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Shifting U.S.-Africa Policy Under Trump Administration

According to *All Africa*, Rama Yade from the Atlantic Council predicts significant adjustments in U.S. policies towards Africa during Donald Trump's presidency, despite his "America first" stance. Shortly after his inauguration, Trump implemented several executive orders impacting Africa, including suspending foreign development assistance and initiating withdrawals from global agreements like the Paris Climate Agreement. Marco Rubio, the new Secretary of State, highlighted Africa's potential economic opportunities, though specific policies are still forthcoming. This shift in focus comes amid calls from Congress for more engaged and robust U.S. policies towards Africa, amidst escalating conflicts and humanitarian crises, particularly in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Navigating New Realities: Africa Amidst US-Europe Tensions

All Africa reports that as President Donald Trump exacerbates tensions with Europe, Africa faces new strategic dilemmas. Trump's direct negotiations with Russia on Ukraine and Vice President JD Vance's controversial remarks at the

Munich Security Conference signal a deepening rift with Europe. This divergence challenges the notion of a unified West, prompting Africa to reassess its alliances. Europe may continue to champion governance and human rights, whereas the US might adopt a starkly different stance under Trump, particularly on diversity and inclusion. This shift could realign Africa's diplomatic focus, urging closer ties with Europe and a firm commitment to multilateralism to navigate these turbulent times. As the US scales back on foreign aid and security commitments, Africa must consider alternative partnerships, possibly turning to other global players like China, who are ready to step into roles vacated by the U.S.

Strengthening Ethio-UK Economic Ties: A Future of Prosperity

All Africa reports that Ethiopia and the United Kingdom are deepening their longstanding economic and development partnership, highlighted by UK Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner's recent engagement at the Ethiopian Securities Exchange. This event underscored the UK's support for Ethiopia's significant economic reforms, which have notably increased the profitability of major Ethiopian public enterprises like Ethiopian Airlines and Ethio Telecom. The Ethiopian Investment Holdings has been established to manage these enterprises with global governance standards, enhancing their efficiency and revenue generation. Both nations are committed to sustaining this collaboration, focusing on investments in critical infrastructure to boost Ethiopia's ongoing economic transformation.

African Ministers Advocate for Strengthened Regional Integration and AfCFTA Implementation

According to *All Africa*, Zambia's Foreign Minister Mulambo Haimbe and Nigeria's Industry, Trade and Investment Minister Jumoke Oduwole have called for accelerated implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and regional economic communities (RECs) to fully unleash Africa's economic potential. In discussions with ENA, Haimbe highlighted the urgent need for improved infrastructure and connectivity to facilitate trade and regional cooperation within Africa. He emphasized that overcoming internal trade barriers and enhancing political cooperation should be prioritized over external economic dependencies. Oduwole noted that five years into the

AfCFTA, the initiative has boosted intra-African trade and opened opportunities for key demographic groups like youth and women. Both ministers stressed the importance of regional collaboration for sustainable development and addressing challenges such as conflicts that hinder economic progress.

Nigeria's Role as Africa's Digital Trade Leader

According to *All Africa*, Vice President Kashim Shettima, represented by Minister of Industry, Trade, and Investment Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to spearheading Africa's digital trade agenda at the AfCFTA Digital Trade Workshop in Abuja. The event highlighted Nigeria's advancements in digital commerce and its positioning as a continental hub, potentially creating over 10 million jobs by 2025. Initiatives such as the National Talent Export Program and investment in infrastructure like the modernized passport system are aimed at bolstering Nigeria's role under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The workshop also showcased various government efforts to integrate digital trade, from customs enhancements to creative industry support, underscoring a comprehensive strategy to leverage digital trade for economic growth.

Zimbabwe Emphasizes Trade for National Prosperity at African Union Session

During a post-Cabinet media briefing, Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Professor Amon Murwira, underscored the importance of trade in achieving national prosperity, reports *All Africa*. Highlighting discussions from the recent African Union's 38th Ordinary Session, he noted Zimbabwe's commitment to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), aiming to boost intra-African trade. Prof Murwira elaborated on the Africa Prosperity Dialogue in Ghana, which focused on enhancing trade facilitation infrastructure, such as transport and digital systems, across the continent. The minister also discussed meetings with leaders from neighboring Mozambique and the UAE, emphasizing the importance of economic cooperation and increased trade to strengthen Zimbabwe's international relationships and local production systems.

Ugandan Traders Seek Presidential Intervention Over Market Issues

All Africa reports that traders in Kampala, represented by the Federation of Uganda Traders' Association (FUTA), have called on President Yoweri Museveni to resolve persistent conflicts and injustices in city markets. Despite existing presidential directives on market leadership, traders face ongoing issues with high utility costs and illegal fees from self-appointed landlords in government-owned markets. FUTA chairperson John Kabanda expressed the traders' intentions to present their grievances directly to the President, seeking decisive action to permanently address these disputes. Meanwhile, Kampala Minister Minsa Kabanda emphasized that the President's orders are still in force, urging traders to focus on their businesses and confirming the reconstruction of Kisekka Market for trader use, not as a bus terminal.

