

AFRICA: 8 MARS 2018 : (Energie: l'Algérie met le cap sur le nucléaire)



Le Premier ministre, Ahmed Ouyahia, a signé un décret exécutif, publié le 13 février 2018 dans le journal officiel, définissant les prérogatives du ministère de l'Energie dans le développement du programme des énergies renouvelable et le nucléaire civil.

LIRE LA SUITE : AFRICA: 8 MARS 2018 : (Energie: l'Algérie met le cap sur le nucléaire) [<http://burundi-agnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/bur08032018.pdf>]

Burundi :

Burundi : EACJ constate la présence du Rwandais NGOGA à l'EALA

JUSTICE, GEOPOLITIQUE, SECURITE, EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY, AFRIQUE DE L'EST, UNION AFRICAINE – La juge Ougandaise Mugenyi Monica de l'East African Court of Justice (EACJ) rejette la violation de l'article 12 de l'EALA (East African Legislative Assembly), constatée comme tricherie observée, en défaveur du Burundi et de la Tanzanie, dans la nomination du Rwandais NGOGA Martin, comme Président de l'EALA en décembre 2017, succédant à l'Ougandais KIDEGA Daniel.

Arusha, Tanzania, mardi 6 mars 2018 – En première instance, la juge Ougandaise Mugenyi Monica, de l'East African Court of Justice (EACJ), a rejeté la requête déposée par le Burundi pour demander l'annulation de l'élection du nouveau Président de l'EALA (East African Legislative Assembly / Parlement de l'EAC).

L'argument que la Juge Ougandaise Mugenyi a avancé : “Le titulaire de charge du poste a depuis dûment commencé ses fonctions“.

Le mardi 19 décembre 2017, le Rwandais M. NGOGA Martin a été élu, suite à un putsch inexplicable à l'EALA, Président de l'EALA. Selon un accord politique entre les pays EAC, ce n'était pas le tour du RWANDA d'occuper cette place au sein de l'EALA. Le problème fondamental est cette rupture de confiance au sein de l'EAC. La Tanzanie et le Burundi, mettant en avant l'art.12 du règlement intérieur de l'EALA, ont directement protesté contre ce putsch -DESORDRE- dans les institutions de l'EAC. Le Sud Soudan, nouvellement dans les institutions EAC, n'était pas au courant de cet entendement politique au sein de l'EAC. Le Burundi, fâché suite à cette rupture de la parole donnée, s'est ainsi lancé dans cette procédure judiciaire ...

Ce mardi 6 mars 2018, la Cour EACJ a statué sur l'exception soulevé -in limine litis – par l'avocat de l'État Burundi. Le fond sera débattu lors de la prochaine audience. La procédure judiciaire se poursuit concernant cette décision [<http://eacj.org/?p=3570>] ...

Pour les connaisseurs de la géopolitique régional et africaine, il ne s'agit là que l'un des épisodes de la guerre que livre les lobbies américains et européens contre la Chine. Le lobby occidental se réjouit de garder le contrôle sur l'Afrique en ayant réussi à mettre le Rwandais, Président KAGAME Paul, à la tête de l'Union Africaine pour (1) une année. Dans la même dynamique, ces lobbies ont permis, par un putsch organisé au sein de l'EALA (East African Legislative Assembly / Parlement de l'EAC), à mettre le Rwandais M. NGOGA Martin, succédant à l'Ougandais M. KIDEGA Daniel, gardant ainsi la main mise sur l'EAC.

En 2015, après le putsch militaire raté du mercredi 13 mai 2015 contre le Burundi, alors que tout était finie pour les putschistes, les USA d'Obama et l'Union Européenne ont réussi, via l'OUGANDA, à relancer des négociations avec les putschistes sous le couvert d'un- Dialogue InterBurundais Externe-. L'Ougandais Mze Museveni, fin stratège, réussissant même en nommant le Tanzanien Mze MKAPA, à brouiller les pistes dans ce conflit géostratégique... C'est à cela que servent des personnages comme KAGAME, NGOGA, et MUSEVENI lorsque l'on dit d'eux qu'ils sont les pions de l'OCCIDENT en Afrique des Grands Lacs, et en Afrique de manière général.

En conclusion, au sein de l'EAC, aujourd'hui, nous avons d'un côté le Burundi et la Tanzanie, et puis de l'autre, le Rwanda et l'Ouganda. Ajouté à cela, le Kenya et le Sud Soudan qui jouent les arbitres souvent en direction du Rwanda et de l'Ouganda, qui y ont une diplomatie forte, aidés par ses lobbies occidentaux.

Entre 2019 et 2020, l'Afrique va connaître sa première révolution industrielle (électrique, combinée à celle de l'internet et des réseaux sociaux), boostée par les nouvelles Routes africaines de la Soie Chinoise, qui sont la réelle préoccupation occidentale actuellement.

Sudan :

New U.S. military attaché meets Sudan's defence minister

<http://sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64891>

March 7, 2018 (KHARTOUM) - The newly appointed military attaché at the U.S. embassy in Khartoum Lieut. Col. Adam Matthew Cordish, Wednesday has presented his credentials to Defense Minister Awad Ibn Ouf.

Cordish would replace former U.S. defence attaché Lieut. Col. Jörn Pung whose term had ended last December.

During his reception of the new military attaché, the defence minister stressed Sudan's keenness to promote ties with the U.S. to serve interests of the two peoples, describing relations between the two countries as important and strategic.

According to the Sudanese army spokesperson Ahmed Khalifa al-Shami, Ibn Ouf touched on some historical aspects of the military cooperation between the two countries which began in 1958.

He expressed hope the new military attaché would continue efforts of his predecessor to achieve the "desired goals", vowing to provide every possible support to facilitate his task.

For his part, the new military attaché underscored the importance of relations between the two countries, pledging to exert every possible effort to promote ties between Washington and Khartoum.

He expressed readiness to pursue implementation of the five-track engagement plan between the two countries.

Last October President Donald Trump permanently cancelled the 20-year economic sanctions on Sudan opening the door for the normalization of bilateral relation and removal of remaining sanctions on the east African country particularly its removal from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

Washington is involved in a five-track engagement process with Sudan towards the full normalization of relations.

The five-track process includes the fight against terrorism, Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Sudan's role in the peace process in South Sudan, Sudan's peace and the humanitarian situation in the South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

In March 2017, Sudan appointed a military attaché in Washington, several weeks after the arrival to Khartoum of the American military attaché.

U.S. State Department labelled Sudan a sponsor of terrorism on August 12, 1993. Sudan's inclusion in the list of state sponsors of terrorism prevents military cooperation between the two countries.

However, the development of security cooperation between the two countries pushed them to move forward to upgrade bilateral relations despite the ban.

