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Trump Imposes Wide-Ranging Tariffs on Global Imports

Emmanuel Addeh, reporting for *All Africa*, states that President Donald Trump has declared a 10% baseline tax on imports from 185 countries, escalating up to 14% for Nigeria and reaching as high as 50% for some African nations like Lesotho. Major economies like China, the EU, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan face tariffs ranging from 20% to 34%. Trump's unilateral move, citing a national economic emergency, is expected to generate hundreds of billions in revenue annually, aiming to correct what he views as a long-standing exploitation of the U.S. in global trade. This action is based on the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and is part of his broader strategy to bring manufacturing jobs back to the U.S. Critics argue this could lead to higher consumer prices and economic stagnation, with potential political fallout from affected industries and consumers.

WTO and IMF Warn Against Economic Impact of New U.S. Tariffs

Africa News reports that the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are sounding alarms about the potential

economic damage from the Trump administration's latest tariffs. The WTO has revised its forecast, now expecting global goods trade to decrease by 1% in 2025, marking a significant downturn from previous growth predictions. Both WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and IMF Chief Kristalina Georgieva have expressed concerns that these tariffs could trigger a global trade war and exacerbate economic instability at a time when global growth is already weak. The new tariffs, which include a 10% baseline tax on all imports and higher rates for countries with significant trade deficits with the U.S., are set to be implemented this Saturday. The international bodies are urging for a resolution to trade tensions to prevent further economic disruptions.

Global Reactions to Trump's New Tariffs

According to *Africa News*, world leaders have voiced strong opposition to President Donald Trump's new series of tariffs, which include a baseline 10% on all imports to the U.S., and higher rates on countries with trade surpluses, such as 34% on China and 20% on the EU. These measures have heightened fears of a looming global trade war. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, speaking from an EU-Central Asia summit in Uzbekistan, criticized the reliance on tariffs and hinted at impending EU countermeasures. Meanwhile, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney promised to safeguard Canadian interests, despite Canada being exempt from the new measures. Brazil's Congress has passed a bill to retaliate against tariffs, awaiting President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's signature. China and Japan also responded, with China calling for the immediate cancellation of the tariffs and Japan adopting a cautious approach. Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa announced the suspension of all tariffs on US goods in response to recent American tariffs on Zimbabwe. The decision aims to boost American imports in Zimbabwe and promote Zimbabwean exports to the US but may affect regional relations within SADC. The tariffs have affected global stock markets, causing them to drop at the opening on Thursday.

Global Markets Tumble After Trump's Tariff Announcement

Additionally, *Africa News* reports that Global and American stock markets have experienced significant declines following President Donald Trump's declaration of a new 10% tariff on all imports to the United States. This announcement has

intensified concerns about a potential global trade war and prompted warnings from economists about the risk of a recession. In the U.S., the S&P 500 dropped by 3%, Dow Jones futures by 3.7%, and Nasdaq by 4.5% at market opening. Additionally, oil prices fell over 4%, and the U.S. dollar weakened against the Japanese yen, reaching its lowest point since early October. European markets also saw a downturn, with a 2.7% drop overall and a significant 9.5% fall in shares of Maersk, a key indicator of global trade health. World leaders from the EU, Canada, and China have announced plans for retaliatory measures, escalating trade tensions further.

New U.S. Tariffs Disrupt Long-Standing African Trade Relations

President Donald Trump's recent announcement of sweeping tariffs, including a 10% baseline tariff on all imports to the U.S. effective from April 5th, has rattled trade relationships with several African nations, reports *All Africa*. The new tariffs particularly target countries with significant trade deficits with the U.S., imposing even higher reciprocal rates starting April 9th. This policy change has sparked significant concern across Africa, with South Africa, the U.S.'s second-largest African trading partner, branding the tariffs as "unilaterally imposed and punitive." The move is expected to heavily impact South Africa's automobile, agriculture, and pharmaceutical sectors, which exported $14.7 billion worth of goods to the U.S. in 2024. Small economies like Lesotho are among the hardest hit, facing a staggering 50% levy that could jeopardize 40,000 jobs in its textile sector. The tariffs might also override the benefits provided by the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), pushing African nations to reconsider their trade strategies and potentially unite for negotiations through regional blocs.

