

INSIDE AFRICA

Now is the time to invest in Africa

25 July 2019



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ANALYSIS

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In-depth:

How Africa's free-trade zone will provide an economic boom

African leaders launched a continental free-trade zone on Sunday that if successful would unite 1.3 billion people, create a \$3.4 trillion economic bloc and usher in a new era of development.

After four years of talks, an agreement to form a 55-nation trade bloc was reached in March, paving the way for Sunday's African Union summit in Niger where Ghana was announced as the host of the trade zone's future headquarters and discussions were held on how exactly the bloc will operate. It is hoped that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - the largest since the creation of the World Trade Organization in 1994 - will help unlock Africa's long-stymied economic potential by boosting intra-regional trade, strengthening supply chains and spreading expertise.

"The eyes of the world are turned towards Africa," Egyptian President and African Union Chairman Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said at the summit's opening ceremony.

"The success of the AfCFTA will be the real test to achieve the economic growth that will turn our people's dream of welfare and quality of life into a reality," he said.

Africa has much catching up to do: its intra-regional trade accounted for just 17% of exports in 2017 versus 59% in Asia and 69% in Europe, and Africa has missed out on the economic booms that other trade blocs have experienced in recent decades.

Economists say significant challenges remain, including poor road and rail links, large areas of unrest, excessive border bureaucracy and petty corruption that have held back growth and integration.

Members have committed to eliminate tariffs on most goods, which will increase trade in the region by 15-25% in the medium term, but this would more than double if these other issues were dealt with, according to International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates.

The IMF in a May report described the free-trade zone as a potential "economic game changer" of the kind that has boosted growth in Europe and North America, but it added a note of caution.

"Reducing tariffs alone is not sufficient," it said.

Divergent interests

Africa already has an alphabet soup of competing and overlapping trade zones - ECOWAS in the west, EAC in the east, SADC in the south and COMESA in the east and south.

But only the EAC, driven mainly by Kenya, has made significant progress toward a common market in goods and services.

These regional economic communities (REC) will continue to trade among themselves as they do now. The role of AfCFTA is to liberalize trade among those member states that are not currently in the same REC, said Trudi Hartzenberg, director at Tralac, a South Africa-based trade law organization.

The zone's potential clout received a boost when Nigeria, the largest economy in Africa, agreed to sign the agreement at the summit. Benin has also since agreed to join. Fifty-four of the continent's 55 states have now signed up, but only about half of these have ratified.

One obstacle in negotiations will be the countries' conflicting motives.

For undiversified but relatively developed economies like Nigeria, which relies heavily on oil exports, the benefits of membership will likely be smaller than others, said John Ashbourne, senior emerging markets economist at Capital Economics.

Nigerian officials have expressed concern that the country could be flooded with low-priced goods, confounding efforts to encourage moribund local manufacturing and expand farming.

In contrast, South Africa's manufacturers, which are among the most developed in Africa, could quickly expand outside their usual export markets and into West and North Africa, giving them an advantage over manufacturers from other countries, Ashbourne said.

The presidents of both countries attended the summit.

The vast difference in countries' economic heft is another complicating factor in negotiations. Nigeria, Egypt and South Africa account for over 50% of Africa's cumulative GDP, while its six sovereign island nations represent about 1%.

“It will be important to address those disparities to ensure that special and differential treatments for the least developed countries are adopted and successfully implemented,” said Landry Signe, a fellow at the Brookings Institution’s Africa Growth Initiative.

The summit also saw the launch of a digital payments system for the zone and instruments that will govern rules of origin and tariff concessions, as well as monitor and seek to eliminate non-tariff obstacles to trade, the African Union said. (By Boureima Balima in collaboration with Reuters for World Economic Forum)

Africa is facing an electricity crisis – a pay-as-you-go model could solve the problem

The number of people in Africa without access to electricity remain staggering and unchanging with every report—around 640 million people don’t have access to a grid. And even when some of people do have access the electricity supply is unreliable and unstable.

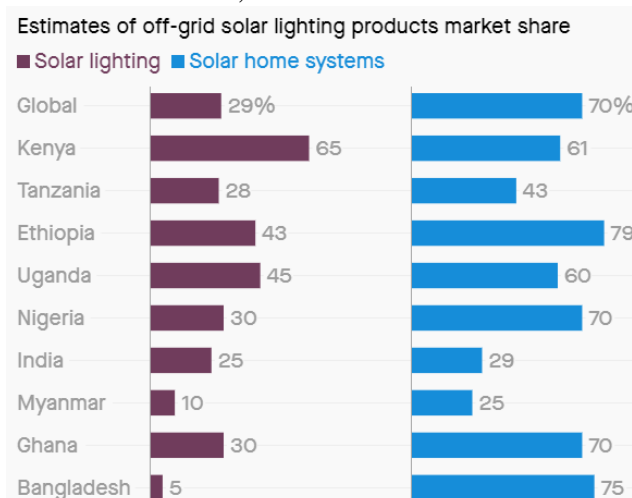
It’s a problem across the continent. The most consistent and promising approach to tackling this huge obstacle to development has come with the off-grid pay-as-you-go solar power model, now called PayGo. The sector started out in East Africa built around combining the improving and increasingly cost-effective solar technology with the region’s mobile money advantage, thanks to the successful reach of Safaricom’s M-Pesa in Kenya.

Companies like Nairobi-based M-Kopa, who we spoke with recently at the Collision conference in Toronto, have signed up 750,000 homes in the region on the back of that payment platform which has been key for also enabling users to obtain credit and manage their payments. “The energy is kind of the easy part,” acknowledged chief executive Jesse Moore.

Also on the panel with Moore in Toronto was the musician Akon, who has famously been building a solar power business for a few years in several African countries. His latest initiative to develop a crypto-currency to get round the difficulties with payments and boosting financial inclusion.

PayGo solar isn’t just reliant on classic mobile money solutions. In some countries it’s being used with local bank partnerships such as in Nigeria or with credit bureaus in India, for example.

The rise and challenges of PayGo are covered in the World Bank-backed Lighting Global report which analyzes the market attractiveness of the model around the developing world. Globally, the sales volume of PayGo products grew by 30% last year with revenues growing even faster at 50% driven by customers upgrading to solar home systems beyond basic products like solar lamps. According to the global off-grid solar market report, PayGo companies represented just 24% of the sales volume in the last six months of 2018, but accounted for 62% of revenues.



The two strongest markets for PayGo are Indonesia and Kenya, according to Lighting Global’s index, which looks at 71 factors across demand, supply and enabling environment. On that basis Sierra Leone, Mozambique and Angola were the weakest markets for PayGo.

When it comes to demand Kenya and Uganda score high particularly when it comes to users' "willingness to pay", while Kenya also does well on the supply side along with Indonesia, driven by the availability of finance to support the sector.

While the report covers 24 countries across sub Saharan Africa and Asia, it's clear East Africa is the star of the show with more than 70% of the global PayGo market's revenues.

In Lighting Global's country focus on Nigeria, Africa's largest economy, the demand for PayGo services is the highest of country's covered because of the unreliability of the country's existing grid and low electrification rates especially in rural areas. The PayGo market has seen rapid growth in recent years with over 1.7 million households now using off grid solar products. But Nigeria's current market penetration is still low, at just 4% of the potential market.

Nigeria's complex regulatory environment is identified as one hurdle to enabling better supply with opportunities such as supporting mobile money more widely. But on the plus side the country offers innovative business models, including partnerships with mobile operators for airtime credit enabled PAYGo products and retail banks to leverage agent networks have helped some solar operators overcome barriers to market. (By Yinka Adegoke, Africa editor , Quartz - World Economic Forum)

IMF, WORLD BANK & AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

World Bank supports small and medium enterprises in Angola

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has granted two credit lines of US\$50 million each to Banco Millennium Atlântico, one of which is intended to increase lending to small and medium-sized enterprises in Angola, the Angolan press reported.

The second credit line, signed in Luanda by Banco Millennium Atlântico's financial risk manager, Éder Samuel de Sousa, and the IFC's regional director for Africa and the Middle East, Manuel Reyes-Retana, is earmarked to finance the acquisition of raw materials and equipment abroad, through the opening of letters of credit.

Sousa said that in granting credit, projects from sectors that contribute to the real economy, such as small-scale industry or another productive area, will be favoured, with the amount of funding limited to a maximum of US\$5 million for each application. Reyes-Retana said that one of the priorities of the International Finance Corporation, an arm of the World Bank Group, for Angola is to increase the financial inclusion of small and medium-sized enterprises, and the "signed contract will help Atlântico to significantly expand its credit operations in this segment." Banco Millennium is the result of a merger of Banco Millennium Angola (BMA) with Banco Privado Atlântico (BPA), which was completed in April 2016, according to its shareholder Banco Comercial Português at the time. The bank's main shareholders are Interlagos Equity Partners, with 29.77%, BCP Africa, SGPS with 22.52%, Atlântico Financial Group with 19.80% and Jasper Capital Partners – Investimentos e Participações, with 15.25%. (Macauhub)

World Bank increases funding to Angola to US\$2.52 billion

The World Bank has increased the value of its project portfolio in Angola to US\$2.52 billion with the approval of a new financial package in the amount of US\$1.32 billion as part of "Angola Day" according to official information released by the Angolan press.

This new funding will be applied in three structural initiatives of the Angolan government, namely the project to strengthen the Social Protection System (US\$320 million), the Budget Support operation (US\$500 million) and the Bita Project (Energy and Water) with US\$500 million.