(ST)

South Sudan :

U.S urges U.N to impose an arms embargo on South Sudan

<http://sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64894>

March 7, 2018 (NEW YORK) - The United States on Wednesday circulated a draft UN Security Council resolution that threatens to impose an arms embargo on South Sudan and to take "all appropriate measures" against those blocking its peace efforts.

JPEG - 22.7 kb

US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley (L) looks on as she meets President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir at The President Office in Juba on October 25, 2017 (AFP)

The draft text from the U.S administration, AFP reported, demands an end to four years of fighting in South Sudan and urges the warring sides to uphold three ceasefire accords agreed upon from July 2016.

The Security Council, according to the draft resolution, "expresses its intention to consider all appropriate measures, including an arms embargo, to disable the parties' ability to procure weapons and ammunition so that the peace process can proceed".

However, although negotiations on the proposed measure ahead of a vote at the 15-member Security Council scheduled for March 15 begin on Thursday, there are fears Russia and China could opposed the draft resolution from Washington.

Now in its fifth year, the conflict in South Sudan has left tens of thousands of people dead, more 2 million displaced and half of the population at threat of facing severe starvation, aid agencies say.

A recent report by the United Nations and South Sudan government said up to 150,000 people could slip into famine this year alone.

In January this year, the US Ambassador to the world body, Nikki Haley told a council meeting that imposition of arms embargo would "actually help the people of South Sudan — to slow the violence, slow the flow of arms and ammunitions and protect innocent lives."

The draft resolution would also renew the mandate of the UN peacekeeping force in South Sudan for a year, maintain a regional force in Juba and request that the blue helmets be fully-equipped with tactical helicopters and drones to help them carry out their mission.

The UN has 12,500 troops and 1,500 police in its UNMISS mission. The draft resolution urges UN to ensure the mission is at full strength, reaching its authorized ceiling of 17,000 troops and 2,000 police.

It calls on Juba to sign an agreement with the African Union to allow the establishment of a hybrid court in South Sudan to try those responsible for serious crimes.

The African Union has backed sanctions as a way to pressure the warring sides to end the war in South Sudan, but it has not endorsed an arms embargo.

(ST)

Egypt :

BP to produce up to 700 mcf per day from Egypt's West Nile Delta fields by end - 2018

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-bp-egypt/bp-to-produce-up-to-700-mcf-per-day-from-egypts-west-nile-delta-fields-by-end-2018-idUKKCN1GJ1EZ>

Reuters Staff

CAIRO (Reuters) - BP (B.P.L) is set to begin production at two of its Egyptian gas fields as part of its West Nile Delta project before the end of 2018, a petroleum ministry statement said on Wednesday. The fields, Fayoum and Giza, are expected to produce 500-700 million cubic feet of gas per day, the statement added. BP started gas production from two other fields in its West Nile Delta development last year. The Taurus and Libra fields, commissioned eight months ahead of schedule and under budget, currently produce about 700 million standard cubic feet of gas a day for the Egyptian national grid. BP CEO Bob Dudley said last month that the company plans to invest over \$1 billion (721.19 million pounds) in Egypt this year. Egypt has been seeking to speed up production from recently discovered fields, with an eye to halting imports by 2019 and achieving self-sufficiency.

Ethiopia :

Tillerson Stops in Ethiopia on First Official Visit to Africa

<https://www.voanews.com/a/tillerson-stops-ethiopia-first-official-visit-africa/4284331.htm>

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was welcomed to Ethiopia Wednesday on the red carpet by Foreign Minister Workneh Gebeyehu on the first stop on his official visit to Africa, a resource-rich continent that is becoming more closely linked with China on matters such as trade and aid.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is also visiting Ethiopia Wednesday but there has been no confirmation the two diplomats will meet.

Hours before leaving the U.S. Tuesday, Tillerson said the U.S. is committed to building on a "strong foundation of U.S.-Africa relations" and accused China of "encouraging dependency" in its approach to the continent.

In a speech Tuesday outlining the Trump administration's Africa policy, Tillerson said the United States is "eager" to lower barriers to trade and investment in Africa, whose largest trading partner by far is China.

The secretary of state added the U.S. approach of "incentivizing good governance" contrasts sharply with China, "which encourages dependency, using opaque contracts, predatory loan practices and corrupt deals that mire nations in debt and undercut their sovereignty."

"Chinese investment does have the potential to address Africa's infrastructure gap, but its approach has led to mounting debt and few, if any, jobs in most countries," Tillerson added. "When coupled with the political and fiscal pressure, this endangers Africa's natural resources and its long-term economic, political stability."

Representative Chris Smith, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, released a statement that said China's activities and actions on the continent have "propped up kleptocrats and autocrats."

"Although Africa needs sustained investment and engagement from members of the international community, China has been largely a negative actor in the region for some time," Smith said.

The U.S. lawmaker added China "is building military relationships and partnering with one-party states, often to the detriment of good governance, the rule of law, and the African people themselves."

Former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield told VOA on Tuesday that Tillerson is "absolutely correct" on Chinese influence in Africa, but "he did not say what will done to counter balance that influence."

In Ethiopia, for example, total U.S. investment of around \$567 million, is dwarfed by Chinese investments, which are more than \$15 billion, according to the State Department.

Some experts say Washington and Beijing can both benefit from their work on the continent, even though China is focused on infrastructure and the United States is focused on education and health care.

"The U.S.-Africa versus China dynamics doesn't necessarily have to be, I think, an either/or," said Christina Golubski, an assistant director of Brookings Institution's Africa Growth Initiative.

"The opportunities for engagement from different partners in the continent is quite great," she added.

Counterterrorism, trade, governance

Tillerson's one-week, five-nation trip that begins late Tuesday will focus on counterterrorism, promoting peace, good governance and trade and investment.

"Our country's security and economic prosperity are linked with Africa's like never before," the top U.S. diplomat said before an audience at George Mason University just outside of Washington.

The trip comes two months after President Donald Trump triggered a wave of controversy when he reportedly referred to some African nations as "s—hole countries" during an Oval Office meeting on immigration with a bipartisan group of senators.

The African Union, which represents 55 countries on the continent, demanded an apology from Trump. A group of African ambassadors to the United Nations also denounced Trump's remarks, saying they were "outrageous, racist and xenophobic."

After more than a year in office, Trump has not nominated a chief U.S. diplomat for Africa, and embassies in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Africa and in five other African countries remain without ambassadors.

Tillerson is also scheduled to meet with top officials in the allied nations of Chad, Djibouti, Kenya and Nigeria, some of which are helping in the battle against rebellions from jihadists linked to al-Qaida and Islamic State.