Lesotho's Textile Industry Faces Crisis Under New U.S. Tariffs

In particular, Lesotho, a key player in the textile sector and a significant exporter to the U.S., faces economic uncertainty following the imposition of a 50% tariff by U.S. opines Dominic Wabwireh for *Africa News*. President Donald Trump. This Southern African nation, where brands like Levi’s and Wrangler often source their jeans, sends about 75% of its textile products to the U.S., employing around 12,000 people. The new tariffs come as a response to what Trump claims is a 99% tariff from Lesotho on American goods, a figure the Lesotho government contests. The potential increase in export costs could lead

to significant job losses within Lesotho's textile industry, which is crucial for the country's economy. In 2024, bilateral trade between the U.S. and Lesotho amounted to $240.1 million. Facing a dire situation, Lesotho’s Trade Minister Mokhethi Shelile expressed the country's resolve to diversify and seek new markets, particularly within the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, as a strategy to mitigate the impact of these tariffs.

Severe Aid Cuts by US and EU Pose Challenges and Opportunities for Africa

Writing for the *Institute for Security Studies* Peter Fabricius reports that the Trump administration's recent dismantling of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) programs, totaling approximately $75.9 billion, has caused significant upheaval across Africa and beyond. This abrupt termination affects 5,341 development projects, dramatically increasing the risk of severe health and economic repercussions. This includes potential increases in malaria, childhood malnutrition, HIV infections, and even famine due to a lack of essential food assistance. Concurrently, several European Union (EU) countries are also slashing their aid budgets amid shifting priorities towards defense, further complicating the global aid landscape. African leaders and experts are now faced with the urgent task of finding alternative sources of funding to fill these massive gaps in their development budgets. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa sees this as a wake-up call to finance critical services like HIV/AIDS treatment, which had been heavily supported by PEPFAR. This situation has sparked discussions on reducing dependency on Western aid, with suggestions to increase domestic revenues and improve government accountability. Despite these challenges, some see this as an opportunity for Africa to assert greater financial and political independence, although replacing these funds with trade and private investment might not be immediately feasible for the continent's poorest nations.

Kenya Faces New Trade Challenges with US Tariff Shift

According to *All Africa*, Kenya's trade with the United States is under new pressure due to recent tariff increases by the U.S., which threatens to exacerbate Kenya's already substantial trade deficit, currently standing at approximately $12 billion (12% of GDP). The Kenya National Chamber of

Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) has expressed serious concerns, highlighting the potential negative impacts on exporters and major industries that depend on U.S. markets. While direct retaliation with higher import tariffs from Kenya seems unlikely, the KNCCI plans to hold urgent discussions to develop mitigation strategies. The new tariffs have been described by the KNCCI as a critical moment to reevaluate and strengthen Kenya's economic structure, emphasizing the development of local industries such as IT, digital technology, and machinery to bolster industrialization. In response to the 10% tariff increase, the Chamber aims to collaborate with government ministries to identify alternative export markets and improve the business environment in Kenya. This situation also underscores the broader need for Africa to enhance economic self-reliance by boosting intra-regional trade and capital flows.

Ethiopia Prepares for WTO Accession with New Trade Policy

All Africa reports that Ethiopia is taking significant steps toward joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) and enhancing its trade capabilities, as outlined in its newly drafted trade policy. The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) held a stakeholders' panel to gather final inputs on the draft, signaling the country's readiness for global trade integration. MoTRI Minister Kassahun Gofe highlighted the absence of a formal trade policy for 117 years but noted recent economic strides made through macroeconomic reforms. The new policy is part of Ethiopia's broader efforts to engage more fully in international trade, including its preparations to participate in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) with a pilot phase involving 12 nations and an upcoming revised tariff book. These initiatives are expected to bolster Ethiopia's economic growth and integration into regional and global markets. Additionally, the country has seen a significant increase in business licensing efficiency, reducing the processing time dramatically and issuing 2.5 million new licenses and renewals in just eight months. With WTO accession on the horizon, Ethiopia aims to better negotiate trade agreements and expects to hit $6 billion in export revenues by the fiscal year's end, indicating robust trade activity and potential.

