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By:

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Tunisia and US IMF aid talks

According to *AfricaNews*, the United States Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, urged Tunisia to accept an IMF reform plan to prevent an economic collapse and address its debt and migration challenges. Blinken emphasized the importance of stability in Tunisia and Libya for the Mediterranean region. Meanwhile, the European Union offered Tunisia a strengthened partnership and potential financial aid of up to $985 million, in addition to the IMF's $2 billion loan, during a visit by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the Prime Ministers of Italy and the Netherlands.

EU cooperation on migration with Tunisia

AfricaNews shares that during a visit to Tunisia, European leaders offered over 1 billion euros in financial aid, as well as investments in undersea data cables and renewable energy, to address the country's economic instability and stem migration to Europe. Tunisian President Kais Saied, whose support is crucial for any EU deal on migration, made an unannounced visit to a migrant camp and appealed for international aid. The EU's plan includes budgetary aid,

investment in digital infrastructure and renewable energy, funding for search-and-rescue operations, and respect for human rights, aiming to disrupt the business model of smugglers and tackle migration challenges.

Seven African Heads of State to Attend 2023 US-Africa Business Summit

According to *AllAfrica*, the Corporate Council on Africa, in collaboration with the Government of Botswana, will host the 15th U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Gaborone, Botswana from July 11-14, 2023. The summit aims to bring together over 1,000 participants from the public and private sectors, including African Heads of State, ministers, government officials, private sector executives, entrepreneurs, investors, and stakeholders. With the theme "Enhancing Africa's Value In Global Value Chains," the summit will focus on strengthening trade, investment, and commercial ties between the United States and Africa, building on the momentum of the previous U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit and Business Forum held in December 2022.

Nigeria on Subsidy Removal and Poverty

Mary Izuaka from *Premium Times* writes that Amnesty International Nigeria has expressed concern over the removal of fuel subsidies in Nigeria, stating that it should not worsen poverty in the country. The organization urges the government to implement measures to protect the rights of those most affected by the subsidy removal and to mitigate the impact on low-income individuals. Amnesty International emphasizes the need for social cushioning and protection measures, calling on the authorities to investigate the fuel market chain and hold accountable those involved in smuggling, hoarding, and subsidy scams.

Ethiopia "Telecoms" project secures financing

According to Natasha Doris of *African Law and Business*, the Global Partnership for Ethiopia, which includes Vodafone Group, Safaricom, Vodacom Group, CDC Group, and Sumitomo Corporation, has secured financing from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) for its telecommunications project in Ethiopia. The investment will support the construction of the first private telecommunications system in

Ethiopia, including 4G and 5G mobile networks, as well as the rollout of a new financial services offering called M-PESA. The IFC provided a USD 157.4 million equity investment to the Global Partnership, while MIGA offered USD one billion in guarantees to protect equity investments by Safaricom Ethiopia shareholders. Norton Rose Fulbright advised the Global Partnership in this deal.

Canadian Zenith launches Tunisia oil claim

Robert Li from *African Law and Business* shares that the Calgary-based energy company Zenith Energy has initiated arbitration proceedings against Tunisia, seeking USD 48 million under the UK-Tunisia investment treaty. Zenith claims that the Tunisian government obstructed the sale of produced oil from its Sidi El Kilani and Ezzaouia oil concessions, leading to unjustified obstructions and financial losses for the company. The dispute was filed at the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), with French law firm Gide Loyrette Nouel representing Zenith as the claimant.

Africa lagging in intermediate goods exports

Toby Awodipe from *The Guardian* writes that according to a recent study by the World Trade Organization (WTO), global exports of intermediate goods (IGs) declined by 10% in the fourth quarter of 2022 to $2.3 trillion. This drop can be attributed to disruptions in global supply chains caused by factors such as geopolitical tensions, commodity shortages, high energy prices, and weak consumption. Africa and Asia experienced the most significant declines, with IG exports falling by 14% and 15% respectively. High-tech components and industrial supplies were particularly affected, while food and beverage exports remained resilient.

Stakeholders hopeful of Electricity Act impact on manufacturing sector

According to Toby Awodipe from The Guardian, President Bola Tinubu of Nigeria has signed an electricity bill that repeals the Electric Power Sector Reform Act and empowers states, companies, and individuals to generate, transmit, and distribute electricity. The new Act aims to provide a comprehensive framework for the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI) and encourage private sector investments in the sector. The move is expected to address the dearth of electricity in the country, which has hampered manufacturing and forced many

businesses to rely on costly alternative energy sources. The Act is seen as a positive development for industrial development, decentralization of the electricity grid, and attracting foreign direct investments (FDIs) into the country's power sector.