"To understand where the world is going, one must understand Africa is the future," Tillerson said, noting Africa will be home this year to six of the world's 10 fastest-growing economies and will have one-fourth of the world's workforce by 2030.

Without partnerships to build infrastructure and achieve more economic development, Tillerson warned there will be "new ways for terrorists to exploit the next generation." He said the administration is willing to collaborate with African countries to address the "drivers of conflict" and to build the "institutional law enforcement capacity of African nations."

Tillerson also said U.S. and African leaders "must work to find long-term diplomatic solutions" to regional conflicts "that cause so much human suffering." He announced the United States will give \$533 million in additional aid to alleviate famine and other needs caused by conflicts in Ethiopia, the Lake Chad Basin, Somalia and South Sudan.

"Greater stability will attract United States' trade and investment with African nations," he said.

RD Congo :

The Congo Is Set To Butt Heads With Mining Firms Over Cobalt

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stratfor/2018/03/07/the-congo-is-set-to-butt-heads-with-mining-firms-over-cobalt/#7819f5ad5c35>

Stratfor, Contributor Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own. This article was originally published at Stratfor.com.

Battery producers will continue their rush to ensure continued supplies of raw materials like cobalt amid soaring demand.

New mining regulations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain in limbo, but any change to the code will result in a backlash by the many large mining operations in the country.

Despite the political uncertainty, Kinshasa's role as a mineral exporter will not diminish and the government will continue to seek ways to benefit from resource wealth.

For parents in much of the world, the beginning of December is a harbinger for the scramble to secure the year's hottest game or electronic gadget ahead of the holidays. And as battery technology continues to improve and costs decline, it has touched off another scramble of its own, as the manufacturers of batteries for everything from smartphones to electric vehicles chase after raw

materials like cobalt, an invaluable component in such objects. Right at the center of this frenzy is the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which holds roughly 50 percent of the world's cobalt reserves. But with President Joseph Kabila and his government looking to grab a greater share of mineral revenue while avoiding any additional international pressure that could threaten Kabila's hold on power, Kinshasa and international mining companies might soon find themselves on a collision course.

The Scramble for Supply

The price of cobalt has skyrocketed over the past year, as numerous companies have sought to negotiate long-term contracts with cobalt miners to ensure guaranteed access to the metal, which is an essential component for most lithium-ion batteries. Demand for cobalt, however, is limited in how much it can boost production growth, as cobalt is a byproduct of copper mining, meaning global demand for the latter still drives much of the world's cobalt production. With cobalt supplies thus constrained, battery makers and other users are keen to ensure as stable a supply as possible, often in the form of long-term contracts. As demand for electric vehicles increases, battery makers and users of consumer electronics will compete with the producers (and users) of batteries for new-generation cars to access cobalt supplies. The latest to enter the fray is Apple, which has revealed continuing talks to secure thousands of metric tons of cobalt directly from mining companies. Apple's moves came after Korean battery maker SK Innovation agreed to a supply contract of at least seven years with Australian Mines' Queensland operation. The Chinese, who have a large interest in the country, are also searching to secure supplies, as Fujian-based battery maker CATL recently signed a long-term contract with Glencore, a mining and processing company with extensive operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to supply batteries for major automobile manufacturers.

Industry leaders will continue to tread a well-worn path to the African giant in the short term, as the country will dominate supply for the next several years. Alternative projects that do not carry the same amount of ethical or political risk as Congolese cobalt are in the works, but they are not yet (and perhaps never will be) able to replace Kinshasa's capacity. Projects in Australia could benefit from close proximity to China, while smaller projects in Canada are likely to begin operations in three to five years.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo traditionally has experienced difficulty in converting its mineral wealth into widespread economic growth, especially as a result of graft. In November 2017, Bloomberg reported that \$750 million in royalties and other payments to state-owned mining company Gecamines had disappeared, representing around two-thirds of what it should have acquired over a three-year time period. Accordingly, the country will remain an unavoidable quagmire for mining companies interested in exploiting global cobalt demand. Yet the promise of its riches will continue to entice investors. And because of this attention, the country's political future will remain of particular interest to mining companies.

Grabbing a Greater Piece of the Pie

In an effort to better leverage the country's mineral wealth, the Congolese parliament passed legislation in January to increase royalties on "strategic minerals" like cobalt from 2 percent to as much as 10 percent. Legislators forwarded the bill to Kabila for approval, but he took no immediate action, even though the country's constitution stipulates that the president must sign any bill within 15 days of receiving it. (According to public statements, Kabila received the bill no later than Feb. 7.) His failure to issue formal approval leaves the entire legal process wrapped in uncertainty, although recent statements from the government imply that a signature is imminent. The formal implementation of the law will require the renegotiation of mining contracts, and mining companies already have threatened international arbitration should this occur. Western and Chinese companies alike have joined forces to lobby the government, while Switzerland (where Glencore is based)

recently slapped sanctions on several Congolese individuals allied with Kabila amid accusations that they interfered with elections and engaged in human rights violations.
(Stratfor)

Kinshasa rules over a country awash in mineral resources, although the Congolese government has largely given mining companies a long leash to pursue production. Now, the president (and whatever government may follow) stands poised to insert his administration more forcefully into the industry in the country.

The president and his family are heavily involved in the mining sector through various companies and holdings. In addition to investment in diamond mines, they have turned their attention to copper and cobalt in recent years. Kabila's brother, Zoe, owns or controls stakes in several companies that possess mining permits or perform services for Western mining companies, including Canadian-based Ivanhoe Mines.

Ivanhoe has obtained exploration permits with La Generale Industrielle et Commerciale au Congo, a subsidiary of Cosha Investment in which Zoe Kabila possesses a 90 percent stake, according to Congo Research Group. Another subsidiary owned by the president's brother also provides services for China's Sincomines as part of a \$6.2 billion minerals-for-infrastructure project that centers on copper and cobalt. China has a vested interest in the country thanks to its ambitious electric vehicle initiative and achievements in battery manufacturing. China is also a key consumer of the output from smaller, often unregulated mining operations that often sell for much lower prices but which have been the subject of human rights investigations. Glencore has also found itself mired in some controversy, and it is currently determining its contractual obligations on permits obtained from Israeli investor Dan Gertler, who was subject to sanctions for corruption and involvement in human rights abuses.

Kabila's Catch-22

The Kabilas have amassed ample wealth, but international pressure for Joseph Kabila's resignation is increasing, especially as his constitutional term limits ended in December 2016. With no obvious successor, the plan for transition -- if there is any -- remains unclear. The president has successfully used the country's mineral wealth to support himself and his close circle. Raising mining royalties by formally approving the recent legislation would allow the government to further benefit from the mining sector, although it would also incur the wrath of international mining companies.

