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ONE) – BANKERS FOCUS ON ASIAN AND AFRICAN GROWTH

Banks worldwide are focused on Asia as the number one region for growth, according to the annual Barclays Corporate Global Banking Survey. Africa is seen as providing “significant” growth opportunities, while the potential for growth in Europe and North America has become “very limited”. However, the majority (61%) of respondents expect the US dollar to be the world’s reserve currency in 10 years’ time, with 21% of bankers questioned predicting that China’s Renminbi (or yuan) will take its place within a decade.

Matt Tuck, global head of financial institutions at Barclays, says the survey demonstrates just how focused on Asia the global banking industry has become, with Asia also predicted to be the dominant centre for global trade flows over the next 12 months. According to Mr. Tuck: “There is huge work being done by global banking groups to capitalise on the unrelenting economic growth in Asia.” He adds: “While this trend has been evident for more than a decade, it appears to be accelerating in the financial world as growth amongst developed nations remains sluggish.” Meanwhile, with the industry becoming increasingly mobile and selective over where it targets growth, the focus on Africa, in particular, continues to gather pace.

The survey also reveals a positive trend for those seeking more competition in the banking industry, with 89% of respondents expecting improvements in these areas over the next two years. Barclays’ study involved 200 respondents from major banking groups in North America, the UK, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

TWO) - ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK REINFORCED IN ASIA; EXTENDED TO NORTH AFRICA

The European Commission is extending the outreach of the Enterprise Europe Network – the business and innovation support network for SMEs - by opening new contact points in Japan and doubling its presence in China. The aim is to see more European small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) profit from the fast growing markets in Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. .

The Commission is also extending the Network in southern Mediterranean countries, with eight contact points in place in Tunisia, a longstanding partner in Egypt and Moroccan branches to be set up soon. The Network helps firms to find potential partners in European and world markets and to turn research and innovation into profits.

On the occasion of the Network’s fourth Annual Conference in Warsaw on 26th September, five winning SMEs received the special ‘Network Stars’ awards. These awards recognise companies and researchers who have used the Network to find opportunities abroad or to develop their businesses and research.

THREE) - OUATTARA ASKS AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK TO RETURN HQ TO ABIDJAN

The president of Ivory Coast says it is time for the headquarters of the African Development Bank to return to Abidjan after eight years in Tunisia. It is part of the president's push to restore Ivory Coast's standing after this year's political crisis.

The African Development Bank left Abidjan in 2003 during riots over a controversial peace plan between Ivorian rebels and then-president Laurent Gbagbo.

Bank staff left for Tunisia, from where they watched Mr. Gbagbo postpone 2005 elections and refuse to admit defeat in 2010 elections. The political crisis that followed last year's vote killed at least 3,000 people. Rebels captured Mr. Gbagbo, and the winner of the vote - former Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara - was installed as president in May.

With that crisis behind it, Mr. Ouattara says Ivory Coast is ready for the African Development Bank to come back to Abidjan, where it was based since its founding in 1963. "My argument was very simple with the president of the African Bank. I said, 'Well look. We have gone through a process of getting a constitution, making elections, having a post-election crisis and having a legitimate president,'" he said.

President Ouattara says that stability is not a given in Tunisia, where street protests toppled the long-time president in January and a coalition caretaker government is in place to organize new elections. "I like Tunisia. Tunisians are my brothers and my friends. But it would make sense as a manager to go to a place that is already safe rather than staying in a place which may not be," he said.

President Ouattara spoke at a session of the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations in New York, where he shared the stage with Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma. President Koroma says Tunis today is reminiscent of the turmoil in Abidjan eight years ago. "The reasons that influenced the movement of the ADB from Abidjan are now very visible where it is now presently domiciled," he said.

President Koroma says West African leaders are joining President Ouattara's push to get the Bank back in Abidjan. "I think we all look forward to the relocation of the ADB again where they already have established infrastructures of their own. It is not a question of leasing properties but they have established infrastructure of their own. It will be a lot cheaper now economically to run it. And also the political risk has been considerably minimized," he said.

