetjoa Metsing, who was part of the Pretoria deal.

"The deputy prime minister is implicated in corruption charges. He is under investigation for that."

But military spokesman Major Ntlele Ntoi insisted there was no doubt who was in command of the armed forces.

"Lt-Gen Tlali Kamoli is the one who is in charge," he said categorically, stating that Lt-Gen Mahao faces a court martial for conduct unbecoming an officer. (AFP 02-09-2014)

ANGOLAN GROUP STARTS INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESS WITH HOTEL IN LISBON, PORTUGAL

Angolan group Sociedade Comercial de Investimentos Gerais (Socinger) will begin its process of internationalisation by opening a 4-star hotel of the Skyna Hotels chain in Lisbon, Portugal, the group said in a statement.

The group plans to invest 22 million euros in the project and the hotel is expected to start operating in March 2015.

"We have chosen Portugal as the first country to receive the Skyna brand due to the proximity between the two countries, both in terms of language and the success of partnerships between Portugal and Angola in the tourism and hospitality area," said the chief executive of Skyna Hotels, Alexandre Portugal.

In the statement, Portugal also said that the unit to be opened in Lisbon will be focused on the international market, "proposing a privileged cultural and business exchange between Angola and Portugal."

The Skyna Lisboa Hotel will have 105 rooms, of which seven will be suites and five master suites with private balconies and 93 rooms, 26 of which will be superior. (03-09-2014)

AMPLATS PLANS TO NEARLY TRIPLE PRODUCTION AT SOLE ZIMBABWE MINE

Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) plans to almost triple production at its sole mine in Zimbabwe even though it still has to be repaid money seized from its bank accounts by the central bank and is being forced to cede control of the operation.

The company plans to boost production of ore at its Unki mine to 350,000 tonnes a month from 130,000 tonnes, through an expansion that is expected to last from 2016 until 2020. That would equate to annual production of 180,000oz-200,000oz of platinum once it is shipped to SA and refined. Unki produced 63,000oz of the precious metal last year.

"Studies are still in progress to determine the actual cost of the ramp-up phase," general mine manager Walter Nemasasi said last Friday. "By the end of the year, we'll know how much it would cost."

Unki's expansion comes as Amplats plans to sell assets in SA after a five-month strike over pay earlier this year. Still, the mine in Zimbabwe has yet to complete an agreement to satisfy ownership laws that would see it ceding 51% control, and it is still owed \$109m from when the government seized foreign exchange from bank accounts from 2006 to 2009.

Negotiations over the stake sale with the government are continuing even though a memorandum of understanding has been signed, said Mr Nemasasi. "That package has not yet moved," he said. "Anglo American Platinum remains committed to complying with the legal requirements of indigenisation and, in its opinion, the heads of agreement remain valid."

As part of the \$143m sale agreement signed in November 2012, 21% would be sold to the state-run National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Board, 10% to the community around Shurugwi, 10% to employees and 10% to black Zimbabweans.

The company may also be paid back the money it is owed after the government assumed the central bank's \$1.3bn debt to local companies and foreign creditors in June.

Under the expansion plan, the mine would increase the number of sections it operates to 20 from 11 and its maximum depth to 1.8km from 1.5km. The mine's life will also be cut to 50 years from 80.

Unki is Anglo American's last mining operation in Zimbabwe, after assets ranging from gold mines to ferrochrome producers were sold as the country struggled through a decade-long recession. (Bloomberg 02-09-2014)

PROSPECTING BEGINS ON NINE OIL BLOCKS IN ANGOLA

Prospecting for oil and gas has begun at nine Angolan blocks, according to a report by the Oil Ministry on prospecting activities in Angola.

The document indicates that operators such as ENI (Italy), Repsol (Spain), Total (France), Petrobras (Brazil) and Statoil (Norway) have ongoing prospecting operations in the Angolan sea, with a global investment of US\$630 million so far.

Of the nine operations underway on 30 July, the one run by Cobalt (United States) in block 21/09, in deep waters, it at the most advanced stage.

The American oil company has invested US\$164 million in this operation, of an estimated total of just over US\$179 million and has achieved its initial production targets, at a depth of 1,633 metres and is now under "review".

Also under review is the activity of the Associação de Cabinda operator, with drilling underway, as is Total, in block 32, in ultra-deep waters.

The remaining six drilling operations identified by the Oil Ministry on the same date, are at the stage of preparation, drilling or testing.