Alternatively, Kabila may be using the levy as a bargaining chip to provide the government with some much-needed breathing room with the international community. There are indications that he may be discussing some sort of deal with mining companies, as Ivanhoe has "specific assurance" of consultations on the mining code with Kinshasa, Bloomberg's Tom Wilson reported Feb. 26. However, more recent statements from the government indicate that while conversations with mining companies are continuing, the president could sign the legislation imminently.

Kinshasa rules over a country awash in mineral resources, although the Congolese government has largely given mining companies a long leash to pursue production. Now, the president (and whatever government may follow) stands poised to insert his administration more forcefully into the industry in the country. Kabila's delay in concrete action reflects his conundrum: sign the bill into law and accrue greater revenue -- irking foreign mining companies and the international community in the process -- or continue discussions in an attempt to appease global companies to prevent an acceleration of the mining industry's move away from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to places such as Australia and Canada in the search for more cobalt. But whether the Congolese government and mining companies embark on a path of conflict or cooperation, reckoning with the country's political uncertainty looks set to become a cost of doing business for the global mining sector more than ever before.

This article was originally published by Stratfor Worldview, a leading geopolitical intelligence platform and advisory firm based in Austin, Texas.

Congo :

Congo appoints new head for debt-ridden state oil company

<http://www.africanews.com/2018/03/01/congo-appoints-new-head-for-debt-ridden-state-oil-company/>

Congo Republic has appointed a new head for the state-run oil company. President Denis Sassou Nguesso named Maixent Raoul Ominga with immediate effect, as general manager of Societe National des Petroles du Congo (SNPC), as the company struggles to pay its creditors.

According to Bloomberg, the appointment was confirmed by communications minister Thierry Mougalla by phone on Wednesday, from the capital Brazzaville.

Ominga replaces Jerome Koko, who is expected to become director of Congo's Treasury following the departure of Albert Ngondo eight months ago, Mougalla said.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Congo which is considering a bailout owes creditors \$9.14 billion, equivalent to about 110 percent of gross domestic product.

While the advocacy group Global Witness says debt has more than tripled since 2010 because of a series of SNPC oil pre-financing deals – which involve loans that are paid back in crude instead of cash – that have been used by people who are close to or part of Sassou Nguesso's family as vehicles for corruption.

Ominga reportedly has close ties with the president's family and is a lawmaker for the ruling Congolese Workers Party in Oyo 2 constituency, home to president Sassou Nguesso.

He was the the deputy general manager in charge of finance and accounting at SNPC.

SNPC is set to hold debt-relief talks with trading houses after borrowing \$2 billion from companies including Glencore and Trafigura Beheer B, Reuters reported.

Crude accounts for three-quarters of output in Congo's \$7.8 billion economy, which has contracted for the past two years after a slump in prices, according to IMF data.

Angola :

Angola Faces Oil Industry Crisis

By Irina Slav - Mar 07, 2018, 3:00 PM CST rig

<https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/Angola-Faces-Oil-Industry-Crisis.html>

Angola has been OPEC's second most compliant member with regard to the 2016 oil production cut deal, but just like the number-one compliant member, Venezuela, this prestige does not come from the country's willingness to help bring down global supply of crude, at least not entirely.

Angola's oil fields are maturing and are nearing depletion. Unless new investments are made in new discoveries, things will continue getting worse, the International Energy Agency warned in its Oil 2018 report this week.

Without measures to stimulate new investment, Angola's oil production capacity will drop to just 1.29 million bpd over the next five years. Currently, the West African country pumps around 1.67 million bpd in line with the quota assigned it by OPEC.

There have been oil investments in recent years. In fact, three oil majors have invested in new production in Angola, Bloomberg's Rupert Rowling notes in a recent story. These are Chevron, Eni, and Total. But their discoveries, which have added some more crude to daily production and exports, are not enough to compensate for the decline of Angola's more mature fields.

The willingness of more oil companies to throw money at exploration in Angola is questionable. Big Oil and independents are these days much more careful with the projects they decide to invest in. Angola recently underwent a major shake-up when long-time president Jose Dos Santos stepped down, replaced by Joao Lourenco. This could signal a change for the better, but investors might proceed with caution to see how things go before entering Angola's oil industry or expanding their presence there.

Related: Oil Profits Are Fueling South Sudan's Civil War

While the recent production trend is nothing to cheer about if you're in Angola, for OPEC it is a blessing. In the same report, the IEA gave the cartel a few reasons to worry when the agency forecast that the United States, Canada, Brazil, and Norway together will be able to cover the growth in global crude oil demand over the next five years.

For the group that has cut the economic equivalent of live flesh from its body, this is a significant blow. OPEC, together with Russia and almost a dozen other smaller producers, pledged in 2016 to take 1.8 million bpd off global markets—a pledge that it has essentially made good on, whether its members voluntarily or involuntarily met the quota.

It doesn't really matter at this point that the success of the deal came at the cost of Saudi Arabia cutting more than it had agreed to, or that the top two compliant states did not have to put too much effort into cutting production. What matters is the simple fact that OPEC succeeded.

But as OPEC rightfully celebrated its success, the IEA slammed it with this forecast.

Against this background, oil production trends in Angola could spare OPEC the trouble of having to convince the West African nation to continue cutting beyond the end of 2018. Unfortunately, Angola

is not OPEC's only member, and while it can't pump more at present, Nigeria can, and so can Iran and Iraq, to mention only a couple of the larger producers besides Saudi Arabia. Now these OPEC members will have to be convinced to continue pumping less for longer to support prices.

By Irina Slav for Oilprice.com

Zambia :

Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, recall SA meat

05 March 2018 - 16:54 By AFP and REUTERS

Image: 123rf/ olegdudko

<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2018-03-05-mozambique-zambia-botswana-recall-south-african-meat-over-listeria/>

Mozambique, Zambia, Namibia, Malawi and Botswana have all recalled South African processed meat products after a deadly listeria outbreak.

The outbreak claimed 180 lives in South Africa. Tiger Brands issued a recall on their cold meats following listeria being found in their polony. Rainbow Chickens' polony was also recalled.

“(Ministry) asks that all owners of establishments that commercialise these products start to withdraw from the shelves due to the danger that this constitutes to health,” a statement from Mozambique's ministry of agriculture and food security said.

Zambia's high commissioner to South Africa, Emmanuel Mwamba, urged South African retail chain stores operating in Zambia to recall ready-to-eat meat products imported from that country following the confirmation of the source of listeria bacteria.

The Malawi Competition and Fair Trading Commission on Monday asked wholesalers and retailers to remove imported meat products from South Africa from their shelves, and Namibia on Monday suspended imports of processed meat.