Extortion and Trade Barriers at Loguatuo Border Impacting Liberia-Ivory Coast Commerce

All Africa reports that extortion at the Loguatuo border between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire is reportedly disrupting the flow of goods and services, according to traders and travelers. Allegations of high customs duties imposed by Ivorian authorities, particularly on items like dry cow skin, are diminishing profit margins for businesses operating across the border. Traders are faced with multiple checkpoints and associated fees, exacerbating the financial burden and complicating compliance with ECOWAS protocols intended to foster free movement within the region. This situation not only impacts individual traders but also poses broader economic implications, potentially affecting market supplies and the regional trade environment.

Rise of AI Provisions in Asia-Pacific Trade Agreements

According to *All Africa*, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into preferential trade agreements (PTAs) has increased since the China-Mauritius Free Trade Agreement in 2019 first addressed AI. These provisions, mostly embedded within digital trade and data governance sections, focus on ethical AI use, algorithmic transparency, and fostering trust in AI technologies. Asia-Pacific nations, notably Singapore, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, are leading this inclusion, with comprehensive AI policies and legal frameworks enhancing their regional agreements. However, while dedicated AI articles in PTAs are still uncommon, they are becoming more focused on promoting

responsible and internationally aligned AI governance frameworks. This shift underlines the potential of PTAs to not only foster economic growth but also guide equitable and responsible technology adoption across the globe.

Uganda-France Investment and Trade Conference Underway in Paris

Permanent Secretary Ramathan Ggoobi is representing Uganda at the inaugural Uganda-France Investment, Tourism, Trade Conference in Paris, aimed at boosting bilateral trade and investment ties, reports *All Africa*. Alongside key figures like Dr. Lilly Ajarova from the Uganda Tourism Board, Ggoobi presented Uganda as a prime investment destination in sectors such as mining, agriculture, and tourism. The three-day event, organized by Uganda's embassy in France, features discussions with French, Spanish, and Portuguese business leaders and government officials. The conference seeks to enhance trade relations, encourage public-private partnerships, and foster sustainable economic growth through direct engagement with European investors.

WTO Chief Urges African Leaders to Innovate in Funding Development

According to *All Africa*, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, has called on African leaders to innovate in funding their continent's development, speaking at a breakfast dialogue in Addis Ababa. She highlighted the potential for Africa to generate funds through enhancing the value of natural resources, utilizing pension funds for patient capital, and innovating in carbon emissions pricing. This appeal was made at the AU Summit, emphasizing the need for Africa to reduce dependency on borrowing and sustain investments to achieve Agenda 2063's goals. The event underscored mobilizing local investment as crucial for Africa's socio-economic advancement.

Mauritius and UK Enhance Trade and Investment Ties

According to *All Africa*, during discussions in Ebène, Mauritius, with His Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Africa, Mr. John Humphrey, Mauritius's Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning, Mrs. Jyoti Jeetun, emphasized new opportunities for enhancing trade and investment ties with the United Kingdom. Key areas of potential collaboration include digital and Fintech regulation, and the development of innovative systems, where the UK's

advanced capabilities can play a significant role. The talks also covered the broad spectrum of the Strategic Trade Partnership, touching on sectors like green economy, education, and biotechnology. Additionally, issues of anti-money laundering standards and the challenges of adopting virtual assets were discussed, alongside the importance of UK support in Mauritius's transition to renewable energy and strategic planning capacities. This meeting marks a step towards deepening the bilateral relationship and leveraging Mauritius's strategic position as a gateway to African markets.

FC Invests $50 Million in Lagos Free Zone to Boost Nigeria's Economic Growth

African Law & Business reports that the International Finance Corporation (IFC), associated with the World Bank, has invested $50 million in Nigeria's first privately developed free-trade zone, the Lagos Free Zone (LFZ). Managed by the Lagos Free Zone Company (LFZC) and advised by international law firm Norton Rose Fulbright and local firm Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie, the investment aims to develop real estate, industrial facilities, and infrastructure within the 860-hectare zone. LFZ, which includes the nearby Lekki deep seaport, is set to foster high-growth industries like consumer goods, pharmaceuticals, engineering, and logistics. This initiative is expected to enhance Nigeria's global market competitiveness and drive significant job creation.

Events – 2/21/2025

"Scaling Up Green Public Procurement: Insights from India, Indonesia, and South Africa." IISD. *Virtual*. 5 March 2025.

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