African Development Bank chief Donald Kaberuka has discussed the move with President Ouattara. Bank statutes mandate an "orderly return" with governors sufficiently confident in Abidjan's security to make the decision, then waiting another year to ensure that the situation is right.

President Ouattara wants the Bank back in Abidjan next year and is pushing for an accelerated return.

FOUR) - EMERGING MARKETS HIT ECONOMIC STAGE LIKE A TONNE OF BRICS

Headlines this week have been saturated with protests against unaffordable food, unfair taxes and unsustainable austerity measures, with one distinct difference setting these stories apart from countless others in recent history. The people demanding reform are no longer marginalised Asians, Africans and Latin Americans, but poor, working class Europeans.

As citizens of Western Europe – particularly in Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain – flood the streets of their once-stable countries demanding an end to cuts in public education, health care, youth programmes and housing subsidies, the big question at the annual fall convergence of the Bretton Woods Institutions is, "Who will solve the impending crisis in Europe?" Rana Foroohar wrote in Time Magazine last month, "While the crisis appears to be Europe's problem, if it results in a break-up of the euro zone or a growth-dampening series of costly bailouts, it will reverberate from Beijing to Boston and back." "Europe is the largest trading partner of... China. If they stop buying our stuff, everyone suffers. Meanwhile, dissolution of the union would make nations from Asia to Latin America that hold the Euro as a reserve currency much weaker," she added.

Small wonder then the world's leading emerging markets— Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, or BRICS – took centre-stage at the World Bank/International Monetary Fund meetings in Washington this week, discussing everything from possible investment in troubled euro zone sovereign bonds to domestic job creation. The BRICS possess a combined 4.3 trillion dollars in hard cash reserves, with China holding three-quarters of the kitty, much of it in Euros.

Following the "Lehman Crash" and ensuing financial crisis in 2008, the BRIC countries experienced the fastest rebound, with India and Latin America springing back to life with surprising resilience to the shock waves. The result has been a shifting of the power relations within the economic arena increasingly towards emerging economies, which will likely account for 60 percent of global economic growth by 2014. A communiqué issued following a meeting of BRICS finance ministers and central bank governors Thursday expressed a stern warning to the developed world to "adopt responsible macroeconomic and financial policies, avoid creating excessive global liquidity and undertake structural reforms to lift growth". Given the fact that nearly every euro zone country has flouted the three-percent annual budget deficit limit and the 60-percent debt-to- GDP ratio, the BRICS's concern appears to be well founded.

"The BRICS are open to consider, if necessary, providing support through the IMF or other IFI (international financial institution) in order to address the present challenges to global financial stability, depending on individual country circumstances," the communiqué stated, though it steered clear of hard numbers or blueprints for such actions.

"What everyone has to realise is that we, as a cluster of nations, face an enormous demand for resources at home, particularly in the realm of (poverty reduction)," D. Subbarao, governor of India's Reserve Bank,

told the press on Thursday.

"This causes an incredible amount of tension between allocating money to multilateral institutions for the sake of global stability and meeting stability at home," he added.

In fact, the Bank's release Wednesday of a report calling for more and better jobs in South Asia predicted that the region, home to half a billion poor people, will have to generate 1.2 million jobs every month over the next 20 years, equivalent to about 40 percent of the increase in the global labour force, in order to ward off extreme poverty and unemployment.

"Most of us are democracies, so we are constrained by democratic processes of when and how much is given to the (global pool) of monetary reserves," Subbarao added at the press conference, a likely reference to China as one of the only economic players capable of acting outside of the will of the majority of its people. Numerous economists have echoed this view, tempering the media speculation that the BRICS will "save the day". "When people talk about the BRICS, they really mean China, and to a lesser extent India and Brazil," said Omar Dahi, professor of development economics at Hampshire College.