The Social Protection System Strengthening Project is part of a policy to transfer income to low-income households, totalling around 1 million, to mitigate the impact of benefit reforms on consumer purchasing power as a short-term result of the adjustment of prices of goods and services such as electricity, water and fuel tariffs.

The Budget Support Operation aims to support ongoing economic reforms, with technical support and financial resources from the World Bank, to make the process of adjustment and economic

transformation of the country sustainable, while protecting the most vulnerable segments of the population.

The Bitá Project is aimed at improving the operational and economic performance of the Energy and Water sector, thus increasing the access of households and companies to drinking water in some densely populated areas south of Luanda.

Finance Minister Archer Manguiera noted the importance of the decision from the World Bank Board of Directors to strengthen the social protection system in Angola at a time when reforms of the system of subsidies to consumer prices are underway.

Archer Manguiera said that the need to adjust the prices of administratively controlled goods, such as water, electricity, public transport and fuels, has been included in the Macroeconomic Stabilisation Programme, approved in 2018, in order to boost ongoing reforms implemented by the government as well as to transition to a new growth model. (Macauhub)

Angola - Growth and Inclusion Development Policy Financing

Loan: US \$250 million equivalent

Project ID: P166564

Project Description: The Operation will support the Government of Angola to achieve more sustainable and inclusive growth, through (i) a macro-financial and institutional environment that is conducive to private-sector led growth; and (ii) financial and social inclusion

Angola - Strengthening the National Social Protection System Project (Cash Transfer)

Loan: US \$320 million equivalent

Maturity: 30 years Grace: 8 years

Project ID: P169779

Project Description: The project will provide temporary income support to poor households in selected areas of Angola and to strengthen the delivery mechanisms for a permanent social safety net system.

Angola - Luanda Bitá Water Supply Project Guarantee+

IBRD Guarantee: up to US \$500 million equivalent

Project ID: P163610

Project Description: The project will improve access to potable water service in selected areas of Luanda by mobilizing commercial financing for the GoA. The guarantee is proposed to be applied to US dollar-denominated international commercial debt.

DEALS & INVESTMENTS

Angola has legislation to attract private investment

Angola's Oil and Mineral Resources Minister Diamantino Azevedo said in Lisbon that his country already has the necessary legislative framework to attract private investment. The minister, on the sidelines of the seminar on "Investment opportunities in the Angolan mining sector," organised by the Portuguese Economy Ministry, said that the Angolan government has increasingly improved legal conditions, so as to give national investors and foreigners greater security. "Angolan law is good and the tax system for the mining sector is competitive. What we are doing is to further improve what already exists in the sector," he said, quoted by Angolan news agency Angop.

The minister said the sector has been working on the creation of a mineral resources agency that will become both the sector regulator and concessionaire. He explained that Angola benefits from only around 20% of the oil that is extracted in the country, because it has only one refinery with capacity for about 60,000 barrels, while 80% of its oil derivative needs have to be imported. He also said that the country intended to encourage investors to focus on the area of ornamental

rocks, in production as well as transformation, because this will also be an incentive for the construction sector in Angola. (Macauhub)

Angola identifies 27 priority countries for attracting investment

Angola's Private Investment and Export Promotion Agency (AIPEX) has identified 27 countries as priorities for implementing a strategy to attract investment, director Lello Francisco said in Luanda. During a roundtable discussion on "Angola-Turkey Strategic Cooperation" promoted by the Ministry of Public Administration, Labour and Social Security and the National School of Public Administration and Policy, the director mentioned, in addition to Turkey, South Africa, Germany, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, South Korea, Spain, the United States, France, India, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, Russia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Singapore and Uruguay, to name but a few. Lello Francisco, quoted by the Jornal de Angola daily newspaper, said the list was adopted based on established criteria, in order of importance, of technological capacity, capital and investments, taking into consideration the interest of these countries in investments in Africa.

The investment programme in Turkey takes into account the country's textile industry experience, said the director, mentioning his agency's "concrete actions" to boost the export of marble and other ornamental stones to that country. Lello Francisco said that, despite some progress, the trade relationship between Angola and Turkey "is still unequal," with Luanda missing in an unfavourable position as it buys more than it sells to Ankara, and Aipex's objective is to reverse this situation, which reflects the poorly diversified Angolan economy, in which more than 95% of exports are of crude oil. (Macauhub)

Mozambique prepares a new strategy to attract investment from China

Mozambique is finalising a new strategy to attract investment from China, focused on agro-industry and light industry, at a time when the country is also being sought out by Chinese pharmaceutical manufacturers and medical equipment manufacturers.

Information provided by the International Trade Centre (ITC) showed that the strategy will be developed under the Partnership for Investment and Growth in Africa (PIGA) programme and will be implemented by the Mozambique Investment and Export Promotion Agency. "Participants in the strategy-setting process include sector-specific civil servants, the Mozambican private sector and representatives of the Chinese government and business communities," the ITC said.

The strategy, to be completed this summer, will "provide Mozambique with a multi-year road map to target new investors, build on existing ones and work with stakeholders on the investment climate to carry out reforms that stimulate industry in four sub-sectors: manufacturing clothing, textile production, cashew processing and fruit processing." Over the last decade, China has taken over from the more traditional investors in Mozambique – Portugal and South Africa. The investment has been directed mainly at non-productive sectors, such as transport infrastructure and real estate. The ITC said China's "Go Out" strategy – to encourage Chinese companies to invest abroad – should "encourage unprecedented values of direct productive investment" in China, and "the Mozambican government decided to attract a significant part of that investment."

According to the ITC, Chinese companies are interested in the drugs and medical equipment market in Mozambique and nearby countries, as demonstrated by presentations made in June by the ITC and the China Chamber of Commerce for Import & Export of Medicines & Health Products.

Jiang Xuejun, head of the ITC for Asia and the Pacific, said "the rapid growth of the continent's (African) industrialisation process in recent years, significant improvement in transport infrastructure and the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area – which covers more than 50 African countries – together represent significant historical opportunities for regional pharmaceutical production centres in Africa."

Chinese pharmaceutical investment "could have a major impact on social and economic improvements on the African continent," by helping to make reliable and quality medicine cheaper and more affordable, said the ITC. (Macauhub)

Portugal and Mozambique sign 13 agreements to strengthen cooperation

The Portuguese and Mozambican governments on Wednesday 3rd July in Lisbon signed 13 agreements, one of which on a credit line of 400 million euros until March 2020, the Portuguese press reported. The documents were signed at the end of the 4th Luso-Mozambican Summit in Lisbon, under the chairmanship of the Mozambican head of State, Filipe Nyusi, and the Portuguese Prime Minister, António Costa. Portugal and Mozambique signed an amendment to the “Tripartite Agreement of 1 July 2008 on a credit line in the amount of 400 million euros between Caixa Geral de Depósitos, as a lender, the Republic of Mozambique, as the borrower, and the Portuguese Republic as guarantor.”

This agreement, according to both governments, will extend the deadline for the use of the 400 million euro credit line (signed in 2008) until March 2020, and the amount to be disbursed, 11.6 million euros, will cover the work to recover a number of roads in Mozambique. For the reconstruction of the regions affected by cyclones in Mozambique, as had already been announced by the prime minister during the economic forum that preceded this summit, the Portuguese and Mozambican governments signed a memorandum involving about 1.5 million euros, with the fund managed by Instituto Camões.

This fund will be made up of funds from the State Budget and donations from public entities (such as municipalities) and individuals, and will finance, via a tender process, projects of non-governmental organisations and will be conducted over the next three years. (Macauhub)

Cabo Verde 2019 Investment Forum raises 1.5 billion euros in investment

The 2019 Cabo Verde Investment Forum was a “success” and it raised 1.5 billion euros for investments in the country, the deputy prime minister and finance minister said on Thursday 4th July in Santa Maria, Sal Island. Olavo Correia, taking stock of the three days of the forum, said that the amount raised for investments in the health, tourism, maritime and air transport, telecommunications and vocational training sectors, “is a significant value.” The deputy prime minister, quoted by the Inforpress news agency, said that this forum had shown that there is “great confidence in the Cape Verdean economy,” noting that contracts have been signed with investors from several countries and that all the country’s islands will see investments. “Cabo Verde is neither poor nor small, Cabo Verde is a great country, with great ambition, there are many people who believe in our country and we have to create the conditions to execute projects that are structural for our economy,” the minister said. In his opinion, the three days of work of the forum were “interesting” and saw an “extraordinary result” and he pledged that there will be a follow-up so that the signed agreements, protocols and memoranda of understanding can be fulfilled. The minister gave assurances that the country will have a second edition of this forum in 2020, which he hopes will be “even better,” since the current organising team will have “more experience.” (Macauhub)

BANKING**Banks****Mozambique’s Banco Terra merges with Moza Banco**

Banco Terra de Moçambique (BTM) has merged with Moza Banco, following a resolution by the bank’s shareholders, according to a statement released in Maputo. The merger will be carried out through the incorporation of BTM in Moza Banco, the statement said, which does not specify the terms of the transaction. “The merger proposal was submitted unanimously, with the favourable votes of all the shareholders represented, representing the total share capital of BTM,” the statement said. In September 2018 it was announced that Moza Banco, belonging to the Banco de Moçambique Pension Fund (Kuhanha), had acquired the entire capital stock of Banco Terra.

The statement specifically said that the bank made an offer on 24 August 2018 to acquire the entire capital stock of Banco Terra, under a structured transaction that included, in addition to said acquisition, a subsequent merger between Moza Banco and Banco Terra.

