NEWS: 12.20.2022

By:

Afronomicslaw

December 20, 2022

Biden tells African leaders US is 'all in' on the continent

At the Leaders' Summit hosted in Washington, Joe Biden stated that African countries can count on the United States. Florizelle Liser from Corporate Council on Africa said, "I think for the US we don't tend to take our private sector companies by the hand, you don't see an American president taking private sector companies anywhere in the world, whereas, other countries, when they go, when Macron goes, he takes French companies with him, they open up the doors for their businesses. I think for the US we are doing more of that now." The second day of the summit included the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the United States and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), an agreement that, for Biden, will bring the two sides of the Atlantic even closer together.

Nigeria and Rwanda are the First African Nations to Sign Space Treaty

According to *AllAfrica*, Nigeria and Rwanda are the first two African countries to sign onto the Artemis Accords Space Treaty, joining 23 other countries. The Artemis Accords are, "a set of principles to guide the next phase in space

exploration, reinforcing and providing for important operational implementation of key obligations in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty." The U.S.-Africa Space Forum reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to collaborating with African partners on the peaceful use and exploration of outer space to meet shared priorities on Earth.

Africa has lowest travel restrictions since 2016

Natasha Doris from *African Law and Business* shares that approximately 93% of countries across Africa have maintained or risen in the Africa Visa Openness Index this year. According to African Development Bank's (AfDB) annual Africa Visa Openness Index (AVOI), travel is easing throughout Africa, with visa restrictions at their lowest level since 2016. AfDB acting vice president Marie-Laure Akin-Olugbade wrote, "The increase in travel is driven in large part by pent-up personal demand, but also by the realization that many businesses depend on human movement, and that investment thrives on it." Lower-income states have led the way in liberal visa requirements, encouraging intra-African mobility.

UK optimistic over Rwanda migration deal ahead of court verdict

According to Edwin Ashimwe from *The New Times*, the United Kingdom is optimistic that an ongoing court case of the UK-Rwanda migration and economic development partnership will prove its legality. The policy, under which some of the migrants and asylum seekers illegally entering the UK are to be transferred to Rwanda, has been on hold for months after it was challenged by a high court in the UK. Omar Daair, British High Commissioner to Rwanda has said, "The UK government is confident that this policy is legal and correct and has fought that case in court." Bilateral ties between both countries have particularly deepened this year owing to various factors like hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and they are both committed to achieve their initial objective.

ECA facilitates look and learn tour on VAT system

According to the *Economic Commission of Africa*, the Government of Sao Tome and Principe, with the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is implementing a new Value Added Tax (VAT) system to improve

revenue collection. ECA is supporting the tax policy reform, undertaken since 2019 by the Government of Sao Tome and Principe, to adopt a generalized system of taxation of goods and services, including indirect taxation reform based on the introduction of a VAT. The next steps for the Sao Tomean Tax and Customs Tax Direction and Customs Administration will consist of finalizing the legal framework on VAT as well as the certified software to be used by economic agents to implement VAT and the VAT Administration Information System (SIT-IVA).

Arbitration Important to social-development agenda if West Africa

Yetunde Ayobami Ojo from African Arbitration Association states, “for peaceful resolution of commercial disputes and other bilateral disagreements, the Federal Government has said arbitration must be embraced as a policy in the West Africa sub-region, especially in Nigeria.” Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami (SAN) reiterated that there is a need to establish more arbitration institutions as well as develop the few existing ones to have global appeal and capacity to administer diverse oil and gas related disputes. To achieve the objective of making the country become an international arbitration center, Malami promised that the government would encourage autonomy of arbitration organizations.

South Sudan traders approved to clear goods in Naivasha

The Kenyan government has told South Sudan traders that they are free to clear imported goods at any of the two dry ports in the country. The directive comes as a boost to the standard gauge railway, which is likely to benefit from the move should Juba opt to clear its goods in any of the ICDs. President William Ruto said Kenya will provide land to South Sudan in Mombasa to build a dry port to ease the cost of doing business between citizens of the two nations.

EVENTS- 12.20.2022

"**11th ITA-IEL-ICC Joint Conference on International Energy Arbitration**." African Arbitration Association. *Houston, Texas*. 19-20 January, 2023.

View online: NEWS: 12.20.2022

Provided by Afronomicslaw