"However, while (these countries) have the clout to be heard on international policy as well as to refuse the impositions of the Quad (the United States, the European Union, Canada and Japan), they do not yet have the ability to reshape international economic policy and certainly not to pull Europe or the U.S. out of its slump."

"The BRICS are not thinking or speaking in unison," told Susan Schadler, a visiting fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) and former deputy director of the IMF's European Department, . "I would not look to a large contribution to financing from the BRICS soon. A token contribution is all that is likely in the immediate future. What would be the incentive for the BRICS to expose themselves on a significant scale to the risk inherent in the European situation, when the high saving countries of Europe (such as Germany) are worried about their (own) exposure?" she asked.

Stubborn Inequalities

The dominant view of South-South cooperation indicates that a "shifting of the power relations" will somehow end the legacy of economic hegemony by now waning superpowers. But discussions between the BRICS this week threw that assumption into question.

Chinese national economist Luo Xiaopeng said earlier this week, "After so many years of humiliation (from Europe), they (are now) kneeling down to beg from us and you cannot underestimate the satisfaction and joy that Chinese politicians derive (from this)."

"If the euro zone collapse, it would result in a global financial crisis," said Yukon Huang, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, adding that China was unlikely to lend a hand until Europe came up with a solid solution on its own.

"China is not going to put its money into a situation where there are enormous risks and only downsides," Huang added.

Projections like this suggest that "whatever country or group of countries holds significant shares of global wealth will be driven to preserve their wealth and place in the global economy," Schadler told IPS.

"I doubt that from the point of view of creating a more equal opportunity for the most and least wealthy countries of the world, having former colonies or developing countries in the driver's seat will make much difference. The ways in which China has pursued its self interests in establishing its interests in commodity producing countries and resisting calls for ending global imbalances perfectly (encapsulates) this," she added.

"While increased south-south integration, trade, and foreign direct investment have reduced reliance on Northern markets, it has also led to rising inequalities within the global South as well as tensions between rising powers – China's presence in Africa is an example of benefits and drawbacks of this cooperation," told Dahi.

"More broadly, we are witnessing a worldwide crisis of capitalism, and the type of global economy that will emerge is still not clear," he added.

FIVE) – IRAN PRESIDENT VISITS SUDAN

Le président iranien Mahmoud Ahmadinejad doit arriver dimanche soir à Khartoum pour une courte visite destinée à renforcer les relations politiques et économiques entre Téhéran et le Soudan, deux pays musulmans alliés. "La visite va renforcer les excellentes relations entre les deux pays et particulièrement la coopération dans les domaines de l'économie et du développement", a déclaré Jawad Turkbay, ambassadeur de la République islamique à Khartoum, à la radio soudanaise. M. Ahmadinejad sera accompagné d'une

délégation de ministres, en particulier ceux de l'Energie et de l'Enseignement supérieur, ainsi que de nombreux conseillers économiques. La délégation doit entamer des discussions avec des responsables soudanais lundi à 10H00 (07H00 GMT) "à propos des relations bilatérales, des intérêts communs aux deux pays et des moyens de les développer", selon l'agence officielle soudanaise Suna. Cette visite intervient trois mois après la participation du président soudanais Omar el-Béchar à un sommet contre le terrorisme à Téhéran, auquel avaient également assisté les dirigeants afghan, pakistanais, irakien et tadjik. Après l'indépendance du Soudan du Sud le 9 juillet, Khartoum cherche activement des soutiens financiers pour faire face à une inflation galopante, à une dette internationale en hausse et à la perte de la majeure partie de ses revenus pétroliers, dans la mesure où les réserves de brut se trouvent au Sud. L'Iran, un investisseur-clé au Soudan, a promis 200 millions de dollars pour financer divers projets dans l'est du pays, lors d'une conférence de donateurs organisée par le Koweït fin 2010. L'Iran et le Soudan font l'objet de sanctions de la part des Etats-Unis. (AFP)

SIX) - FRONTIER FUNDS LOOK TO AFRICA

Fund managers in the Emirates are building up positions in sub-Saharan Africa to counter a rapid decline in Gulf markets where share prices have tumbled this year. "We are definitely bullish on Africa," said Mark Mobius, the executive chairman based in Singapore of Templeton Asset Management's emerging-markets group. Nigeria now has the largest country weighting in the Templeton Frontier Markets Fund, accounting for 11 per cent of its investments. The UAE accounts for 8 per cent of the same fund.