Moza's management announced in February 2018 that the Arise financial company, consisting of two Dutch banks and the Norwegian sovereign fund, would become a shareholder in the bank in a transaction that required Moza to acquire Banco Terra, which was owned by the Arise Fund in Mozambique. (Macauhub)

Cabo Verde state buys Geocapital's stake in Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde bank

The Cape Verdean state plans to acquire the shares held by Geocapital in the Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde bank, whose acquisition by International Holding Cabo Verde was approved by the central bank last May, according to an official announcement. The government of the archipelago said in a statement quoted by the Inforpress news agency that the entire 27.44% stake held by that company in Caixa Económica would be acquired by the state, as part of an initiative to, "transform Cabo Verde into a financing platform country." The Bank of Cabo Verde (BCV) on 3rd May said it had approved the acquisition of a 27.44% stake in Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde by International Holding Cabo Verde (IHCV), owned by Spanish businessman Enrique Bañuelos de Castro, after considering that it ensures "sound and prudent management" of the bank. According to the BCV, in July 2018, the IHCV notified it of an intention to "acquire shares representing up to 30% of the capital stock of Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde," and four months later GeoCapital – Gestão de Participações informed the Cape Verdean central bank of its intention to "dispose of the shares" that made up its stake in Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde. Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde was founded on 18 May 1928 under the name Caixa Económica Postal and was transformed into an autonomous financial institution in December 1985. (Macauhub)

Government of Cabo Verde acquires stake in Caixa Económica due "uncertainty of Spanish businessman"

The uncertainty of Spanish businessman Enrique Bañuelos de Castro forced the Cape Verdean government to acquire a 27.44% stake held by the Geocapital company in the Caixa Economica de Cabo Verde (CECV) bank, the finance minister said in Praia. Olavo Correia, who is also deputy prime minister, said that given the uncertainty of the businessman whose purchase proposal had been approved by the Bank of Cabo Verde, the government had to move "to ensure banking stability."

During the signing of the share purchase agreement, the minister, on the grounds that he was "preserving the State", said that the acquisition is aimed at avoiding shareholder instability in Caixa Economica de Cabo Verde as a result of the Macau-based company moving out. Olavo Correia, quoted by the Inforpress news agency, declined to talk about International Holding Cabo Verde, the company owned by the Spanish businessman, whose proposal to buy the shares had been approved by the central bank, and merely said that the government of Cabo Verde now has increased responsibility for the CECV as a national benchmark bank. The chief executive of Geocapital, Diogo Lacerda Macedo, said that ten years in the CECV was, "a long time for an investment," and this was one of the reasons for leaving, as well as the fact that the Cabo Verde State has a much more significant stake in the Caixa than it had when Geocapital went in. (Macauhub)

Nigeria Bars Interest Payments on Bank Deposits Above \$5.5 Million

- Central bank cuts amount lenders can earn interest on by 73%
- Nigerian economy is battling to recover from 2016 contraction

Nigeria unveiled another set of measures aimed at forcing lenders to extend more credit in an effort to revive economic growth, this time cutting the amount of money companies can keep in interest-bearing accounts at the central bank.

Banks will no longer receive interest payments on deposits exceeding 2 billion naira (\$5.5 million), the Central Bank of Nigeria said in a statement posted on its website. That compares with a previous limit set in 2014 of 7.5 billion naira through the central bank's standing deposit facility. The move comes less than a week after the Abuja-based central bank ordered lenders to use at least 60% of their deposits for loans by the end of September, or have their cash-reserve requirements increased, meaning they'll be forced to leave more of their cash with the central bank. "The rule is geared at making banks lend," Kunle Ezun, an analyst at Ecobank Transnational Inc in Lagos, said by phone. "It is to encourage banks to move funds to areas the central bank wants to drive growth." Banks are reluctant to lend with the economy struggling to recover from a 2016 contraction, double-digit inflation and the lure of buying government bonds that pay average yields of 14.2%. (By Paul Wallace, Bloomberg)

Citigroup Disappointed by South Africa Investment as Deals Stall

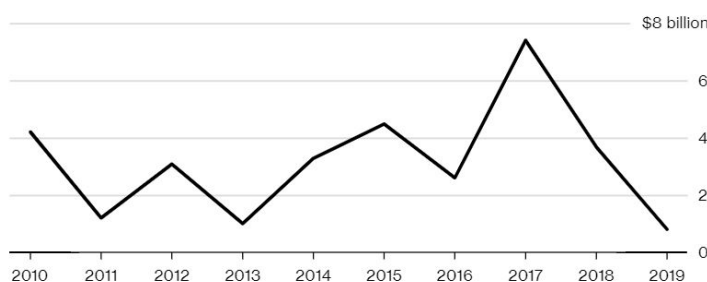
- Local CEO says lender is planning for a 'difficult scenario'
- Bank is now sitting tight after expanding South African unit

Citigroup Inc. invested to expand in South Africa. Now all the New York-based bank needs is deals.

Heading South

Equity offerings in South Africa are at their lowest level on record

✓ Value of transactions



Source: Bloomberg

IPOs, rights issuance and other equity sales for first half of each year. Data goes back as far as 2007.

"We have in the two last cycles appropriated additional capital to continue to grow our business, but we haven't seen as big a deal flow to be able to execute against that," said Citigroup Chief Country Officer Peter Crawley. "We're very much sitting on the side and battenning down the hatches, planning for a difficult scenario. But hands on today, eyes on tomorrow."

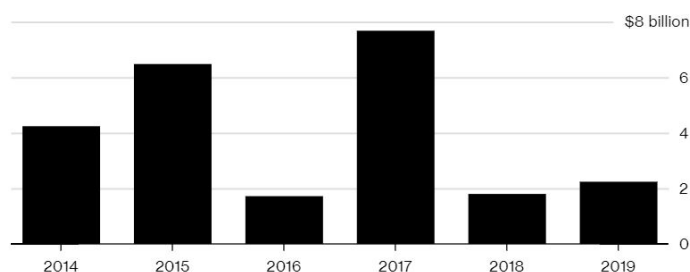
President Cyril Ramaphosa's slow progress in returning the continent's most industrialized economy back to growth is

stunting takeovers and bond issuance and causing equity-related deals to plummet to record lows. His administration is also grappling with how to deal with power utility Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd., which has debt equal to about 8% of gross domestic product.

Stuck in a Sad Place

South African deal flow hovers around 2016 levels as economy stumbles

■ Value of transactions



Source: Bloomberg

Mergers and acquisitions over \$100 million for first half of each year

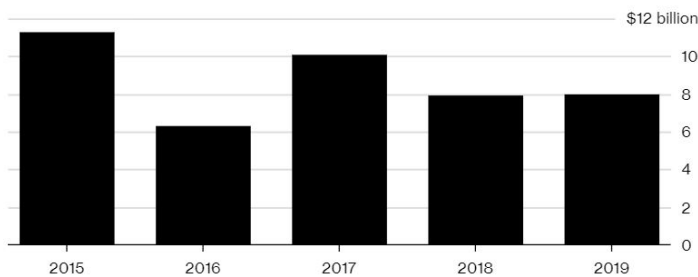
South Africa is one step away from falling out of the World Government Bond Index, with only Moody's Investors Service assessing the nation's debt as investment grade -- a rating due for review in November. The economy has shrunk four out of the past nine quarters, weighing on business and factory confidence. Spending by households, which accounts for 60% of GDP, remains weak, while the government's expenditure continues to outpace income.

A number of foreign investors are "sitting on the sidelines" waiting for clarity on Eskom and Moody's, Crawley said. More also needs to be done to appease foreign direct investors on property rights, he said, as the country debates how to give the majority black population greater land ownership. "Challenges are policy certainty and growth."

Slow Going

After reaching a record in 2012, South African bond sales are flat this year

■ First-half South African bond issuance



Source: Bloomberg
Issuance peaked at \$24.4 billion for the full year in 2012.

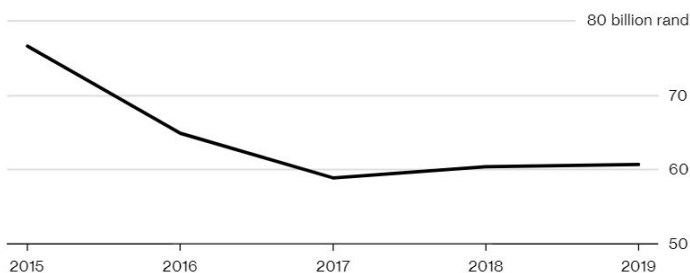
Naspers deal to top South Africa's M&A league table.

Citigroup's local commercial-banking unit is seeing "mid-single digit growth" in rand terms year-on-year, Crawley said, adding that the lender will focus on the immediate needs on the

Clawing Back

After shrinking for two straight years, Citi's assets in South Africa are rising

▲ Citigroup South Africa's assets



Source: South African Reserve Bank
Data for 2019 is from the end of April. Each other year as of Dec. 31.

invested capital here and we do expect modest recovery over time," Crawley said. "So right now, given some of the uncertainty in terms of execution against the current stated policy direction, we are just sitting tight." (By Roxanne Henderson, Bloomberg)

While the value of mergers and acquisitions in the first half of this year rose 25% to 2.25 billion rand (\$160 million) from the same period in 2018, there were no deals of over \$100 million in the second quarter, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

There were six announced deals in the first six months of 2019 -- including Naspers Ltd.'s plans to buy full control of a Russian online classifieds business for \$1.1 billion. That's unchanged from a year earlier. Citigroup advised on the

multinationals it serves in the country. Uncertainty over the direction of the rand is opening up hedging opportunities, he said.

Citigroup's South African unit is the largest foreign lender in the country, with assets of 60.7 billion rand as of the end of April, according to data compiled by the nation's central bank. That compares with 1.37 trillion rand held by Standard Bank Group Ltd.'s South African unit.