Somali and Djibouti Presidents Discuss Strengthening Bilateral Ties

All Africa reports that Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud met with Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh to discuss enhancing the strategic cooperation between their nations. The discussions centered on security, economic, trade, and political collaboration, aiming to bolster regional stability and prosperity. President Mohamud expressed gratitude towards Djibouti for its support in Somalia’s peace efforts and specifically acknowledged Djibouti's role in combating Al-Shabaab, referred to as "Khawarij" in their dialogue. President Guelleh reiterated Djibouti's commitment to supporting Somalia, promising to increase aid in counterterrorism efforts, state rebuilding, and security enhancement. This meeting underscores the strong partnership between the two Horn of Africa neighbors as they face mutual challenges such as insurgency and economic recovery.

Misalignment of African Government Foreign Policies with Public Opinion

Florian G. Kern et. al., reporting for the *Afro Barometer*, discuss a recent study that examines the alignment between the foreign policy of African governments and the preferences of their constituents, focusing on issues of free movement and free trade across 34 African countries. Despite considerable public engagement with foreign policy issues, there is a notable gap in academic research addressing the extent to which African foreign policies reflect public opinion. This paper explores the congruence between government foreign policy positions and public preferences, investigating the influence of governance style (democratic vs. autocratic) and external economic factors (such as natural resources, aid, and remittances) on policy alignment. Our findings reveal a general disconnect between public opinions and government policies. Specifically, public opinion tends to be more skeptical of free trade than the liberal policies adopted by their governments, indicating low congruence in foreign policy on trade issues. Conversely, on the topic of free movement, the public favors more liberal policies than those enacted by their governments. Interestingly, our multivariate analysis suggests that democracies exhibit lower foreign policy congruence than autocracies concerning free trade, potentially due to a systemic tendency in democracies to promote market liberalization aggressively. The study finds no significant impact of external rents on the congruence of foreign policy, challenging common assumptions about the influence of economic factors on policy

making.

Advancing Transport Development in Africa through Regional Integration and AfCFTA

All Africa reports that the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the African Transport Policy Programme (SSATP), held in Cotonou, focused on regional transport priorities, institutional reform, and digital innovation under the theme "Strengthened Governance for Safe, Sustainable, and Decarbonized Transport in Africa: Enhancing Institutional Capacity through Regional Collaboration." The meeting, attended by 250 participants including transport ministers and technical experts, emphasized the critical role of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and regional integration in advancing cross-border transport development. Robert Lisinge, Director at the ECA, highlighted the significance of initiatives like the Trans-African Highways network and the Single African Air Transport Market. However, he noted that coordination between regional and national institutions needs improvement. The event also explored digital solutions for sustainable transport, discussing the impact of technology and data on transport systems. Founded in 1987 by the ECA and the World Bank, SSATP remains a pivotal entity in shaping transport policies across the continent, working with numerous stakeholders to enhance Africa's transport infrastructure and policy landscape.

Zimbabwe Eyes Lucrative Chinese Market for Avocado and Macadamia Exports

According to *All Africa,* Zimbabwe is targeting the Chinese market for exports of avocados and macadamia nuts through the Zimbabwe-China Avocado and Macadamia Inward Buyer Mission scheduled for April 8-10, 2025, in Chipinge. This initiative by ZimTrade aims to build on strong existing trade relations between Zimbabwe and China, which saw trade volumes reach US$3 billion in the first nine months of 2024. The event will include seminars, networking, and farm visits to help Zimbabwean producers understand the Chinese market and forge business connections. This follows the recent removal of trade barriers with the signing of the "Protocol for Phytosanitary Requirements for Export of Zimbabwean Fresh Avocado to China" at the 2024 FOCAC Summit in Beijing. ZimTrade's CEO, Mr. Allan Majuru, expressed confidence that this mission

would lead to significant business deals, enhancing Zimbabwe's global agricultural market presence.