Gulf investors and fund managers are banking on growth in the continent's economies to perform strongly in light of a weakened global economic outlook. The economy of sub-Saharan Africa is expected to grow by more than 5 per cent this year and next, compared with 2.8 per cent in 2009, according to a report published by the IMF last week. That compares with a projected growth of 4 per cent this year for the Middle East, 1.5 per cent for the US and 1.7 per cent for the EU.

Africa accounts for 13 per cent of the MSCI Frontier Markets Index, while the Middle East accounts for 60 per cent. That split could shift as more funds are drawn to the continent and banks move operations. Barclays and Standard Chartered have relocated employees serving the continent from Dubai to South Africa. "These markets have a lot in common with the Gulf, although they have different economies and GDP per capita. Middle East and sub-Saharan markets both have underdeveloped capital markets," said Rami Sidani, the regional head of investments at the asset management company Schroders in Dubai.

Mr. Sidani manages US\$50 million (Dh183.6m) of assets for the company's frontier fund, launched in January, domiciled in Luxembourg and heavily invested in the Middle East and Africa.

"For us, it was a natural expansion to move into sub-Saharan markets as a diversification play, particularly Nigeria and Kenya, given that we are already looking at Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia," he said.

One of the selling points for the sub-Saharan market is that it indirectly benefits from the Chinese growth story, said Mr. Sidani. Africa is home to 30 per cent of the known mineral deposits in the world, and China is the largest user of minerals, especially copper and zinc.

Invest AD, based in Abu Dhabi, is a major investor in Nigeria's banks, aiming to benefit from the country's economic growth, expected to reach 7 to 8 per cent this year.

"Some banks are trading below book value, indicative of the attractive valuations on offer in a Nigerian stock market that is only starting to perk up for the first time since the global financial crisis," said Mohammed Al Hashemi, the head of asset management at Invest AD. "With non-performing loans at single digits, loan growth is forecast at around 15 per cent this year, with some banks probably reaching 25 per cent."

The Nigerian Stock Exchange, one of the most liquid bourses in Africa, has a \$50.9 billion market size that is equivalent to 18.1 per cent of the country's GDP.

In contrast with other frontier markets, African economies fared comparatively well during the global financial crisis in 2008 as a result of weaker linkages to the rest of the world. Changes in ownership structure and integration of African banks into the global financial market have been slow, which helped avert a crash in the continent's financial services sector.

Now Africa is again attracting attention. "There is a wider trend of frontier-market funds being launched with asset managers building positions or placing bets on sub-Saharan Africa," said Fadi Al Said, a senior fund manager at ING Investment Management in Dubai. "The appeal is that they have shown over a long period of time a low correlation with global markets, so from a risk perspective it makes sense."

SEVEN) - INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER TRADERS FOSTER ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Informal cross-border traders embody the spirit of African entrepreneurship. Driven by a lack of formal employment opportunities offering regular wages and hours, and succeeding in challenging conditions through sheer determination and a savvy business sense, this army of informal traders makes up a crucial, though often overlooked part of the continent's economy.

If Africa is to support and develop entrepreneurship - both in the informal and formal sectors - intra-regional trade is crucial, yet this has been overshadowed by international exports.

With the spread of well-known South African franchises throughout the region, it would be easy to assume that intra-regional trade in Africa - or at least in sub-Saharan Africa - is booming. However, that is far from the reality.

South Africa proudly lists its fourth largest export destination as Africa, claiming that trade with the rest of the continent jumped from roughly 6.17 billion dollars in 2001 to 13.3 billion dollars in 2007, and that trade with other countries in the South African Development Community (SADC) accounted for 8.4 billion of that total.