"Any prudent banker should be planning for a downside, but equally we have

National Bank of Angola promotes the creation of business incubators

A memorandum of understanding aimed at promoting the creation of business incubators based on the digitization of payment services was signed in Luanda between the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and the National Bank of Angola (BNA), which is intended to contribute to the emergence of innovative companies in the country.

Under this memorandum, the central bank will support and encourage the training of entrepreneurs, researchers, companies and other entities in the development process, based on high-potential technological business ideas, according to the Angop news agency.

The memorandum stipulates that the assessment and selection of applications will be based on criteria set by an evaluation committee made up of representatives of the two institutions.

BNA director Pedro Castro e Silva said that the central bank has been following the development of technology worldwide, especially in the financial system, noting that, "our aim is to continue to contribute to the development of Angola's payment systems, drawing on young people at universities who already have business ideas that can also enhance Angola's payment system."

Castro e Silva explained that the central bank will not provide financial resources directly, but will contribute to the incubators being properly equipped to support the development of ideas.

Minister Maria Sambo said that this initiative will be implemented in the current pilot phase at the Faculty of Engineering of Agostinho Neto University, and it is also expected to be extended to other higher education institutions. (Macauhub)

Markets

South African State Pension Fund to Invest More Offshore

- GEPF seeks to double unlisted investments to 10%: Executive
- Any changes still need to be agreed with the finance minister

South Africa's Government Employees Pension Fund is planning to invest more of its 2 trillion rand (\$144 billion) under management outside the country and in unlisted assets to reduce risk of overexposure to locally traded companies.

The strategy was outlined by GEPF Principal Executive Officer Abel Sithole to a commission of inquiry into allegations of wrongdoing and poor governance at the Public Investment Corp., the fund's biggest manager. The GEPF has more than 93% of its assets invested in the South Africa and is a significant holder of South African government bonds and those of state-owned enterprises, he said. "We now need to have that discussion with the finance minister," Sithole said. The GEPF's "significant home bias" isn't wrong and has historically served the GEPF well, but it needs to manage risk, he said.

Moving more GEPF cash offshore could send shockwaves through South Africa's listed companies, many of which count the PIC as its biggest shareholder. Meanwhile, increased investment in unlisted assets may help back new industries and support black entrepreneurs, he said, part of a wider initiative to redress economic imbalances caused by white-minority rule.

The PIC has been the subject of a judicial inquiry into whether the entity deviated from its mission to best safeguard pensions for more than 1.2 million South African state workers. The company has suspended staff that it says flouted governance and approval processes when making investment decisions, some of them linked to unlisted assets. In contrast, the PIC repeatedly assured the GEPF that correct governance processes were followed, Sithole said. "The GEPF views this as a serious breach of trust," he said. The fund isn't "solely concerned if the PIC survives or not" as it isn't the only asset manager around, he added.

When asked by one commissioner how much the GEPF would look to invest outside the country, the executive said private South African pension funds are able to keep as much as 30% of their assets offshore. The GEPF wouldn't do the same immediately, but it would "probably make sense over time," he said.

Doubling the GEPF's unlisted investments in South Africa to 10% would help spur the economy, Sithole said. The GEPF wants the PIC to seek approval for all investments of more than 2 billion rand. The inquiry continues Tuesday 16th July with further testimony from PIC's former CEO Daniel Matjila. (By Janice Kew, Bloomberg)

Angola Sovereign Fund barred from granting loans or providing guarantees

The Angolan Sovereign Fund is prevented from directly or indirectly granting loans or providing guarantees in connection with the placement of assets under the investment policy for the 2019/2023 term, approved by Presidential Decree, the Angop news agency reported.

The Presidential Decree that introduces changes in the management of the Sovereign Fund was published in Angola's official bulletin, *Diário da República*, on 15th July, and the Fund may, under duly justified circumstances considered by the Board of Directors, use leverage mechanisms to make investments of up to 5.00% of the fund's capital. "Because the Fund's primary source of funding is the oil sector, investments related to the sector should not exceed 5.00% of assets under management," said the Presidential Decree.

The investment of assets, and therefore the investment portfolio, must be a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 50% in fixed income assets issued by supranational agencies or institutions of

countries, mainly G7 or other economies, Investment grade-rated companies and financial institutions issued by one of the top five credit rating agencies.

The decree also sets a maximum of 50% of the capital invested in equity securities, including stock market shares in advanced economies, emerging market assets as well as frontier economies and also sets a maximum percentage of 50% of capital in alternative investments.

Hiring external managers is now governed by criteria of competence, reliability, credibility, honesty, reputation and proven experience in the area, and another requirement to be able to perform this activity in accordance with the laws of the country in which it was incorporated and to have more than 10 years of experience in at least one G7 country.

Additional requirements include being subject to the supervision of a regulatory body for the business to be conducted, not being the subject of a criminal investigation and management of a financial portfolio with an asset value of no less than US\$3 billion.

The board of the Fund chaired by José Filomeno dos Santos was dismissed on 11 January 2018, and was replaced by another one led by Carlos Alberto Lopes. (Macauhub)

ENERGY

Closing Hydro Plant Is Zimbabwe's Answer to Getting More Power

- Country may close power plant to limit water flow downstream
- **In exchange, Mozambique would supply discounted electricity**

Zimbabwe has proposed reducing the flow of the Zambezi River in exchange for receiving discounted power from neighboring Mozambique, people familiar with the situation said.

The proposal would result in the closing of Zimbabwe's Kariba South hydro plant, which would bolster critically low water levels in the world's biggest man-made reservoir, said Zimbabwean government officials and a senior manager at the state power utility who asked not to be identified because the talks aren't public. The plan would also limit the flow into the already full Cahora Bassa dam in Mozambique, as water wouldn't need to be pushed through the plant's turbines, the people said.

Opening the flood gates at Cahora Bassa could inundate the low-lying Zambezi Delta on Mozambique's coast. In return for limiting the river flow, Zimbabwe would want to be compensated with cheap power from Cahora Bassa, which has the capacity to produce 2,075 megawatts, the people said. Kariba is 28.9% full, according to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority's website.

Zimbabwe Approach

The power plant on the south bank of the dam, which straddles Zimbabwe and Zambia, is producing just a third of its 1,050-megawatt capacity. Zimbabweans are currently experiencing power cuts of as long as 18 hours a day because ageing equipment at its power plants keeps breaking down and outstanding debts to utilities in South Africa and Mozambique have slashed imports.

Talks between Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa and his Mozambican counterpart Filipe Nyusi began in June, and Zimbabwean Energy Minister Fortune Chasi will travel to the Mozambican capital, Maputo, to complete the arrangement when it is ready, the people said.

A board member at Hidroelectrica de Cahora Bassa SA, the company that operates the Mozambican plant, confirmed there has been an approach by Zimbabwe, declining to be identified as the matter hasn't been discussed publicly. The company, which is state-controlled, would be wary about lowering prices as it also sells electricity to South Africa, which might have similar demands, he said. The company isn't involved in active negotiations, he said.

Snake God

Kariba Dam is 128 meters (420 feet) tall and 579 meters long and, when full, holds 181 cubic kilometers (43 cubic miles) of water, more than three times the capacity of Cahora Bassa and almost five times that of the Hoover Dam. Its wall is flanked by a carved stone statue of Nyaminyami, a snake-like river god believed to have been trapped in the dam when it was built. A

flood that entombed the bodies of Italian and local workers in the concrete wall is blamed by the Tonga community on Nyaminyami. Officials at Zimbabwe's Energy Ministry and at Zesa Holdings Ltd., the state power utility, were said to be unavailable when their offices were called. The proposed plan would not stop water flowing through turbines at the 1,080-megawatt Kariba North power plant on the Zambian side of Kariba Dam. (By Brian Latham and Borges Nhamire, Bloomberg)

Islamic Development Bank donates funding for an electricity project in Mozambique

The Islamic Development Bank will donate US\$99.7 million to build a power transmission line between Temane and Maputo, southern Mozambique and a combined cycle plant, a source at the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy said.

The source added that this donation completes the US\$550 million needed for the construction of the high voltage line, which will be 563 kilometres, according to Portuguese news agency Lusa. "The power transmission line between Maputo and Temane is a structural project and an initiative of the Mozambican government and public company Electricidade de Moçambique that will allow greater security and availability of energy for various socio-economic projects in the provinces of Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo, in addition to enabling new connections to new customers," he said. In June, the World Bank approved US\$420 million in grants and guarantees for the Temane Regional Electricity Project (TREP), to help Mozambique strengthen domestic and international electricity transmission capacity and increase production capacity through private sector investment.

TREP, which also has US\$24 million in funding from the Norwegian Trust Fund, is an integrated operation involving both public and private investments, including the construction of a high voltage transmission line and a 563-kilometre stretch between Maputo and Vilanculos/Temane and a 400 megawatt combined cycle power plant in Temane. (Macauhub)

Namibia plans to add 220 MW to electricity grid by 2023

Namibia's power utility NamPower plans to add 220 MW in new electricity capacity by 2023, as the uranium-producing southwest African nation seeks to wean itself off imports, its managing director said on Wednesday 24th July.

Namibia, which has installed capacity of 606 MW, is a net importer of electricity mainly from neighbouring countries like Zambia and South Africa.

NamPower's managing director Simson Haulofu said the utility would construct wind, solar and biomass generators in the central and coastal regions to deliver 150 MW.

Another 70 MW would be procured from independent power producers, Haulofu said while launching NamPower's business plan for the period 2019 to 2023 in the capital, Windhoek.