Angola is the second largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa and reached a daily production of around 1.6 million barrels per day in the first half of the year. (03-09-2014)

AMERICAN ORGANISATION TO HOLD CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN INFRASTRUCTURE

The US-based Corporate Council on Africa will host the US-Africa Infrastructure Conference on 7-9 October in Washington DC, according to a statement made available to PANA in New York on Monday.

The statement said that the conference, with the theme: "Building Resilient Cities", would highlight how major cities in Africa were coping with rapid urbanization and the needs for a steadily growing middle class.

It noted that during the conference, various sessions would offer solutions for potable water, intermodal transportation, communication technology, and on- and off-grid electricity for the growth and development of African cities.

It said that participants would be drawn from US and African governments and businesses involved in infrastructure, power, water and ICT, as well as financiers looking for bankable projects in Africa.

The CCA is a nonprofit, membership-based organisation established in 1993 to promote business and investment between the US and African countries, and it has members in more than 170 US companies, which represent nearly 85 per cent of total US private sector investments in Africa. (Pana 02/09/2014)

NEW DAMS IN MOZAMBIQUE FACILITATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The construction of the Lupata and Boroma dams, in Mozambique's Tete province, will facilitate the development of agriculture and forestry along the Zambezi River, according to the heads of the companies that recently signed the respective concession agreements.

The officials believe that once they are completed, the two reservoirs will contribute to mitigating the effects of floods that have dramatically affected populations living along the Zambezi River valley and riverside districts, according to Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias .

The two concessions granted by the government are intended to build two dams to produce 800 megawatts (MW) of hydroelectric power, essential to meeting growing domestic demand for electricity. The companies are part of a Mozambican group and a consortium of companies that it is made up of, namely Sonipal Ltd, Hydroparts, Ruthland and Cazembe Holdings in strategic partnership with state power company Electricidade de Moçambique (EdM).

Paul Ratilal, on behalf of the proponent companies, said at the session to sign the concession agreements that Mozambique is a vast country, with an average of 120,000 new electrical connections per year and an energy demand that is growing by about 14 to 16 percent per year.

"In the coming years, in the city of Maputo alone, approximately 100 new residential and office buildings are due to be built, as well as condominiums and in other urban areas new buildings are also planned, especially in Beira, Nacala and Pemba, in addition to development corridors and special economic zones, development hubs such as Nacala, Beluluane, Manga, Dondo, Tete, and Palma, amongst others," said Paul Ratilal. (03-09-2014)

LIBERIA EBOLA HEALTHCARE WORKERS STRIKE

Scores of healthcare workers at Liberia's main hospital have gone on strike over unpaid wages, complicating the fight against the world's worst Ebola epidemic that the US disease prevention chief said was spiralling out of control.

As well as the quickly mounting human toll, the United Nations warned the spread of the fever could lead to food shortages in West Africa, potentially further depleting the resources of governments frantically trying to contain it.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and other international bodies are scrambling to support fragile healthcare systems in some of the world's poorest countries, but so far additional staff and resources have been slow to arrive on the ground.

More than 120 healthworkers have died during the Ebola outbreak amid shortages of equipment and trained staff in the region. That is nearly a 10th of the total 1,550 killed by the disease, mostly in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

The strike at the John F Kennedy Medical Center (JFK) in Liberia's capital Monrovia follows a one-day protest over pay and conditions at the Connaught hospital in Sierra Leone's capital on Monday. Both hospitals have treated Ebola patients.

"Health workers have died (fighting Ebola), including medical doctors at ... JFK and to have them come to work without food on their table, we think that is pathetic," George Williams, secretary general of the Health Workers Association of Liberia, said.

Williams said healthcare workers at JFK, the country's largest referral hospital, had gone unpaid for two months.

Staff at the main Ebola clinic at Kenema in eastern Sierra Leone also walked off the job last week, in protest at conditions.

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Tom Frieden said on Tuesday the outbreak was accelerating very fast and urged more global support to combat the Ebola outbreak.

Harvests risk

"It's spiralling out of control. The situation is bad and it looks like it's going to get worse quickly. There is still a window of opportunity to tamp it down but that window is closing, and we need to act now," he told NBC News in an interview following a trip to Africa.

"This is different than every other Ebola situation we've ever had. It's spreading widely, throughout entire countries, through multiple countries, in cities and very fast," he said, speaking from CDC headquarters in Atlanta.

Frieden called on health officials to immediately seek to reverse the outbreak by sending in more resources and specialised workers, adding that the US government now has 70 people in the region.

The countries affected want to fight the outbreak but face limited resources, he added. "There is a willingness there to confront it, but they need to world to support them." Putting further pressure on the ability of the region's governments to spend money on healthcare, the epidemic has also put harvests at risk and sent food prices soaring in West Africa, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said. Restrictions on people's movements and the establishment of quarantine zones to contain the spread of the haemorrhagic fever has led to panic buying, food shortages and price hikes in countries ill-prepared to absorb the shock.