The anomaly is this: according to the CIA World Factbook, no single African country comes within the top five of South Africa's export or import partners. Further, according to a 2009 report for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "intra-African trade increased by an average of almost 14 percent per year between 1999 and 2006, while trade with the U.S. and China expanded by 26 percent and 61 percent respectively."

Why then are the levels of intra-regional trade in Africa so low? Simon Freemantle, a senior analyst with Standard Bank's African Political Economy Unit, suggests the biggest impediment is a lack of infrastructure. "Africa has the highest transport costs in the world and it is often cheaper to ship goods from Dar es Salaam to Europe than to export by road to the DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo). Also, until recently, Africa's markets were often not of a sufficient size for market penetration. This is changing rapidly and infrastructure upgrades are still lagging. Landlocked African countries are the most vulnerable as they rely on the often decrepit infrastructure of neighbouring African countries for access to all global markets." Freemantle also believes that other factors impeding cross-border trade include corruption at borders - increasing costs and causing delays - and unsuitability of certain products themselves.

"Too often, export products are geared primarily for advanced economies and aren't suited to local tastes and budgets - a hangover largely from colonial times. As a result, there is no back-up market when demand slumps in these advanced economies," he explains.

"Africa has invariably looked outside for the means of economic growth, and structurally speaking, countries need to begin to look to domestic and regional factors when determining products."

Free Trade Protocol

The importance of intra-regional trade is that it creates greater economic resilience, provides the region with some level of protection and, of course, grows and supports African entrepreneurship.

Regional economic communities such as the SADC exist because of the importance of intra-regional trade.

The Free Trade Protocol signed by SADC member countries sets out to create a Free Trade Area in Southern Africa. Although SADC countries have signed up to the Free Trade Protocol, it has yet to come into full force. Currently, agreements between individual countries allow for tariff reductions and duty-free quotas on the import and export of particular goods. This does not, however, apply to the informal sector.

"Small scale, or informal sector cross-traders are usually excluded from access to any tariff quota reductions as they do not apply to be part of them," explains Sally Peberdy, associate professor at the Department of Geography at the University of the Western Cape.

"They pay duties based on the goods and personal allowances for particular goods. Research done by the

Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) shows that although many evade paying duties and may only pay duties on some of the goods they carry, informal sector traders make a significant contribution to the duties collected at borders in the region."

Yet the role that informal cross-border traders play in contributing to the formal economy - bolstering intra-regional trade and fostering entrepreneurship in Africa - is often overlooked.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), informal trade is the main source of job creation in Africa, accounting for 20-75 percent of employment in most countries. A notable exception is South Africa, where the last available figures in 2005 showed it accounts for only around 12 percent.

A 2002 research paper by Peberdy, entitled "Hurdles to trade? South Africa's immigration policy and informal cross-border traders in the SADC", suggests that in some cases volumes of informal cross-border trade may even exceed volumes of formal trade between certain countries. Informal trade, driven by high levels of unemployment and a shortage of essential goods in the region, manages to fill the gaps left by an inadequate formal sector.

Trading illegally

"From research undertaken with SAMP suggests that, yes, informal - or small scale - cross-border trade should be seen as a benefit to the South African economy, regional economies and to the process of regional integration," said Peberdy.

Cross-border traders do not qualify for a South African work permit and, as there is no specific trader's permit, this means that they must enter the country on a visitor's visa.

Not only does this mean that, technically, they are trading illegally in the country, it also means that there are no clear records of the number of cross-border traders operating in the region. Because of this, and the informal nature of the business, it is difficult to estimate the volume of goods being traded.

However, a SAMP study monitoring 20 land border posts in the SADC covering 11 countries over 10 days, gives some idea of the scope of cross-border trade. A total of 205,000 people were counted crossing through the borders, of whom 85,000 were traders. Some 5,500 transactions with custom officials were monitored and 4,500 traders interviewed.

The SAMP study found that traders comprised over 30 percent - and in some cases up to 75 percent - of people going through the monitored land border posts.