Namibia is home to the Kudu Gas Fields, which have proven and probable recoverable reserves estimated at more than 3.3 trillion cubic feet.

Demand for power in the diamond and uranium producing nation is expected to rise to 755 MW in the next five years, according to the government. (By MacDonald Dzirutwe, Reuters)

INFRASTRUCTURE

Construction firm wants debt settlement as part of Congo IMF deal

Construction firm Commisimpex is calling upon the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to make settlement of its 1.2 billion euro (\$1.35 billion) debt dispute with Congo Republic a precondition for a bailout deal, according to a letter seen by Reuters.

Congo's negotiations for an IMF bailout programme have dragged on since 2017. The Fund's executive board is due to consider a bailout for Congo after the government agreed to restructure a portion of its debt to China.

The IMF had also required Congo - an oil producer and OPEC member - to make progress towards restructuring debt owed to oil trading companies.

Commisimpex, which worked on construction and public works projects from the early 1980s until a Congolese court ordered its liquidation in 2012, said debt stemming from decades-old unpaid bills must also be taken into account. "The IMF has required the Congo to negotiate with the two other significant groups of creditors with which it is in default. It is patently unfair that the IMF appears to be favouring one set of creditors over others," the letter said. The letter, dated July 5, was sent by Commisimpex's lawyers and addressed to the IMF's acting Managing Director David Lipton and director of its African department Abebe Selassie. The IMF did not immediately comment on the letter. Congo's government spokesman Thierry Moundounga said he would not comment on Commisimpex. Commisimpex wrote that the IMF should demand that Congo fully and properly record its debt to the company in its public accounts as a precondition for granting the bailout programme. It also said the Fund should demand Congo disclose the payment scenario of that debt under the debt sustainability analysis prepared with IMF staff. And finally, it said the IMF should require Congo to engage in negotiations with Commisimpex over the payment of the debt. Commisimpex has pursued Congo in courts in Europe and the United States for two decades, winning a series of court decisions as it has attempted to recoup the debt. Congo has not paid, however. And in 2012, the country said the firm owed 1.3 billion euros in social security payments built up over 30 years. A Congolese court then ordered the firm into liquidation. (\$1 = 0.8915 euros) (By Joe Bavier, Reuters)

Chinese companies interested in Benguela railroad in Angola

Chinese businesspeople are interested in using the Benguela railroad (CFB) to transport goods from the interior of Angola and neighbouring countries to international markets, the Chinese ambassador to Angola said in Lobito. The Angop news agency, citing ambassador Gong Tao's statements, said the companies interested in this project were the China Harbor Engineering Corporation, responsible for the reclassification of the port of Lobito in 2013, COSCO and Sinotrans, focused on logistics, maritime and rail transport. The ambassador added that the commodities and raw materials produced both in the interior of Angola and in neighbouring landlocked countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia, can use this corridor of the CFB and the port of Lobito to reach the international market including China. Benguela Railway Chairman Luís Teixeira said that rail freight, including ore from the Democratic Republic of Congo, will be reinforced with 300 new wagons that were ordered from the Chinese Sinotrans group.

Speaking at the end of the visit of the Chinese ambassador, Luís Teixeira said that with the arrival of the wagons, freight transport will increase from 94,000 tonnes per year to more than 300,000 tonnes, including international traffic, notable ores mined in the regions of Catanga, in the DR Congo. Without giving dates or the amount to be invested in the acquisition of new equipment, Teixeira said these wagons will be paid through freight discounts, as the Sinotrans group is a CFB customer and also has a stake in the Congo mines. With a 1344-kilometre rail line from Lobito in Benguela to Luau, in the eastern Angolan province of Moxico, on the border with the DRC, the Benguela Railroad already transports ore to the Atlantic port of Lobito under a cooperation agreement signed in 2017 with the National Railway Company of Congo (SNCC). (Macauhub)

MINING

Angola's state diamond company to be privatised

Angolan national diamond company Endiama will be privatised and its stock will be partially floated on the stock exchange, announced the Minister of Natural Resources and Oil in Lisbon.

Diamantino Azevedo told Portuguese news agency Lusa that a process of reorganising the activities of the Ministry and state-owned companies is underway, with the creation of a mineral resources

agency that will act as regulator and concessionaire, and the current one, Endiama, will no longer take on these roles and a portion of its capital will be sold on the stock exchange.

The minister pointed out that the strategy for the mining sector closely follows the one adopted for the oil sector, where Sonangol is selling its non-strategic assets and will have a minority share of its capital floated on the stock market in 2020. “The idea is the same, and the strategy for its implementation is now being drawn up,” he said, adding that “the future Natural Resources Agency will benefit from all the experience and assets of the state-owned company that deals with precious metal and mineral resources.” (Macauhub)

Diamond exploration licenses returned to semi-industrial companies and cooperatives in Angola

The return of licenses to 241 companies and semi-industrial diamond mining cooperatives in seven provinces of Angola will allow the creation of at least 20,000 jobs, the national director of Mineral Resources said in Dundo. André Buta, who spoke at the end of the delivery of 31 of the 81 licenses for semi-industrial exploration planned for Lunda Norte, said the aim of re-launching this process in Lunda Sul, Malanje, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul and Uíge provinces, was to reduce the youth unemployment rate. The ceremony was expected to hand over 41 licenses, and ten companies will receive them as soon as they meet all the requirements of the law, which should happen within 15 days. The 241 semi-industrial diamond mining companies and cooperatives were unable to carry on operating because their licenses were revoked under “Operation Transparency” launched by the Angolan government to combat diamond trafficking and illegal immigration, and in the case of Lunda Norte more than 400,000 foreigners were deported. Buta warned those responsible for the 31 companies that if foreigners are found in their exploration areas the licenses now returned to them will be revoked again, and recommended that the recruitment of the workforce should focus on the youth of the neighbouring communities. The security of the exploration areas is the responsibility of the cooperatives, Buta said, pointing out that the minimum number of workers in a semi-industrial mine is 30 people, including specialised foreign labour with official immigration status.

In addition to recalling that the Angolan diamond sales company, Sodiam, is the only channel through which to sell the product of semi-industrial mines, the national director of Mineral Resources said that companies and cooperatives have to provide basic social services to the resident populations of concession areas. (Macauhub)

Acacia says valuation higher than Barrick buyout offer, extends bid deadline

Tanzania’s largest gold miner Acacia Mining Plc said it is worth more than a buyout proposal by majority shareholder Barrick Gold Corp values it at, and extended the deadline for a firm bid to July 19. Based on a review by independent technical consultant SRK Consulting, Acacia is worth 271 pence per share under a “preferred-value” scenario, with a range of 203 pence to 281 pence per share under low- and high-value scenarios, the London-listed miner said in a statement.

Barrick on May 21 had offered 0.153 of its own shares to acquire the 36.1% of Acacia it does not already own. That equates to about 193 pence per share, based on closing prices, valuing the company at about \$990 million (794.8 million pounds), compared with \$787 million when it first proposed the deal, thanks to a rally in Barrick shares. “271p is the absolute minimum the minorities will accept,” a minority shareholder in Acacia told Reuters. “Barrick should go for that and just get this done ... there is material upside for Barrick. The quicker both sides can get on and deliver that, the better.”

In a separate statement, Barrick said it has continued talks with the Acacia Transaction Committee to acquire shares which it does not already own and is also reviewing the SRK Consulting report. “Barrick intends to meet early next week with representatives of Acacia and SRK to discuss the SRK report and related matters,” the company said. Barrick’s buyout proposal for Acacia followed two years of wrangling over a \$190 billion tax bill in Tanzania, which was reduced to \$300 million under a 2017 framework agreement. Barrick last month said its proposal was “more than fair,” and

that some Acacia production estimates were unsupportable. Acacia, whose minority shareholders had accused the Canadian company of taking advantage of its predicament, reported a 19% increase in second-quarter gold production.

The valuation scenarios assume a gold price of \$1,300 an ounce, the settlement of the tax dispute between the government of Tanzania and Acacia and the lifting of the East African country's mineral export ban. Spot gold was trading at \$1,396.80. [GOL/] Barrick shares have risen almost 30% to C\$21.10 since its close before its proposal, while Acacia shares are up 14% at 181.3 pence. Acacia said its board believes a buyout by Barrick would be an attractive solution, as long as the price is fair and supported by minority shareholders. It also said a negotiated settlement with Tanzania is its preferred outcome. Acacia also said that should its minority shareholders vote for a Barrick offer, it would seek a stay of arbitration, which it has said it will proceed with in the absence of a final deal. (1 British pound = \$1.2456). (By Nichola Saminather, Reuters)

Mwiriti, Lda discovers large gold deposit in northern Mozambique

Mozambique has at least one large gold deposit in the province of Cabo Delgado, said Azghar Faqhr, managing director of Mwiriti, Lda, a Mozambican company that owns a stake in Montepuez Ruby Mining. Faqhr, quoted by Mozambican daily newspaper O País, said initial results of the surveys indicate that the gold deposit found in that province is about six times larger than those discovered in South Africa.

In addition to the amount of ore present, the deposit is considered to be special due to the occurrence of gold with a high degree of purity, which the company said was the highest in Mozambique. "The gold extracted in Nairoto is 22-carat, which is to say, it leaves the ground with a degree of purity between of 86% and 91%, exceeding the levels of gold mined in the province of Manica," Faqhr said. The gold deposit is located in the Montepuez district of the administrative post of Nairoto, where a small mining complex has already been set up, and the managing director said that since the beginning of the survey in 2015 the company has already spent more than US\$11 million, more than half on the purchase and installation of equipment at the site of the future ore processing unit. Mwiriti Lda. has a 25% stake in Montepuez Ruby Mining, which holds a ruby mining concession in Cabo Delgado, in which British company Gemfields, which since July 2017 belongs to the Pallinghurst group, is the operator. (Macauhub)

Mozambican mining company now holds 5.0% of Australian mining group subsidiary

Mozambican mining company Empresa Moçambicana de Exploração Mineira (EMEM) now controls a 5.0% stake in Twigg Exploration and Mining Limitada, a subsidiary of Syrah Resources, the mining group said in a statement released on the Australian stock market.