Lawrence McDougall, the CEO of Tiger Brands told a news conference the company had not yet worked out the financial impact of suspending production at two of the company's factories that were linked to the outbreak.

MacDougall did acknowledge that the government had linked the ST6 strain of listeria bacteria detected in Enterprise facilities with the outbreak that has resulted in 180 deaths.

"We are being extra cautious and vigilant, we are recalling all products made from the two facilities" affected, he said, adding that the government had only ordered the company to withdraw three product lines.

"Any loss of life is tragic. It is devastating for me to have our products linked to this outbreak."

Recalls

Enterprise-branded products accounted for 28.2 percent of processed meat sales in South Africa in 2017. The local market was worth R6.02-billion last year alone.

Tiger Brands, one of South Africa's food giants, made pre-tax profits of R4.27-billion in 2017.

Shoprite and Pick n Pay, have also pulled products made by Rainbow Chickens after Motsoaledi confirmed that listeriosis had been identified in samples taken from one of its facilities.

Motsoaledi said on Sunday that Enterprise and Rainbow Chicken's registration to export their products outside of South Africa had been temporarily suspended.

As fears of listeria continued to rise in South Africa, several other smaller food retailers have also announced product recalls.

Woolworths announced it was recalling dozens of sausage and ham products "as an additional precautionary measure".

The United Nations has previously said South Africa's listeriosis outbreak is believed to be the largest-ever worldwide.

The infection mainly affects children and has a three-week incubation period, making it difficult to track.

Contamination in humans -- especially those with compromised immune systems -- can result in flu-like illness, infection of the bloodstream and, in severe cases, infection of the brain which can prove fatal.

Kenya :

UPDATE 1-Kenya asks IMF for a 6-month extension of \$1.5 bln standby credit

(Adds policy commitments, 2018 growth forecast)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/kenya-economy/update-1-kenya-asks-imf-for-a-6-month-extension-of-1-5-bln-standby-credit-idUSL5N1QQ013>

NAIROBI, March 8 (Reuters) - Kenya has asked the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to extend its \$1.5 billion standby credit facility that is expiring this month for a further six months, the IMF said on Wednesday.

The IMF said last month that Kenya had lost access to the funds meant to cushion it against unforeseen external shocks last June because of a failure to complete a review of the programme.

In a statement issued at the end of a mission to Nairobi, the IMF said the new request for an extension will be put to the board before the facility expires on March 13.

The Washington-based IMF said the government had committed to reduce the fiscal deficit and substantially modify interest controls, imposed on banks in 2016, which have been partly blamed for choking private sector credit growth.

“Discussions on the details of these policies will continue in the coming weeks,” the IMF said in a statement, adding a full review of the two-year programme was expected to be completed in September.

It said Kenya’s economic growth was expected to rise to 5.5 percent this year, after elections and drought depressed output to an estimated 4.8 percent last year.

“Annual growth could rise further to 6.5 percent within a couple of years, provided that the authorities continue economic reforms, including reducing the fiscal deficit and amending interest rate controls,” the IMF said. (Reporting by Duncan Miriri; Editing by Sandra Maler and Grant McCool)

Our Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.

Rwanda :

Over 2000 Burundian refugees cross to Rwanda from DR Congo

By: Kelly Rwamapera

<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/229370/>

Published: March 08, 2018

More than 2500 Burundian refugees yesterday crossed from Kamanyola refugee camp in DR Congo to Rwanda, an official confirmed.

The refugees who had lived in DR Congo since 2015, mostly women and children, arrived in Rwanda through Rusizi District.

According to Jean Claude Rwahama, the director of refugee affairs unit at the Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee affairs (MIDMAR), the refugees entered the country late afternoon through Rwanda-DR Congo border at Bugarama, claiming to have fled insecurity.

Rwahama said the ministry was yet to ascertain their exact figure with the estimated number based on what the refugees reported.

“We have not got reliable figures yet but refugee leaders told us that at least 2579 of them came,” said Rwahama.

The refugees were temporarily sheltered at Bugarama being catered for by the ministry and its partners pending their transfer to Nyarushishi transit camp in Rusizi on Thursday, according to Rwahama.

He said they didn’t expect more refugees after the same group reported that all of them had left the DR Congo camp.

Rwanda already hosted more than 50,000 Burundian refugees at Mahama Refugees Camp in Kirehe District.

The Burundian refugees while at Kamanyola camp in south Kivu province accused Congolese government of attempting to forcefully repatriate them to Burundi before it is secure for them, according to media reports.

Last year, about 40 Burundian refugees including a 10 year old girl from Kamanyola camp were reportedly shot dead and about 100 injured in clashes with Congolese security forces over planned forced repatriation.

Tanzania :

Tanzania: Chinese Firms Take Lead in 86 African Development Partnerships

<https://allafrica.com/stories/201803070434.html>

THE Chinese government has already signed 101 cooperation agreements with 86 countries and international organisations, in its bid to ensure the concept of Belt and Road Initiative, a multibillion dollar project which envisages to benefit Tanzania and other East Africa nations becomes reality.

This was revealed yesterday by the country's National Development and Reforms Commission, in a report delivered at the ongoing session of the 13th National People's Congress held in Beijing.

Apart from Tanzania, the Chinese also work with Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Egypt and other African countries that will directly benefit from the corridor project, spanning 68 countries and covering over 60 per cent of the world's population.

The project, a brainchild of Chinese President Xi Jinping was officially launched in 2013, focusing on infrastructure investment in countries along the old Silk Road, linking it with a network of countries in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Uganda :

Tanzania, Uganda startups can apply for SEED Low Carbon Awards

<http://disrupt-africa.com/2018/03/tanzania-uganda-startups-can-apply-for-seed-low-carbon-awards/>

By Tom Jackson on March 8, 2018

Startups from Tanzania and Uganda, as well as Colombia, India and Thailand, have been invited to apply for the 2018 SEED Low Carbon Awards, which offers winners business planning assistance, access to networks and US\$5,000 in funding.

SEED is a global partnership for action on sustainable development and the green economy that was founded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Applications for the awards are open until April 3, with SEED looking for enterprises that demonstrate innovation and deliver economic, social and environmental benefits.

Selected startups will gain access to a tailored one-on-one advisory service that offers assistance with business and financial plans, including a three-day Business Planning Workshop and three months of support from a local expert advisor.

SEED will help facilitate connections with valuable contacts to support organisations, such as with funders, policy-makers, and other enterprises such as SEED Alumni, and SEED Partners and Associates, while it will also make a contribution of US\$5,000.

Mozambique :

Russia Boosts Military Cooperation With Mozambique After Attacks

By Borges Nhamire

March 7, 2018, 3:46 PM GMT+1

Russia will boost its military cooperation with Mozambique, where suspected Islamist militants have carried out attacks in the gas-rich African nation's north.

