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OACPS Secretary General Urges Greater Cooperation at International Level to Facilitate Equitable Access to COVID-19 Vaccines

The vulnerable economies and health systems of the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) have been, and continue to be, tested. Vaccines have, however, been developed and are being distributed. As World Immunisation Week draws to a close, Secretary-General, H.E. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, wholeheartedly supports the very relevant theme of “Vaccines work for all” and urges greater cooperation at the international level to facilitate equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Barrick Gold Corporation Refers Senegalese Tax Dispute to International Arbitration

Barrick Gold Corporation has confirmed that it has referred a tax claim by the Senegalese Revenue Authority (SRA) to the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) for arbitration, after numerous attempts to resolve the issue with the government had failed. The SRA has levied an unaudited assessment totaling $208 million (calculated as of March 31, 2021) for taxes it claims arose

from Barrick's sale of its interest in the Massawa project to Teranga Gold Corporation last year.

Digitization an Opportunity to Propel African Economies even as COVID-19 Rages

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit hard the economies of many African countries, and pushed more citizens into poverty, but some countries like Rwanda and Togo have used digitization to keep their economies running. Speaking during the launch of a Pan-African peer exchange series on the benefits of responsible digital government payments, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Ms. Vera Songwe said the pandemic had a huge toll on African economies with GDP growth estimated to have dropped from 3.3% in 2019 to -2.6% in 2020. It is, however, anticipated that growth will return to 3.3% in 2021.

European Union Pledges Stronger Financial and Political Support for the African Continental Free Trade Area

The European Union will continue to be a strong supporter of Africa's economic integration agenda, particularly the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), said Birgitte Markussen, the EU's ambassador to the African Union (AU). She was speaking at a webinar organized recently by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Carleton University, Canada, and the Pan African Strategic & Policy Research Group (PANAFSTRAG) with the support of the EU.

ASAFO Enters U.S.

Africa-focused law firm ASAFO & CO has established a presence in the United States by launching a new office in Washington, DC. By expanding its footprint into the U.S., ASAFO will expand its international reach, while enhancing its existing international public policy and other corporate offerings. This move will also enable the firm to strengthen its relationships with the U.S. and international finance institutions.

Coca-Cola African Bottling Subsidiary Plans IPO

The Coca-Cola Company and its African bottling subsidiary, Coca-Cola Beverages Africa, have announced plans to list the African bottler in

Amsterdam and Johannesburg in the next 18 months. The Coca-Cola Company, which is already publicly listed on the New York Stock Exchange, plans to list subsidiary Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (CCBA), one of the largest Coca-Cola bottling companies in South Africa, selling its shares in the company in the process.

Ghana Growing as Business Destination

Ghana's president has given an update on the measures his government is taking to make the country more appealing to international investors and to encourage local business development. Giving the keynote at last week's online annual conference of the African Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (AVCA), President Nana Akufo-Addo said there were positive signs about the level of private equity and venture capital investment in Africa following the pandemic, and called for greater cooperation between the public and private sectors to facilitate that progress.

South Africa and Singapore Alliances for DWF

Law firms in South Africa and Singapore, respectively, have agreed to an exclusive association with DWF, supporting the firm's ability to serve clients in these parts of the world. Manchester-headquartered DWF has built up a strong national practice in the United Kingdom via acquisitions like Manchester law firm Cobbetts, before expanding into France through a 2017 merger with Heenan Paris, which brought with it strong links with South African law firm Thomson Wilks.

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