The statement added that the delivery of this stake, at no cost to the Mozambican state-owned company, was the result of a mining agreement reached between the Syrah Resources group and the Mozambican government, according to a market announcement issued on 27 September 2018.

In December 2017 the group announced it had signed a contract to supply Chinese company Zhanjiang Juxin New Energy Materials with 20,000 tonnes of graphite to be extracted at the Balama concession, which followed another announcement in September of that year of a contract to supply 30,000 tonnes of graphite to Jixi BTR Graphite Industrial, a subsidiary of the Shenzhen-based Chinese group BTR New Energy Materials.

The Balama concession, in Cabo Delgado province, is about 200 kilometres west of the port city of Pemba, with proven and probable reserves of 81.4 million tonnes, with a graphite content of 13.2 million tonnes. (Macauhub)

Chinese firms to build gold smelter, refineries in Tanzania

Tanzania said on Wednesday 24th July it had awarded licences for the construction of a mineral smelter and two gold refineries to Chinese firms, as part of government efforts to generate more revenues from the nation's mining industry. Minerals Minister Doto Biteko said the Chinese

companies would also soon be awarded licences for mines, each of which would require investment worth more than \$100 million. He did not name the firms or give details about the mining or other projects in the East African nation, Africa's fourth-biggest gold producer after South Africa, Ghana and Mali.

President John Magufuli banned the export of mineral sand in March 2017, a concentrate that contains silver, copper, gold and other minerals, sparking a \$190 billion tax dispute with Acacia Mining, which already has mining operations in Tanzania.

The government invited bids from mining firms to build smelters and refineries, although Tanzania's chamber of mines has said such projects would not be economical. Biteko said 37 Chinese companies had expressed interest. "After carefully assessing the financial capability and history of those companies, we have issued licences for the construction of two gold refineries and a smelter," he said. "We will also soon award special mining licences to two companies to build large-scale mines whose individual investment is above \$100 million," he added. He was speaking in a televised address at a ceremony in Dar es Salaam at which the Kenyan authorities handed back 35kg of gold it intercepted after it was smuggled out of Tanzania. The government said it had set up 28 mineral trading centres since March to improve revenue collection from small-scale miners. "Gold worth a total of 136.7 billion Tanzanian shillings (\$60 million) has been traded through the new mineral centres since March and the government has collected 7.7 billion shillings royalty and clearance fees," Biteko said. Small-scale miners produce around 20 tonnes of gold a year but 90% is illegally exported, a parliamentary report said. Magufuli said revenue collection from mining had increased over the past two years after his government tightened controls.

The government collected 301 billion shillings in mining revenue in the 2017/2018 fiscal year, a figure that rose to 310 billion shillings in 2018/2019. It aims to collect 470 billion shillings in 2019/2020. "African countries have not been benefiting from their natural resource wealth, including minerals. Our minerals have been stolen through smuggling or through exploitative mining contracts," Magufuli said. Gold exports are a key source of foreign exchange for Tanzania, which exported gold worth \$1.549 billion last year, up from \$1.541 billion in 2017, central bank data shows. (\$1 = 2,295.0000 Tanzanian shillings) (By Katharine Houreld and Edmund Blair, Reuters)

OIL & GAS

Brazil cooperates with Mozambique in the development of oil and natural gas

Brazil will cooperate with Mozambique to stimulate the country's industrial development and support local companies to provide services to oil and gas projects, said the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy.

Speaking at the opening of the 2nd Brazil-Mozambique Seminar on Oil, Gas and Correlative Sectors, Alfredo Nampete also said that the two countries will outline agendas to develop business opportunities and cooperation, "and this meeting is a platform that can contribute to maximising the benefits of the oil and gas industry for Mozambique."

"If, on the one hand, the start of gas production in the Rovuma Basin will bring Mozambique to the attention of world markets, on the other hand the opportunities that will result from these projects bring many expectations for us all, as they are a space for Mozambicans to use their intelligence in leveraging business opportunities," Nampete said, quoted by the AIM news agency.

Nampete recalled that the seminar was taking place a few days after the final decision on investment for the development of the "Golfinho" and "Atum" fields was taken on 18 June in the Area One block, a key milestone in making the country's dream of becoming an important player in the global liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry a reality.

With an annual output of 12.88 million tonnes of LNG, the project will have an estimated investment of about US\$23 billion and could generate about US\$61 billion in revenue for the State,

an unprecedented investment both in Mozambique and in Africa, which could turn the country into the continent's largest producer and exporter.

Another milestone was the approval, last May, of the Mamba project development plan for the production of 15.2 million tons of LNG onshore.

The three projects (Coral Sul, Mamba and Golfinho Atum) will have an estimated total investment of more than US\$50 billion and production in excess of 30 million tonnes per year, thus consolidating Mozambique's position as one of the largest producers and exporters of LNG in Africa and in the world. "With institutions such as the National Petroleum Agency, Petrobras and the Brazilian Petroleum Institute, with extensive experience in the oil and gas sector, Brazil is undoubtedly one of the countries with which Mozambique should seek to establish alliances," said the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy. (Macauhub)

Angola auctions nine oil blocks in Namibe Basin

The Angolan government will auction nine oil blocks in the waters of the Namibe Basin, the Minister of Mineral Resources and Oil Diamantino Azevedo announced at the opening session of the ministry's Third Advisory Council under the motto "Restructuring of the mineral and oil resources sector: A commitment to the socio-economic development of the country." According to the minister and the schedule of the meeting, the general strategy of awarding oil concessions for the period 2019-2025 includes auctioning off nine oil blocks in that basin, and the official announcement of the auction for these blocks should take place in October this year. "The province of Namibe will thus become part of the national oil industry, on top of its great role and contribution in terms of ornamental stones, with products that have been well-accepted by the international market," said the minister, quoted by the Angop news agency. Azevedo also announced that several companies had acquired prospecting licenses in the province, given its mineral potential, and named Atabamaik, which plans to explore copper, Chinese General Mining, which is seeking out rare earths and Vig World, in partnership with Spanish company Tolsa in search of lithium. The minister said the restructuring of the Oil and Gas sector is almost complete and now the focus will be on consolidation of the operational processes of the National Oil, Gas and Biofuels Agency (ANPG), the new national concessionaire), of the Oil Derivatives Regulatory Institute (IRDP) and Sonangol – EP, which will allow the company to focus on its core business of oil and gas exploration, development, production, refining, storage and distribution.

In recent months, he said, in addition to the auction strategy for new oil concessions, other instruments related to the sector, such as the refining strategy, including the development of petrochemical hub, have also been addressed. (Macauhub)

Oil Giants Note -- Nigeria Now Has a Chance to Open Its Fields

- Buhari's parliamentary control could speed passage of reforms
- Oil majors want favorable fiscal terms to explore deep waters

Investors' 11-year wait for the Nigerian government to open up Africa's biggest crude industry may be over.

An overhaul of oil policy that's been in the works for more than a decade is among a raft of laws President Muhammadu Buhari could steer through parliament in his second term to help drive investment in the oil-dependent economy. The delays cost an estimated \$15 billion a year in lost funding for the industry over the past decade, according to the Petroleum Ministry.

The ability to implement reforms would mark a departure from Buhari's first four years in office, when he faced hostile leaders of both chambers of the legislature. Since his re-election in February, Buhari loyalists have taken over as the heads of the Senate and the House of Representatives. "Expect an improved level of harmony between the National Assembly and the president going forward," said Luke Ofojebe, an analyst at Lagos-based Vetiva Capital Ltd.

The urgency to get the oil reforms going was signaled by a July 4 meeting between the new Senate president, Ahmed Lawan, and head of Exxon Mobil Corp.'s Nigerian unit, Paul McGrath, where

they discussed the quick passage of the bill. “I promise Nigerians, as soon as we inaugurate our committee, they’ll start work on the Petroleum Industry Bill,” Lawan told reporters afterward. “This time around, we will work with every stakeholder in the industry.”

The reforms are needed to drive investment in oil exploration and production that have been withheld because of policy uncertainty. As a result, Nigeria’s crude output and reserves have stagnated over the past two decades, and targets to reach reserves of 40 billion barrels and output of 4 million barrels a day have been pushed back more than 15 years.

Unless new investment comes in, the government may have to cut spending and could struggle to service existing debt. The state relies on oil for two-thirds of government revenue and has failed to meet its income targets in the past three years mainly due to lower-than-expected crude volumes.

The reforms being considered include:

- An intention to sell part of the state’s controlling stakes in joint ventures. Another initiative being considered is the conversion of the partnerships into incorporated entities, which would enable them to raise funding from financial markets.
- Plans to introduce royalties and taxes for the first time on deep-water exploration -- a proposal that has faced stiff opposition from oil companies including Exxon, Royal Dutch Shell Plc, Chevron Corp., Total SA and Eni SpA, the state’s joint-venture partners.
- Ensuring that the state derives more benefit from oil and gas contracts.
- Addressing the root causes of violence in the oil-rich Niger River delta that has plagued the industry for more than two decades.