The two countries will form a working group to develop collaboration, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told reporters Wednesday in the Mozambican capital, Maputo. Lavrov is on a five-nation tour of Africa and spoke after talks with his counterpart Jose Pacheco and Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi.

"We have common positions with our Mozambican partners that a global priority is to create a front in the fight against terrorism," Lavrov said. "The terrorist threat continues, despite the efforts many countries make."

Mozambican police have arrested more than 300 people since October after raids in Mocimboa da Praia in northeast Mozambique, the first of which targeted police stations and the government blamed on a "radical Islamic sect." Sporadic attacks have continued, including raids on a health center and a government building in January, although authorities haven't said they're linked.

The attacks have occurred near the Rovuma basin, where companies including Exxon Mobil Corp., Eni SpA and Anadarko Petroleum Corp. have gas projects. The development of the deposits could make the southeastern African nation the world's fourth-biggest natural gas exporter. Rosneft PJSC, Russia's largest oil producer, was awarded three licenses for offshore blocks in partnership with Exxon Mobil in 2015.

U.S. Offers Mozambique Help as Attacks Roil Gas-Rich North

Russia's relations with Mozambique date back to the 1960s, when the Soviet Union backed the Marxist Mozambique Liberation Front's fight against Portuguese colonial rule.

Malawi :

Malawi hit by 5.6 magnitude quake

<https://malawi24.com/2018/03/08/malawi-hit-by-5-6-magnitude-quake/>

By Kondwani Mkhalipi-Manyungwa on Mar 08, 2018 Top News

A 5.6 magnitude earthquake has hit Nsanje district. The tremor, reportedly the strongest since the sequence of earthquakes that struck Karonga district in 2009, lasted for about 10 seconds.

According to information published by U.S. Geological Survey's National Earthquake Information, the epicenter is in Mozambique, just 25 km from Nsanje.

It lasted for about 15 seconds.

Meanwhile, there are no official statement from the Malawi Government with regards to the damage that might have been caused by the earthquake.

The tremor has been felt in different parts of Malawi, to as far as Blantyre and Zomba which are located about 115km and 150km from the epicenter.

Malawi lies in the great East African Rift System (EARS), a 3000 km long Cenozoic age continental rift extending from the Afar Triple Junction between the horn of Africa and the Middle East, to western Mozambique.

It is the only rift system in the world that is active on a continent-wide scale, providing geologists with a view of how continental rifts develop over time into oceanic spreading centers like the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

Swaziland :

US slams Swaziland for banning political parties

<https://www.enca.com/africa/us-slams-swaziland-over-banned-political-parties>

Africa / Tuesday 27 February 2018 - 1:49pm

JOHANNESBURG – Lisa Peterson, the American ambassador to Swaziland, has spoken out in support of banned political parties in the kingdom where King Mswati III rules as an absolute monarch, Richard Rooney from Swazimedia.blogspot reported.

Parties are not allowed to contest elections and people and groups that advocate for democratic reform are prosecuted under the Suppression of Terrorism Act, the website reported.

READ: Prominent Swaziland businessman shot dead

“International organisations such as the European Union and Commonwealth routinely declare that Swaziland’s elections are not free and fair because parties are banned from taking part,” said Rooney.

“After the last election in 2013, the Commonwealth Observer Mission and African Union separately called for a review of the kingdom’s constitution to un-ban parties.”

The King chooses the Prime Minister and top government ministers.

Last Friday, Peterson addressed a group of editors in regards to a poll which suggested that Swazis did not support political parties.

“For me that speaks to people not seeing what a political party can do for them. You need to build understanding and policy of advocacy at the grassroot level so that you can get a number of people thinking in a similar manner,” said the American ambassador.

READ: Swazi MPs banned from divorcing

She added that political entities that supported parties in Swaziland needed to work on the ground to change people’s minds about the value of political parties.

“Each party or grouping needs to go about it in the way that works best,” she said, before adding that this would help the average Swazi to understand why political parties are useful.

Three political parties intend to approach the courts to reverse a ban on parties ahead of elections due later this year.

They are the People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO); the Swaziland Democratic Party (SWADEPA) and the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC).

African News Agency

Zimbabwe :

‘Local currency solution to economic stabilisation’

By newsday

- March 6, 2018

<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2018/03/local-currency-solution-economic-stabilisation-2/>

ECONOMIC consultant Nqobizitha Dube has called for the re-introduction of the local currency saying that was the only road to economic stabilisation.

Dube made the remarks at the Alpha Media Holdings Conversation meeting in Bulawayo on Friday. The dialogue was organised in collaboration with the City of Bulawayo to discuss ways in which industrial revival can be attained.

BY SILAS NKALA

“We are engaged in efforts to revitalise the city of Bulawayo and in doing so we must take note that the Bulawayo of 1963 is not the Bulawayo of today. We need to remap certain things,” he said.

He said the city had to adopt the value changes and adopt the new ways of doing business.

Dube said institutions must push and facilitate for the necessary infrastructure which will promote business and development. He said industry needs to be supported and capacitated by capital. He said at the moment the country is trading using the United States dollar, which raises concerns in terms of the country's exports.

"Personally I have been worried about us transacting in US dollar which has caused a lot of problems in the society ... The crisis that we see is as a result of US dollar," he said.

Dube said he prefers the re-introduction of local currency which would stabilise the economy. Dube said the localisation of currency would allow businesses to exist and trade properly in the country.

Economic commentator Bhekimpilo Mlilo said the re-industrialisation of Zimbabwe dollar would be a difficult task due to the destabilisation of the agriculture sector since year 2000. He said agriculture was the backbone of the country's industry. Many commercial farmers were displaced at the height of the land reform programme and most of them relocated to South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique and other neighbouring countries where they are reportedly doing well in farming.

"Re-industrialisation of Zimbabwe will be a very long and difficult road. This is due to the destabilisation of agriculture during the land reform and the proliferation of cheap products from China in the country," Mlilo said.

He said the state of Cold Storage Company, which once generated massive revenue for the government, leaves a lot to be desired.

Mlilo said it was important that Zimbabwe went back to a situation where it imported few raw materials to make its own products for export other than importing finished goods as this strained the country's foreign currency reserves.

Mlilo said locally-manufactured goods were expensive due to high production costs and this made local goods uncompetitive on regional markets. He also lamented mega salaries paid to executives when companies were operating below capacity. He said this pushed the prices of goods up.

He said most of the company executives were earning around \$10 000 which is not sustainable for companies in Zimbabwe.