Peberdy notes that, "93 percent of the goods carried by traders were produced in the SADC - as opposed to formal trade where 49 percent of the goods were produced in South Africa. Types of goods mirrored formal trade patterns."

Important economic function

Over the 10-day SAMP study period, the equivalent of 463,000 dollars was collected from a total of 1,780 traders at the 20 border posts monitored. Given that South African formal trade in the SADC region is worth at least 8.4 billion dollars a year, this is hardly a significant figure - even if one were to extrapolate it to account for the full year, factor in other border posts and unpaid duties, and work out the value of the goods traded rather than duties paid.

However, the fact that these traders continue to run their businesses successfully in spite of the disadvantages that they face when compared to formal traders, suggests that they are fulfilling an important economic function in the region. To facilitate them further, governments could rework the visa system to introduce a trader's permit and streamline customs duties by looking carefully at which goods duties are being charged on.

On top of this, Peberdy believes there needs to be a fundamental shift in attitude about the role that informal cross-border traders play in the regional economy.

"Probably the most important way at this stage [that governments could promote informal cross-border trade] would be to recognise small-scale/informal cross-border trade and its contribution to the region and regional economy and start to include it in policy formation."

EIGHT) – KENYA 2011 TEA EARNINGS SEEN AT RECORD HIGH

Kenya forecasts record tea earnings this year even though exports are seen falling against last year's bumper crop, and might fare even better in 2012 thanks to a sharp decline in its currency versus the dollar. Tea exports in 2011 were expected to decrease to 365 million kg from last year's 399 million kg, but earnings are seen increasing 9 percent to 106 billion shillings. Tea is the largest source of foreign

exchange earnings in east Africa's biggest economy, and exporters of the commodity have made a killing off the shilling's 25 percent loss against the greenback so far this year. "The increase in earnings is attributed to improved demand, as well as a favourable exchange rate," Tea Board of Kenya Managing Director Sicily Kariuki told a news conference. "Owing to improved prices coupled with depreciating Kenyan shilling against the dollar, the total export earnings are expected to reach a record high of 106 billion shillings," she added.

The state-run board said January to August tea output stood at 229.3 million kg, down from 260 million kg in the same period a year earlier, while earnings rose to 72.4 billion shillings from 65 billion shillings in the first eight months of 2010. A weakening Kenyan shilling is seen as a blessing in disguise that has buoyed tea earnings despite lower output, affected by hot and dry weather conditions. "The 106 billion shillings is a safe bet and is achievable because of the exchange rate. With elections next year, people will hold back from investing in Kenya and that will not help (the shilling)," said Peter Kimanga, a manager at Global Tea and Commodities Kenya. "Tea farmers will see even better earnings next year. It's not an effort of the farmers, but the gods have been in favour."

Kenya is the world's top exporter of black tea and in 2010 tea out paced horticulture to become the largest source of foreign exchange in east Africa's biggest economy. Kariuki said that between January and August Kenyan tea fetched an average price up to \$3.02 per kg compared with \$2.75 previously. "Egypt was the leading destination accounting for 22 percent during the period, due to a return to stability in the country, followed by Pakistan and others," she said. Earlier in the year, protests in Egypt -- which led to the ouster of long-time President Hosni Mubarak -- slowed tea sales to the country.