"Even prior to the Ebola outbreak, households in some of the most affected areas were spending up to 80% of their incomes on food," said Vincent Martin, head of an FAO unit in Dakar which is coordinating the agency's response.

"Now these latest price spikes are effectively putting food completely out of their reach," Martin said in a statement, adding the food crisis could hinder containment of the disease, which is typically spread via the bodily fluids of the sick.

The FAO issued an alert for Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, the three countries most affected by the outbreak, which was detected in the forests of southeastern Guinea in March.

The death toll from an Ebola outbreak in the Djera region of northern Democratic Republic of Congo has risen to 31, Minister of Health Felix Kabange Numbi told Reuters on Tuesday.

The outbreak in Congo's Equateur province is thought to be separate from the West African epidemic.

Death toll from Congo Ebola outbreak rises

Meanwhile, the death toll from an outbreak of the Ebola virus in the Djera region of northern Democratic Republic of Congo has risen to 31, the government said on Tuesday, as the WHO confirmed there was no link with an epidemic in West Africa.

Previously, the government said there were 13 dead.

The separate outbreak in West Africa has killed more than 1,550 people since it was first reported in the forests of southeastern Guinea in March.

The WHO said on Tuesday that the outbreak in Congo was a "distinct and independent event, with no relationship to the outbreak in West Africa". It added that there were a total of 53 cases and said health care workers were tracing 160 contacts.

The Zaire strain of the deadly virus is indigenous to Congo and there have been seven outbreaks in the country since it was first discovered there in the remote Equateur province in 1976.

The first victim of the current Congo outbreak was a pregnant woman who butchered a jungle animal in the village of Ikanamongo and died on August 11. (*Reuters 02-09-2014*)

EUROPEAN UNION ALLOCATES 85M EUROS TO EAC

The European Union (EU) has through the European Development Fund (EDF 11) allocated the East African Community 85 million Euros for the 2016-2020 period, the EAC secretariat announced Monday.

In a statement, the EAC said the funds would be directed to three main areas - peace and security (€15 million), regional economic integration (€45 million) and natural resources (€25 million).

Out of the €45 million meant for regional economic integration, €15 million will be for the implementation of key protocols on the Customs Union, the Common Market, and the East African Monetary Union, while €30 million will be accessed by partner states to support trade related activities.

'This development came to light when EAC Secretary General Richard Sezibera met, in Dar es Salaam, with the EU Head of Delegation and Ambassador to Tanzania, Filiberto Ceriani Sebregondi,' the statement added. (Pana 02/09/2014)

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE TAKES ON LOAN FOR WORK ON WATER SUPPLY NETWORK

The government of Sao Tome and Principe has taken on a loan of US\$7.5 million from the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) to finance the construction of the drinking water supply network.

The loan agreement was signed by the Sao Tome Minister for Planning and Finance, Hélio de Almeida, and the Director-General of BADEA, Habelaziz Kelef, who arrived Monday for a 48-hour working visit to the archipelago, Portuguese news agency Lusa reported.

Construction work is intended to improve access to drinking water in the city of Santana and the community in the centre of Água Izé as well as to meet the needs of the current and future population until 2030.

The BADEA loan is due to be repaid over 30 years, has a grace period of ten years and an interest rate of 1 percent.

BADEA's financial support for Sao Tome and Principe totals US\$42 million to date.

As part of his visit to Sao Tome and Principe, Kelef met with the ministers for Planning and Finance, Hélio Almeida, and Public Works, Infrastructure and Natural Resources, Fernando Maquengo and is due to be received by Prime Minister Gabriel Costa, before leaving the country Wednesday. (03-09-2014)

WHO: NO LINK BETWEEN EBOLA OUTBREAKS IN DRC, WEST AFRICA

There is no link between the Ebola outbreaks in West Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the World Health Organization (WHO) announced Tuesday, after receiving results from virus sequencing of samples from the Ebola outbreak in the DRC.

'The virus is the Zaire strain, in a lineage most closely related to a virus from the 1995 Ebola outbreak in Kikwit, DRC,' the WHO said in a statement sent to PANA.

It said results from virus characterisation, together with findings from the epidemiological investigation, were definitive: the outbreak in DRC is a distinct and independent event, with no relationship to the outbreak in West Africa.

WHO said the Zaire strain of the virus is indigenous to that country.

The global health body said the findings were reassuring, as they exclude the possibility that the virus has spread from West to Central Africa.