Minister Sebahizi Addresses Market Inefficiencies in Agricultural Sector

Charles Nyandwi, writing for *The New Times*, reports that during a parliamentary session, Minister of Trade and Industry, Prudence Sebahizi, outlined comprehensive measures to tackle market inefficiencies affecting agricultural cooperatives. He discussed issues like production tracking, limited investment in processing, and market access. Sebahizi highlighted the government's efforts to monitor agricultural production closely and adjust market strategies, including allowing prices to be set by the market to ensure all produce is sold. He emphasized the role of the E-Soko platform in providing real-time market data, aiding farmers and traders in making informed decisions. The ministry also supports infrastructure development, such as road construction and improved storage facilities, to enhance market access and reduce post-harvest losses. Additionally, efforts are underway to meet international standards to help local producers access high-end markets effectively.

Illegal Mining and Banditry in Nigeria: A Deep-Rooted Crisis

According to *All Africa*, illegal mining activities in Nigeria, particularly in the north-western states of Katsina and Zamfara, are exacerbating economic losses and fueling violence, with an estimated $527 million contributed by the legal mining sector in 15 years. The region, rich in strategic minerals like gold, has become a hotspot for violent clashes and banditry, supported by elite collusion. Research involving qualitative interviews in these states reveals that wealthy mine owners often employ bandits to protect their interests, providing them with arms and logistics in exchange for security. This entrenchment of illegal mining activities has led to significant violence, with 1,615 incidents and 4,201 deaths recorded from 2010 to 2023. The government's response has been inadequate, with recommendations for enforcing stricter laws, enhancing border security, involving community participation in policing, and imposing targeted sanctions on elites involved in the illicit trade.

African Marketplace Jiji Expands to Bangladesh

African online marketplace Jiji is set to launch in Bangladesh, aiming to tap into the burgeoning e-commerce sector projected to hit $13 billion by 2027, reports *All Africa*. Already operating in seven African countries with 12 million monthly users, Jiji views Bangladesh's 131 million internet users as a significant growth opportunity. The company plans to differentiate itself from local competitors like Daraz and Bikroy by employing successful strategies from Africa, such as free user listings and telco partnerships. Founded in 2014 and profitable, Jiji's move marks the first time an African startup is venturing into Asia's competitive market, applying its proven business models in a new region. This expansion is a critical test of whether African tech companies can thrive globally, especially in emerging markets.

Nigeria Amplifies Commitment to Digital Trade and Youth Engagement in Water Management

According to *All Africa*, the Nigerian government has reiterated its commitment to enhancing digital trade within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), with a focus on establishing Nigeria as a regional digital trade hub. During the World Trade Organization (WTO) Aid for Trade Session in Geneva, Special Assistant to the President on Export Expansion, Aliyu Bunu Sheriff, emphasized Nigeria's strategic role in driving digital services and expanding market access. The government, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment, has initiated high-impact workshops to improve trade processes and leverage digital systems for cross-border commerce. Additionally, Nigeria is actively supporting the 2025 Stockholm Junior Water Prize Competition to encourage young Nigerians to engage with water and environmental challenges. This initiative, highlighted in Abuja by the Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, Senator Ibrahim Hadejia, aims to foster innovation among youths aged 15 to 20, focusing on the understanding and resolution of water-related issues. The competition is part of a broader effort to integrate environmental consciousness among the younger generation amid global climate challenges.

Events – 04/04/2025

“Exclusive Roundtable with Nigeria's Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment.” Invest Africa. *London, England.* 8 April 2025.

“Energy Modelling Platform for Africa (EMP-A) 2025.” ECA. *Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*. 21 April – 9 May 2025.

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