South Africa :

Ramaphosa tells Moody's land reform will not negatively affect the economy

07 March 2018 - 20:59 By Ernest Mabuza

<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2018-03-07-ramaphosa-tells-moody-land-reform-will-not-negatively-affect-the-economy/>

President Cyril Ramaphosa on Wednesday held discussions with Moody's on the various initiatives under way to accelerate the country's economic growth and create jobs.

At the meeting, which comes just two weeks before Moody's is set to announce its latest outlook on South Africa, Ramaphosa also reaffirmed that accelerated land reform would unfold within a clear legal framework and without negatively affecting economic growth, agricultural production and food security.

Moody's is a provider of credit ratings, research and risk analysis.

This was the first time that the agency had interacted with Ramaphosa since he was elected the country's president last month.

Ramaphosa's meeting with Moody's follows one that newly-appointed Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene had with the ratings agency on Monday, when he outlined government's economic and fiscal plans.

The Presidency said that in the meeting at Tuynhuys in Cape Town, Ramaphosa described the new mood of hope, renewal and unity in South Africa - and the enthusiasm of its people to contribute to change and development.

"President Ramaphosa said this new enthusiasm was anchoring all efforts to confront the challenges facing South Africa, including government's initiatives to increase investor confidence and reduce policy and regulatory uncertainty," the Presidency said in a statement.

It said fresh consultations on the Mining Charter, recent measures to strengthen Cabinet, changes in the board and management of Eskom and an inquiry into state capture formed part of government's invitation to investors to come to South Africa.

"President Ramaphosa underlined government's determination to build a social compact of government, labour, business and civil society to advance investment, youth employment and community development."

He also said job creation was government's most important priority and failure to create such opportunities constituted the greatest risk to the country.

Moody's is due to announce its latest outlook on South Africa on March 23.

In November last year, Moody's placed South Africa's long-term foreign and local currency debt ratings of 'BAA3' (one notch above junk status) on a 90-day review for a downgrade.

In November last year, S&P Global followed in the footsteps of another ratings agency Fitch in downgrading South Africa's credit rating to full junk status.

Namibia :

Namibia Plastics launches construction of N\$95m plant

March 8, 2018

<https://www.newera.com.na/2018/03/08/namibia-plastics-launches-construction-of-n95m-plant/>

Staff Reporter

Windhoek-With the Minister of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, Tjekero Tweya, as the guest of honour at the construction launch, the 2,660 square metre state-of-the-art manufacturing plant at Brakwater – expected to be completed before the end of this year – will close the gap on an estimated 50 percent of plastic currently imported from abroad.

Namibia Plastics co-founder and CEO, Johan Struwig, entertained the audience with the history of Namibia Plastics during his address at the official ground-breaking ceremony of the construction of the plant.

Struwig said: “Initially, I started from a home-based office, making use of a spare room, one cellphone, and a laptop. We struggled for a few months with no orders. The average response in approaching potential clients was always ‘let us know when you have Namibian clients on board, then we will buy.’ I told them that our suppliers have big customers in South Africa – hoping that this will rescue us and bring in Namibian clientele, but unfortunately it didn’t.”

Struwig went on to sing praises to Namibia Breweries Limited (NBL) which was the first Namibian company to give them a break. “Based on a promise to manufacture locally when we reach adequate volumes, our first order from NBL, valued at N\$77,247.23 finally came through in October 2011. Using NBL as a reference and armed with our new dream, Namibia Plastics continued to grow from strength to strength and today we are proud to have clients like Ohorongo Cement, Bokomo, Namib Poultry Industries, Namib Mills, Namib Foam, Coca-Cola, Etosha Fisheries, Seawork Fish Processors and of course NBL on board this journey that has enabled us to maintain an average growth percentage in excess of 100 percent over the past six years.”

Struwig also acknowledged the fruitful relationship with the Development Bank of Namibia (DBN), as well as with investor and partner Spitz Capital, which has contributed significantly to the growth of Namibia Plastics.

Tweya in his keynote address stressed partnerships between government, communities and civil society; partnerships between different branches of government, with the private sector, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations and the international community, as well as partnerships between urban and rural societies and, ultimately between all members of the Namibian society as key to the achievement of dynamic, efficient and sustainable development. He also emphasised the current global economic pressure, and water sustainability following the severe drought, as detrimental effects on the local economy.

Tweya said: “While we face all these developmental challenges, it is important to adopt an attitude of determination and a mindset that nothing is impossible to overcome when we stand together as one big nation. We need to adopt a culture of camaraderie that enables levels of affinity and cooperation amongst public-private partnerships to take the Namibian House to heights unimaginable.”

“We need to grow to become partners – supportive of each other’s endeavours to grow and develop Namibia, with honesty and integrity. We need to take hands not only during difficult times but more so when celebrating our successes. Allow me therefore to commend Namibia Plastics – under the leadership of Johan Struwig together with his dynamic team – for not only dreaming but ultimately bringing that dream to fruition by being committed to and contributing to the growth and development of the Namibian House.”

He added: “The significant investment of N\$95 million into this plant that will create an additional 200 direct and indirect job opportunities during and after construction, is testimony of your support and commitment to achieve the ideals and objectives of Vision 2030 and the president’s Harambee Prosperity Plan. I am excited and confident that the development of Namibia Plastics’ factory plant will contribute immensely to the City of Windhoek and the Namibian economy at large.”

Executive chairman of the O&L Group and president of the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), Sven Thieme, served as endorser of the ground-breaking ceremony.

Thieme said: “One would think that it is common sense that we add as much value locally as possible, and realise that an investment at home is an investment in creating jobs locally. We should never limit ourselves to what we have. Surely manufacturing locally and procuring from home supports growth at home. Yet, we still find that some of us are happy to save a dollar by procuring an imported product that may be a little cheaper – whether it is because the country of origin has economies of scale, provides subsidies, or has some competitive advantage, this doesn’t matter. The bottom line is that we need to understand the multiplier effect of the opportunity cost of not supporting local – on future jobs, on our ability to develop skills, on our ability to become economically independent, on poverty eradication, and how our children will pay this price.” “Therefore, I would like to sincerely appeal to the rest of ‘Business Namibia’, the government and the public at large, to support Namibia Plastics and other local companies in their endeavours to build our nation and make a positive impact on the lives of Namibians. Can you imagine if everyone has an understanding that every time I buy a local product, I contribute to the eradication of poverty and address income inequality? Can you imagine the power and pride of holding in your hand a product that states ‘Made in Namibia’?”