NINE) – ITALY'S ENI RESUMES OIL PRODUCTION IN LIBYA FIELDS

Le géant pétrolier italien ENI a annoncé lundi avoir redémarré sa production de pétrole en Libye sur le gisement d'Abu-Attifel, situé à 300 kilomètres au sud de Benghazi (est), après près de sept mois d'interruption en raison du conflit. "ENI redémarre la production en Libye sur le gisement Abu-Attifel", a indiqué dans un communiqué le groupe, qui est le premier producteur étranger d'hydrocarbures en Libye, pays dont l'Italie est l'ancienne puissance coloniale. Le français Total avait annoncé de son côté avoir repris vendredi sa production sur une plate-forme au large de la Libye, ce qui a fait de lui la première compagnie étrangère à rouvrir le robinet d'or noir libyen depuis la chute du régime de Mouammar Kadhafi. En collaboration avec la compagnie nationale libyenne NOC, ENI a relancé quinze puits sur le gisement d'Abu-Attifel, dont la production s'élève pour le moment à 31.900 barils par jour. Et "au cours des prochains jours, d'autres puits de production seront réactivés avec pour objectif d'atteindre les volumes minimums nécessaires pour redémarrer l'oléoduc qui transportera le pétrole du gisement au terminal de Zuetina", a ajouté le groupe. Abu-Attifel est le premier gisement "géant" découvert par le groupe italien en Libye dans les années 1960. ENI, qui rappelle qu'il "est présent en Libye depuis 1959 et est le premier opérateur international" dans le pays, a signé fin août un accord avec les nouvelles autorités libyennes afin de reprendre ses activités. A l'exception d'un gisement gazier dont la production était destinée aux centrales électriques locales, toutes les activités d'ENI avaient été suspendues en Libye fin février-début mars, mettant à mal le groupe alors que ce pays représente environ 15% de sa production totale. (AFP)

TEN) –ESCAPEES FROM LIBYA WAR PREPARE THEIR ENTRY INTO THE EU FROM ROMANIA

Près de 200 réfugiés dont beaucoup ont échappé à la guerre en Libye ont trouvé un havre de paix à Timisoara, dans l'ouest de la Roumanie, et rêvent d'une nouvelle vie où la "liberté comptera plus que tout". "Nous avons souffert terriblement. Aujourd'hui, ce que nous souhaitons avant tout c'est la liberté", indique à l'AFP Mussie, un Erythréen de 31 ans hébergé depuis bientôt quatre mois dans le Centre de transit d'urgence (ETC) de Timisoara. Assis sur un banc aux côtés de six compatriotes, cet ancien enseignant qui s'exprime en anglais raconte son parcours, similaire à celui de centaines de jeunes hommes ayant fui l'Erythrée au début des années 2000 notamment pour échapper au service militaire d'une durée illimitée. Installés de manière illégale en Libye et travaillant au noir. Leur situation devait encore empirer au début de l'année, alors que la révolte avait gagné ce pays et que de nombreux ressortissants africains étaient devenus des cibles d'abus et de violences, soupçonnés d'être des mercenaires au service du dirigeant libyen. Ceux d'entre eux qui ont pu

fuir se sont installés dans le camp de réfugiés de Choucha, en Tunisie, avant d'être évacués vers la Roumanie par le Haut commissariat de l'ONU aux réfugiés (HCR). La Roumanie est, avec la Slovaquie, le seul pays européen à accueillir un centre de transit d'urgence du HCR. Quelque 125 des 200 réfugiés qui y sont hébergés actuellement viennent d'Afrique sub-saharienne et ont fui la Libye. Géré conjointement par le HCR, l'Organisation mondiale pour les migrations (IOM) et l'Office roumain pour l'immigration, le centre héberge des réfugiés pour une période maximum de six mois, avant qu'ils soient relogés dans des pays tels que les Etats-Unis, la Grande-Bretagne, les Pays-Bas ou la Suède. En 2010, la Roumanie a elle aussi décidé d'accueillir de manière définitive 40 réfugiés par an. (AFP)

ELEVEN) – RWANDA WINS GOLD FOR FOREST CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT

Government policies are seldom lauded, yet Rwanda's forest policy has resulted in a 37-percent increase in forest cover on a continent better known for deforestation and desertification.

Rwanda's National Forest Policy has also resulted in reduced erosion, improved local water supplies and livelihoods, while helping ensure peace in a country still recovering from the 1994 genocide.

Now Rwanda can also be known as the winner of the prestigious [Future Policy Award](#) for 2011.