Even with all the reins now in his hands, some analysts still doubt there’ll be rapid progress, given Buhari’s inclination for state intervention rather than market reforms. When the economy was beset by falling revenue in 2016, the government imposed capital controls, banned certain imports and refused a currency devaluation amid a foreign-currency shortage. “I don’t think the government is interested in any reform, judging by history,” said Robert Omotunde, an analyst at Lagos-based Afrinvest West Africa Ltd.

Foreign portfolio investors fled in the face of the interventionist measures, and only began to return when the central bank set up a market-determined trading window for exporters and importers. Confidence remains low. The Nigerian Stock Exchange Main-Board Index has declined 10% since the first trading day after Buhari’s re-election.

Delicate Negotiations

To arrive at a new law that satisfies the energy companies will take delicate negotiations in the coming months, given lawsuits filed by the government against joint-venture partners that accused them of taking more than their fair share of crude revenue.

Still, a more compliant legislature gives Buhari the muscle he needs to push his reform agenda through. “It is more likely they will pass now more than ever because of the mutual suspicion with the leadership of the last National Assembly,” said Bismarck Rewane, chief executive officer of Lagos-based advisory Financial Derivatives Co. “When you remove that, it is more likely to be passed now.” (By Dulue Mbachu and Tope Alake, Bloomberg)

INDUSTRIAL

Portuguese group Super Bock focuses on China and gives up on building factory in Angola

China remains the main foreign market for Portuguese group Super Bock, which is seeking to expand its presence in the country, said Rui Lopes Ferreira, the group’s chief executive. The Portuguese group owns a 20% stake in Sociedade Bebidas de Macau, which in turn owns 100% of Xiamen Bock Brand Operation, with Super Bock products available in about 50 cities in the provinces of Zhejiang and Fujian, which have a combined population of 200 million.

Ferreira, quoted by Angolan newspaper Dinheiro Vivo, said that the goal until 2020 is to double the number of cities in these two provinces alone, and the strategic plan to expand to three other provinces is being developed jointly with the local partner.

The group's CEO said that the project to build a brewery in Angola, which became the main export market of the company previously known as Unicer – Bebidas de Portugal, had now been officially abandoned. "Angola is currently a market with residual sales due to the financial and economic crisis that the country is going through," said Ferreira, who added, "our brands continue to be cherished by Angolan consumers."

Giving up on the project is the end of an idea that began in 2006, when Manuel Ferreira de Oliveira was still CEO and was taken over by his successors, Pires de Lima, João Abecassis and now Rui Lopes Ferreira.

Unica, the partnership created in Angola with local investors, to facilitate the project's progress is now in liquidation, and Ferreira said that it involved giving up "an investment that has been estimated at 130 million euros."

The group is owned by SGPS Viacer (Grupo Viola [46.5%], Arsopi [28.5%] and Banco BPI [25%]) with 56% and the Carlsberg group with the remaining 44%. (Macauhub)

TELECOM – TECHNOLOGY

Airtel Africa debuts in Lagos in \$4.4 bln listing

Airtel Africa listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange in a 1.36 trillion naira (\$4.4 bln) flotation turning the telecoms company into the bourse's third-largest stock by market value. Airtel Africa's shares climbed 10% from their listing price of 363 naira after the float went live. Some 100,000 shares traded helping the main stock index recover from a seven-week low. The company, owned 68.3% by India's Bharti Airtel, offered shares in its African unit two weeks ago via a London IPO and said it would dual list in Nigeria, its biggest market in Africa. Airtel Africa, which operates across 14 African countries, had planned to list last week but the bourse postponed the cross-border listing to allow the telecoms firm to meet its listing requirements.

Airtel's listing comes after main rival, South Africa's MTN, listed its Nigerian unit in Lagos in May in a \$6.5 billion float that made it the second-largest stock on the bourse by market value. It also becomes the second company to list in London and Lagos following an IPO by oil firm Seplat.

Airtel Africa's existing shareholders include Singapore's Temasek, Japan's SoftBank, Singtel and U.S. investment firm Warburg Pincus.

The local bourse has said Airtel shares registered in Britain may be moved from the London market to Nigeria subject to approval by the custodians in London and foreign exchange rules in Nigeria. But Airtel shares registered in Nigeria cannot be moved to London, it said. (By Chijioke Ohuocha, Reuters)

South African Mobile Firm Cell C Seeks Debt Payment Delay

- Appoints PWC, Deloitte, Bowmans to audit, review practices
- Wireless carrier has struggled to compete with Vodacom, MTN

South African wireless carrier Cell C Pty Ltd. has begun talks to delay debt payments and hired consultants to probe its business practices and advise on a restructuring, sending shares in its biggest investor to a decade low.

Cell C is laboring under 8.9 billion rand (\$639 million) of debt and trying to secure new funding from a consortium of investors. The company has begun a round of cost cuts, has frozen hiring and is reviewing its contracts, wrote Douglas Craigie Stevenson, Cell C's chief executive officer, in an open letter.

Cell C has struggled to compete with Vodacom Group Ltd. and MTN Group Ltd. -- well established carriers that control the bulk of the South African market in wireless services and operate the biggest networks. It has 2.6 billion rand of debt maturing in August next year. "We are engaging with our lenders to re-term our debt and allow us sufficient time to implement the Buffet transaction," Craigie Stevenson wrote in an email reply to questions from Bloomberg, referring to the funding talks with the Buffet Group.

Cell C has paid 116 million rand in interest due to bondholders for June and a further 90 million rand on another funding arrangement with local banks, added Craigie Stevenson, who replaced CEO Jose dos Santos earlier this year.

Shares in Blue Label Telecoms Ltd., which led a recapitalization of Cell C almost two years ago and holds a 45% stake in the carrier, fell more than 15% to their lowest since 2008.

PricewaterhouseCoopers will audit Cell C's procurement practices and review processes, and law firm Bowmans will investigate any irregular business practices, according to the letter. Deloitte has been named as an independent financial restructuring adviser. "Cell C has a zero-tolerance policy towards illegal or unethical activity," Craigie Stevenson wrote in the letter. (By Loni Prinsloo, Bloomberg)

Ethio Telecom revenues rise 7% to \$1.26 bln in 2018/9

State-owned Ethio Telecom, a potential candidate for privatisation, generated 36.3 billion Ethiopian birr (\$1.26 billion) in revenue during the last financial year, a company report said on Tuesday 23rd July, a 7% rise on the previous year.

Multinational firms are eyeing a slice of the telecom provider after Ethiopia's parliament passed a law last month to liberalise the telecommunications sector, opening up one of Africa's last remaining state-controlled telecoms markets.

France's Orange, MTN of South Africa, Britain's Vodafone Group, the UAE's Etisalat and Zain of Kuwait are among the companies that have expressed an interest in the firm.

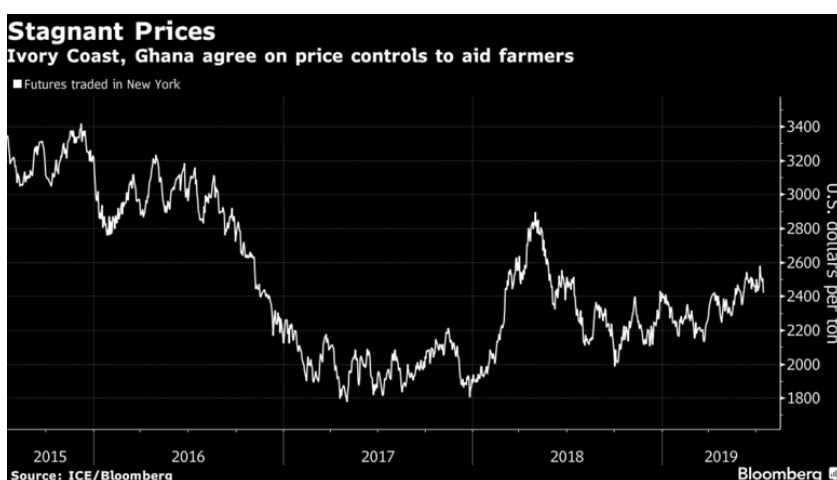
Earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) were 24.5 billion birr, the report said. No figure was given for the previous year. "Drastic tariff discounts ranging from 40-50% have been made in all products and services with the aim of ensuring affordability, enhancing service usage and customer satisfaction," the report said. The cuts increased data usage by 130% and voice calls by 19%, the report said. Ethiopia's financial year runs from July-June. (\$1 = 28.7800 birr) (By Katharine Houreld, Reuters)

AGRIBUSINESS

Cocoa's OPEC Moment Puts World Market on Track for Boom and Bust

- Price premium may curb demand, encourage overproduction
- Move comes ahead of Ivory Coast and Ghana elections next year

The world's two biggest cocoa producers are taking unprecedented steps to exert more control on the market in a bid to help farmers. The problem is they could end up doing the exact opposite.



Ivory Coast and Ghana are looking to jointly introduce a premium of \$400 a metric ton to their sales, a so-called living-income differential. The move could end up encouraging growers to boost production just as high prices curb consumption, setting the industry up for a dangerous boom-and-bust scenario, traders and analysts say.

"Fair to the farmers as it may be seen, there are unintended consequences," said Marcelo Dorea, senior soft-commodities trader at investment firm First New York and an industry veteran. "It has the potential to, over time, lead us onto sequential, structural surpluses and inevitably to lower futures prices."

The move will be felt by farmers from the 2020-2021 season that starts on Oct. 1. That's just weeks before elections in Ivory Coast and a couple months before citizens take to the polls in Ghana, potentially helping the incumbent governments to gather votes. The two countries account for more than 60% of the global cocoa supply. "The government will seek to use this to tell farmers how much they are loved," said Godfred Bokpin, senior economics lecturer at the University of Ghana in Accra. "The dividend comes back when votes are needed."