Chinese firm registered subsidiaries to evade taxes in Kenya

Sam Kiplagat from *The Business Daily* shares that the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) has taken legal action to freeze three bank accounts belonging to Chinese companies suspected of evading over 7 million USD in taxes over the past three years. The KRA alleges that the companies were incorporated to import goods from China but there is no evidence of importation, despite funds being wired to China. Investigations revealed under-declared revenue of approximately 7 million USD, and the KRA intends to issue tax assessments for the unpaid taxes. The companies are owned by Chinese nationals who do not have attachable assets in Kenya, making the preservation of funds in the bank accounts crucial for potential tax recovery.

Kenyan tea exports take hit from Sudan war

According to Gerald Andae from *The Business Daily*, Kenya's tea exports have declined by 26% in the first quarter of the year due to civil unrest in Sudan, one of the country's top export destinations. The volumes shipped to Sudan have decreased by 59%, and traders expect further declines if the civil strife continues. Challenges in forex reserves affecting markets like Pakistan and Egypt have also contributed to the overall drop in Kenya's tea exports.

Radisson Blu grows in Kenya for African expansion

According to Lynet Igadwah from *The Business Daily*, Radisson Blu, a global hotel brand, is planning to open its fourth facility in Nairobi as part of its expansion strategy in Africa. The Radisson Hotel Nairobi Airport, located near Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, is set to open in mid-2027 with 200 rooms. The hotel aims to provide easy access to the airport and Nairobi National Park for tourists and business travelers. Radisson Hotel Group has also signed agreements for six additional hotels across Africa, expanding its room count to 1,400 on the continent. The hotel industry in Kenya has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with tourism earnings declining in 2020 due to travel

restrictions.

Africa moves to protect its interests in the global tax rules

African Union shares that the African Union has concluded a three-day meeting on tax in Africa, discussing contemporary issues affecting the continent's tax regimes. The meeting aimed to protect African interests in the design and implementation of global tax rules and improve domestic resource mobilization. Key recommendations included engaging in the global tax debate at the United Nations, enacting domestic minimum top-up tax legislation to protect taxing rights, implementing simplified VAT regimes for e-commerce, and addressing wasteful tax incentives and illicit financial flows. The outcomes of the meeting will be considered at a future session to influence Africa's policies on tax regimes and domestic resource mobilization.

Summit adopts Verification Report of Somalia to join EAC

According to East African Community, the 21st Extra-Ordinary Summit of the East African Community (EAC) Heads of State in Bujumbura, Burundi, approved the verification report for Somalia's application to join the EAC and instructed the Council of Ministers and EAC Secretariat to commence negotiations with Somalia. This marks a significant step towards Somalia becoming the 8th member of the EAC. Additionally, during the summit, appointments were made for key positions within the EAC, including the appointment of Deputy Secretaries General and judges for the East African Court of Justice.

ECOWAS kicks off Activities of ROGEAP in Liberia and Mauritania

The Regional Off-Grid Electricity Access Project (ROGEAP) was formally launched in Liberia and Mauritania with the participation of renewable energy industry stakeholders. The workshops aimed to introduce ROGEAP, raise awareness about off-grid PV solar technologies, and establish a regulatory framework to promote the development of the off-grid PV solar products market in both countries. ROGEAP, implemented by the ECOWAS Commission and the West African Development Bank, seeks to increase access to sustainable energy services using solar technology in ECOWAS member states and four additional African countries, with funding from the World Bank, Clean Technology Fund, and the government of the Netherlands.

ECOWAS deepens support to the Private Sector to take advantage of AfCFTA

According to *ECOWAS CEDEOA*, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the International Trade Centre (ITC), organized a regional capacity building workshop in Abuja, Nigeria for Master Trainers from Business Associations on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The workshop aimed to equip participants with knowledge on export readiness, market research, strategy, and operational tools of the AfCFTA to support businesses in taking advantage of the continental market. The workshop emphasized the importance of empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), particularly women and youth entrepreneurs, to engage in trade under the AfCFTA.

EVENTS: 06.15.2023

"**Invest Africa Connect Reception: Africa Energy Transition**." Invest Africa. *Nairobi, Kenya.* 21 June 2023.

"**Bridging the Digital Divide: Accelerating Investment into African Data Centers**." Invest Africa. *London, England*. 4 July 2023.

"**UK-DRC Investment Forum."** Invest Africa. London, England. 12 July 2023. "TIArb 6th Annual Arbitration Conference." African Arbitration Association. *Hybrid/Tanzania.* 14 July 2023.

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