Ebola first emerged in 1976 in almost simultaneous outbreaks in the DRC (then Zaire) and South Sudan (then Sudan).

Meanwhile, the WHO has said testing in DRC confirmed Ebola in 6 of 8 samples, and that the outbreak is located in the remote Boende district, Equateur province in the north-western part of the country.

Epidemiological investigation has linked the index case, who died on 11 Aug., to the preparation of bushmeat for consumption.

This is the country's seventh Ebola outbreak since 1976.

The introduction of the virus into the human population following contact with infected bushmeat (usually fruit bats or monkeys) is consistent with the pattern seen at the start of previous outbreaks. The virus is now spreading from person to person.

The response team has, to date, identified 53 cases consistent with the case definition for Ebola virus disease, including 31 deaths. Seven of these deaths were among health care workers. More than 160 contacts are being traced. (Pana 03/09/2014)

MICROSOFT TAKES UP DEMO AFRICA EVENT SPONSORSHIP

Microsoft Corporation has taken up platinum sponsorship for this year's edition of DEMO Africa that will be held later in the month, in Lagos, Nigeria. According to DEMO Africa Project and Communications Manager Evelyene Wangui, the company will participate in the event for the third time under the Microsoft 4Afrika initiative.

The sponsorship will see Microsoft offer financial support for the event where 40 tech based start-ups from across Africa are expected to pitch to potential investors.

Wangui told the Kenyan media Tuesday that DEMO Africa recently released the names of the final 40 start-ups that will launch on the DEMO Africa stage where Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya and Egypt will have the highest representation.

Commenting on the collaboration, Fernando de Sousa, GM Africa Initiatives at Microsoft, underscored the importance of innovations to the growing African economy.

"DEMO Africa has given a platform for investors to realize the enormous potential amongst African youth showcased through start-ups," he said.

"As an organization that has operated in the continent for over 20 years, Microsoft believes Africa's economic take-off to long-term growth prospects will be determined by the investment decisions we make today in support of youth initiatives," he added.

Welcoming the support, DEMO Africa's Executive Producer, Harry Hare commented that investor's confidence plays a very critical role in motivating start-up entrepreneurs.

"We acknowledge the support of Microsoft and their efforts in uplifting young entrepreneurs in Africa. It's this kind of support that assures us that the future is indeed bright for Africa and at DEMO Africa we are keen to make our contribution to this success.

As has been witnessed in the past, the September event is expected to attract top investors, tech acquisition specialists, IT buyers and media from across the region and around the globe. (Pana 03/09/2014)

AVIATION INDUSTRY: DUBAI TO HOST AVIATION AFRICA 2015

A two-day summit, which will focus on strategies, opportunities and challenges affecting the aviation industry in Africa, and dubbed 'Aviation Africa 2015', will be held in Dubai, UAE , between 10-11 May, 2015, organisers announced Tuesday.

In a statement, the organisers said NEXUS from Saudi Arabia and Wyvern Consulting from USA have joined up with the event to become main sponsors.

'The link with these two companies is a perfect fit for the Aviation Africa event, which has launched to address the growth opportunities in the African continent for the aviation industry,' the statement noted.

According to the statement, the two-day Summit will focus on strategies, opportunities and the challenges affecting the industry and a key focus area will be the safety challenges in Africa.

NEXUS provides Flight Operations and Support with a massive commitment to safety.

It was launched in 2010 and is based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It is said to have opened a regional office in Rwanda and already identified the opportunities the region can offer.

Meanwhile, Wyvern Consulting is a U.S. company providing safety intelligence data and onsite risk assessments to business and private aviation communities for over 20 years.

NEXUS is said to be Wyvern Consulting's international partner covering the Middle East, Asia and Africa regions.

"We are delighted to welcome Nexus and Wyvern Consulting to the Aviation Africa 2015 event. I recently visited Nexus at their head office in Jeddah and was very impressed with their level of service across the business aviation sector and their level of commitment to safety, security and people,' Alan Peaford, Managing Director of AeroComm Ltd, responsible for creating the Summit's two-day programme, remarked.

'We will be covering all these topics in our Summit programme and it is companies like Nexus and Wyvern that will be important contributors to the Summit discussions," he added. (Pana 03/09/2014)



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50TH ANNIVERSARY

Our Member the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Belgium-Luxemburg-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific, celebrates the **50 Anniversary** of its existence next September 24th, 2014.

EBCAM congratulate our long standing Belgium Member, and its President Mr Guy Bultynck, at the occasion of such an important landmark.

Fernando Matos Rosa
Brussels



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