Growers in Ivory Coast and Ghana will probably reap some benefits as production from other countries isn't enough to supply the chocolate industry. But in the meantime, buyers will be kept at bay, and the stalemate could mean the top growers won't be selling futures to hedge, opening doors for prices to rise in a market where speculators are already holding large bullish bets.

Farmers like Michael Acheampong, who runs a cooperative with 1,500 growers in the town of Kwabeng, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) north of Accra, are already banking on the plan. "This is very timely and actually the one single act that will save the ever-dwindling fortunes of the cocoa industry from an eventual collapse," he said.

But in the long term, higher prices will mean overproduction, hurting the farmer income the nations are trying to protect. It will also stimulate more plantings in competing producers including Nigeria, Cameroon and Ecuador, where the premium paid in the physical market could also rise. "There's no economic benefit of Ivory Coast cocoa over Nigeria that justifies a premium of \$400 a ton," said Jonathan Parkman, co-head of agriculture at Marex Spectron Group in London. "So the true beneficiaries of the plan in its current format will, in the long-term, be other grades of cocoa."

Higher costs are also likely to hurt demand, which is already showing early signs of weakness. Global chocolate sales were flat in the quarter ended April after growing for eight three-month periods in a row, Barry Callebaut AG said in an earnings presentation this month, citing data from analytics firm Nielsen. "The living income differential of \$400 per metric ton significantly increases the cost of cocoa to every manufacturer and end-user, which has the potential to dampen emerging market consumption at current prices," said Eric Bergman, a commodities broker at Jenkins Sugar Group Inc.

Trader Impact

The plan is also likely to hurt traders and processors, which will have to pay the living-income differential on top of the regular premium they pay in the physical market. Many will find it hard to have exposure to such high premiums over the futures as they aren't usually able to hedge them, while others may struggle to pass on costs.

Barry Callebaut has already warned that while it agrees with the principle of what Ivory Coast and Ghana want to do, the move will result in higher costs for cocoa butter and powder, products of bean processing, starting in 2020. "Margins are tight," Judy Ganes, president of J. Ganes Consulting, in Panama City, Panama, said, adding it was already "tough enough to pass cost increases along."

If history is any guide, the nations are likely to struggle with their attempt to control prices. Unlike OPEC, which exerts its power by controlling supplies, Ghana and Ivory Coast want to prop up prices. An attempt to boost prices by banning sales in 1987 by then Ivorian president Felix Houphouët-Boigny only caused them to more than halve by the time the embargo ended in 1989.

"Any time producer groups attempt to control the market and establish minimum prices, it fails and the market is in worse shape after," Ganes said. "My concern remains the foreseen consequences that price support mechanisms lead to even greater oversupply and ultimately depressed values." (By Isis Almeida and Ekow Dontoh, Bloomberg)

Abundant rains offer good prospects for main Ivory Coast cocoa crop: farmers

Above-average rainfall mixed with sunshine in Ivory Coast's cocoa-growing regions last week could boost the forthcoming October-to-March main crop, farmers said on Monday 8th July.

The April-to-September mid-crop in Ivory Coast, the world's top cocoa producer, is tailing off and farmers said they were closely watching the development of the next main crop as no big pods were seen on trees yet.

While farmers said they were happy with weather conditions - which have allowed many flowers to turn into cherelles - more moisture and sun will be needed throughout the month to boost the crop. "It is not over yet. In the coming weeks, we will need good rains and sunshine to avoid insects and diseases on the plantations," said Eugene Gnaka, who farms near the western region of Soubre.

Data collected by Reuters showed that rainfall in Soubre, which includes the regions of Sassandra and San Pedro, was 55.5 millimetres (mm) last week, 18.9 mm above the five-year average. Farmers reported good flowering and a proliferation of cherelles on trees in the southern region of Agboville where rainfall was 43.9 mm last week, 4.6 mm above average.

In the southern region of Divo, rainfall was at 50.1 mm last week, 21.9 mm above average, and in the central region of Yamoussoukro, rainfall was at 33.3 mm last week, 10.1 mm above average. In the eastern region of Abengourou, known for the good quality of its beans, farmers said a proliferation of cherelles could pave the way for an early harvest compared with last season. "There are a lot more pods compared to the same time last year. The harvest of the main crop could be early if all goes well," said Anani Koffi, who farms near Abengourou. Data collected by Reuters showed that rainfall in Abengourou, which includes the region of Aboisso, was 63.8 mm last week, 24.4 mm above average.

In the centre-western region of Daloa and the central area of Bongouanou, data collected by Reuters showed rains were below average but farmers remained optimistic. "The soil is humid and flowers and cherelles are doing well," said Raphael Kouame, who farms near Daloa, a region that accounts for a quarter of Ivory Coast's national output. Data showed that rainfall in Daloa, including the region of Bouafle, was 18.8 mm last week, 5.5 mm below average. Rainfall in Bongouanou was 23.2 mm last week, 1.7 mm below average. Average temperatures ranged between 24.12 and 27.38 degrees Celsius. (By Loucoumane Coulibaly, Reuters)

Premium prices attract small farmers back to coffee growing in Zimbabwe

David Muganyura smells the coffee cherries on the slopes of his plot and breaks into a smile, as he chats to workers who are harvesting a crop he expects to be his biggest to date. A long-time Zimbabwean coffee grower, Muganyura almost gave up on the crop when prices slumped to as low as U.S. 20 cents a pound at the turn of the millennium, and foreign buyers took flight after land seizures drove out more than 120 white commercial coffee farmers under the banner of post-colonial reform. But with companies like Nestle's Nespresso arm now willing to pay a premium for Zimbabwe's beans, small-scale farmers like Muganyura are returning to a sector that was all-but destroyed under former President Robert Mugabe. Coffee output in Zimbabwe was 430 tonnes in 2018, a 10% increase over the previous year. This year production is set at 500 tonnes, according to industry officials.

Zimbabwe was never among the world's top producers: output peaked at around 15,000 tonnes in the late 1990s. But its Arabica coffee is prized for its zesty and fruity tones, and the sector once provided a livelihood for more than 20,000 poor farmers. Nespresso, which started buying Zimbabwean coffee last year at a 30%-40% premium above international prices and pays farmers in U.S. dollars, is helping to drive the modest revival.

It bought 200 tonnes from 450 small Zimbabwean farmers and two large estates in 2018 and wants to attract more growers, said Daniel Weston, who heads Nespresso's corporate affairs division.

Its limited edition "Tamuka muZimbabwe" ("We Have Awakened in Zimbabwe") coffee, launched in 16 countries in May, sold out in three weeks, he said. "What we are hoping to achieve over time is to increase the volume of coffee coming initially from the smallholder farmers we are working with and also to encourage other smallholder farmers to join the programme," Weston told Reuters.

'HUGE APPETITE'

Nespresso has teamed up with international non-profit TechnoServe to offer training to small farmers in the growing techniques needed to achieve the high quality it demands. "The market has a huge appetite for Zimbabwean coffee," said Midway Bhunu, TechnoServe's farmer trainer. "The world was about to lose one of the world's best coffees."

Muganyura, a father of eight, received the training in 2018 and managed to more than triple output from his 2-hectare plot to 700 kg last year. This year, he expects to harvest 1.5 tonnes, a personal best that will earn him more than \$10,000. “This is only introductory to a stage where we will get real money,” Muganyura told Reuters during a visit to his plot in the eastern Honde Valley, about 360 km from the capital, Harare.

The dollar payments have enabled Muganyura to hire labour, install solar power at his homestead, buy farming inputs, pay school fees for some of his grand-children and medicine for his diabetic wife - which he struggled to do in the past. This year, he aims to buy a car, a lifelong dream. Because of his success, he said, neighbours are inquiring about growing coffee. He plans to add another half a hectare of coffee trees. Zimbabwe outlawed the use of dollars and other foreign currencies last month, ending a decade of dollarisation. Nespresso said it was still assessing what that would mean for its dollar payments to farmers.

The Honde Valley is one of four districts that together had about 2,000 small coffee farmers at the turn of the millennium. But most quit and started growing bananas.

Just two white-owned commercial coffee farms remain in Zimbabwe. Robert Boswell, 50, owns one of them. His family lost two other farms to land seizures in 2000 and cut the area under coffee production by 46%. Boswell said he felt more confident after President Emmerson Mnangagwa replaced Mugabe in 2017, promising to restore property rights and revive the ravaged economy.

Boswell, who had been selling coffee to roasters in Germany and Canada, started delivering to Nespresso in 2018. This year he will expand the area under coffee by 25% to 60 hectares, he said during a tour of his Crake Valley estate in the scenic Vumba hills, 140 km south of the Honde Valley.

Commercial growers have an average yield of more than 2 tonnes per hectare. Tanganda Tea Company, owned by diversified group Meikles Limited, is Zimbabwe’s biggest coffee grower but its 134 hectares are a far cry from the more than 1,000 hectares it used to grow two decades ago.

Tanganda had largely abandoned coffee due to poor prices and started to grow avocados and macadamia nuts. But it too started selling to Nespresso in 2018 and plans to add another 40 hectares of coffee this year, according to a statement on its website. (By MacDonald Dzirutwe, Reuters)

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Eaglestone was founded in December 2011 with the aim to be a committed partner for the development of businesses located primarily in Sub-Saharan Africa and to support the development of renewable energy projects on a global basis.

The company has three business activities - financial advisory services, asset management and brokerage - and currently has offices in Amsterdam, Cape Town London, Lisbon, Luanda and Maputo

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