Former MP and chairman of Namibia Plastics, Theo-Ben Gurirab, during his welcoming address said: “The Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) is based on five pillars. Namibia Plastics directly contributes to two pillars, namely effective economic advancement; and social progression. The expected outcomes of supporting these pillars are a reduction of poverty levels, and promoting a spirit of entrepreneurship and enterprise development. The existence of Namibia Plastics and the significant growth into a successful proudly Namibian entity, speaks directly to government’s growth-at-home agenda. Today we also celebrate the support by Namibian companies, not only to Namibia Plastics, but to other local suppliers as well. It is that camaraderie among Namibian entities and ‘Business Namibia’ at large that will take Namibian businesses, and the local economy to the next level.”

Also at the ground-breaking ceremony, Struwig announced the opening of a staff shareholders trust. Struwig said: “The real heroes of Namibia Plastics are our people. Guided by our company values, we recognize that without talented and committed people who own, support and drive the strategy of the company as enshrined in our 5th value, ‘Value People’ – success will not be possible. For this reason, a staff shareholders trust was created, and I am honored to pledge 10 percent of my shareholding in Namibia Plastics, to the Staff Shareholders Trust. Whether you are working as a packer, cleaner, operator, manager or director at Namibia Plastics, everybody matters and is included in this journey!”

Botswana :

President Lungu to fly to Botswana on Saturday

March 8, 2018

<https://www.lusakatimes.com/2018/03/08/president-lungu-fly-botswana-saturday/>

President Edgar Lungu will this Saturday fly to Kasane, Botswana where he is expected to join Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa and Botswana leader Seretse Khama Ian Khama to assess progress on the construction of the Kazungula Bridge that will connect eight SADC countries.

The Kazungula Bridge will connect Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In a statement yesterday, the Botswana government said the three presidents would assess progress on the project.

“His Excellency Lt- Gen Dr Seretse Khama Ian Khama, His Excellency Edgar Lungu and His Excellency Emmerson Mnangagwa will visit Kasane on Saturday 10th March at 0900hrs to appreciate progress on the Kazungula Bridge project and conduct a Kazungula Bridge tour,” said the Botswana government.

The Botswana government said the Kazungula Bridge project was a multi-national project which would improve trade relations among SADC countries.

“The project will facilitate trade through reduced transit time for freight and passengers and reduced time-based trade and transport costs,” it said. “There will also be improved border management operations arising from the new one-stop border facilities.

“The project will contribute to boosting of the regional economy through increased traffic throughout the North-South Corridor; increased global competitiveness of goods as a function of reduced time-based trade and transport costs; and reduction of transit time from three days to less than half a day.”

The project involves the construction of a 923 metres long rail and road bridge on the Zambezi River.

Algérie :

Energie: l'Algérie met le cap sur le nucléaire

Par Algérie Monde Infos

6 mars 2018

<http://www.algeriemondeinfos.com/2018/03/06/energie-lalgerie-met-cap-nucleaire/>

Le Premier ministre, Ahmed Ouyahia, a signé un décret exécutif, publié le 13 février 2018 dans le journal officiel, définissant les prérogatives du ministère de l'Energie dans le développement du programme des énergies renouvelable et le nucléaire civil.

Le décret en question instruit le ministère de l'Energie de prendre en charge le « développement du programme nucléaire civil », en lui accordant le feu vert du gouvernement pour le lancement d'études d'investissement dans ce domaine.

En effet, l'Algérie dispose d'un programme nucléaire civil qui date des années 1980 avec deux centrales expérimentales à Alger et Aïn Ouessara. Ces derniers temps, l'Algérie a démontré son ambition d'entrer dans l'ère atomique avec la signature de conventions de coopération avec des pays leaders dans le domaine, en l'occurrence la France, la Chine, les Etats-Unis et plus récemment, la Russie.

Ces conventions vont permettre à l'Algérie d'avoir son véritable industrie nucléaire utilisée à des fins pacifiques. L'Algérie bénéficie de l'assistance de ces pays qui couvre les domaines de la formation des ingénieurs et des techniciens nucléaires, l'échange d'informations scientifiques et techniques, l'organisation de colloques et de conférences techniques au profit du monde universitaire algérien et la mise en place d'équipes conjointes pour la conduite des activités de recherche, de développement, d'ingénierie et d'expérimentation.

Notons que le programme nucléaire algérien est sous le contrôle de l'Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique (AIEA).

A.B.

Nigeria :

Nigeria Exits Recession and Looks Beyond Oil

<http://www.imf.org/en/News/Podcasts/All-Podcasts/2018/03/07/nigeria-a4-2018>

March 7, 2018

Nigeria's economy is picking up according to the IMF's latest economic review. Growth hit 0.8 percent in 2017 after contracting by 1.6 percent in 2016. The report attributes the increase—in part—to the recent recovery in oil prices. But as the country emerges from recession, the IMF's Amine Mati says following through on planned reforms regardless of oil price swings and upcoming elections, is key to lifting Nigeria's growth rates to where they should be. Mati heads the IMF team for Nigeria and oversaw this latest economic assessment.

Amine Mati, IMF mission chief and senior resident representative in Nigeria

Africa Union :

African Union Chief Meets Tillerson, Says Trump Slur 'In The Past'

<https://www.news18.com/news/world/african-union-chief-meets-tillerson-says-trump-slur-in-the-past-1683357.html>

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and AU commission chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat discussed security and counter-terrorism, trade and development, corruption and conflict in an hour-long meeting at the continental body's headquarters in the Ethiopian capital.

Addis Ababa: Washington's top diplomat began his first Africa tour Thursday by meeting with the African Union chief, who said the continent had moved on from a reported insult by President Donald Trump.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and AU commission chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat discussed security and counter-terrorism, trade and development, corruption and conflict in an hour-long meeting at the continental body's headquarters in the Ethiopian capital.

However, looming over the meeting was Trump's alleged description of Africa as a "shithole" in January, which forced the president to pen a letter reaffirming his commitment to the continent and dispatch his top diplomat to try to heal rifts.

Faki, however, insisted the slur was now in the past.

"I received a letter written by President Trump to myself and I shared that with other African leaders. I believe this incident is in the past," he said.

Tillerson's five-nation Africa tour -- to include Djibouti, Kenya, Chad and Nigeria -- has been described by analysts as a "listening tour", with no deals or initiatives due to be announced.

"The purpose of my trip is to listen to what the priorities of the countries here on the continent are and see where there is good alignment," said Tillerson.

Tillerson praised the AU as a "force for good".

He and Faki discussed continued US support to African counter-terrorism forces in Somalia and the Sahel but no new concrete commitments were given.

Tillerson said the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is "clearly an example of countries coming together to counter terrorism, promote stability and enable the delivery of much-needed aid."

"We have not yet won that battle in Somalia and we must stay at it," he said.

Tillerson also warned against blind acceptance of Chinese investment, warning African countries to "consider the terms of those investments" lest they "forfeit sovereignty".

He also solicited African support in pressuring North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons.

"African nations can contribute to this goal," he said.