"Rwanda has sought not only to make its forests a national priority, but has also used them as a platform to revolutionise its stances on women's rights and creating a healthy environment," said Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and founder of the Green Belt Movement. She issued a statement for the award ceremony in New York City last week just days before her death from cancer in Nairobi Monday at the age of 71. "Rwanda has been a very divided country since the 1994 genocide but this policy is helping to bring peace and value to the people," said Alexandra Wandel, director of the World Future Council, which administers the Future Policy Awards.

The World Future Council is an international policy research organisation based in Hamburg, Germany that provides decision-makers with effective policy solutions. "Our aim is to inspire other countries to adapt these successful policies to their individual needs," said Wandel.

This year's award celebrates the UN Year of the Forest and highlights the critical importance of forests around the world - and especially for the 1.6 billion people who directly depend on them, she said.

Some 20 forest-related policies were submitted this year. Rwanda's National Forest Policy was awarded the gold while The Gambia's Community Forest Policy and the U.S. Lacey Act and 2008 amendment received the Silver Awards. An international panel of experts selected the winners based on policies that were the most effective in the conservation and sustainable development of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

The evaluation criteria for the best forest policies are wide-ranging, including delivering essential benefits to local people now and in the long term, said Jan McAlpine, director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat and one of the judges. "The panel (of experts) receives a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of the policies that has been 'peer-reviewed' by NGOs, and others," told McAlpine. "It's rare that a country gets complimented for doing something good."

The biggest threats to forests are oil palm, cattle and agriculture such as soy production, she said. Forest policies in most countries need to be changed usually because they are focussed on timber production or on conservation and don't consider forests as key part of the ecological, social and economic landscape, she said.

There is "huge interest in looking at good policies that are replicable", she said. "It is very impressive what the World Future Council is doing."

This year, Rwanda's forest policy was the hands' down winner. "It's quite stunning what they've accomplished," said McAlpine.

Despite enormous land pressures from a growing population, Rwanda was able to increase forest cover 37 percent since 1990. Massive reforestation and planting activities that promoted indigenous species and involved the local population were undertaken, and new measures such as agro-forestry and education about forest management.

Rwanda's forest policy has brought a range of benefits, including a better water supply, reduction in erosion, improved livelihoods and better quality of life overall. The goal is to cover 30 percent of the country in forest by 2020. "There was a strong consensus in selecting Rwanda's National Forest Policy in a continent where the prospects for forests are generally bad," said Wandel. "The jury was also impressed by Rwanda's land tenure reforms, including giving women equal rights to inherit land." Rwanda's success gives hope for other countries, she said.

Africa's The Gambia won silver for its innovative policy of handing control of forests to the communities that

use them. Despite being one of the world's poorest countries, Gambia's Community Forest Policy has reduced illegal logging and resulted in a net 8.5 percent more forest cover while reducing poverty. "The policy has led to the development of new markets for dead branch wood and other forest products which benefit women and rural populations economically," Wandel said.

The other silver went to the U.S. for its criminally-enforceable ban on importation of illegal timber, called the Lacey Act. The U.S. is the first country to address the major global problem of illegal logging that results in corruption and environmental damage, and costs producer countries billions of dollars in lost revenue.

The Lacey Act and its 2008 amendments have forced importers to take responsibility for their wood products. That helps to reduce illegal logging by withdrawing the huge rewards received by illegal loggers from the international market. "One of our jurists from Ethiopia said the U.S. law acts like a global enforcement mechanism, helping the weakest countries to reduce their illegal logging," said Wandel.

The European Union has developed similar legislation.

"We need visionary policies which support a sustainable and just world and protect future generations," said Wandel.

TWELVE) – CALLS RISE FOR GLOBAL FOCUS ON CREATING JOBS

World governments must not let their focus on spending cuts keep them from creating jobs that will be a key part of economic recovery, an international group of experts warned on Monday. The [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) and the International Labor Organization say government support for the unemployed -both with subsidies and job training- is vital since long-term joblessness is particularly intractable. The employment ministers of the Group of 20 leading economies meet Monday and Tuesday in Paris to discuss the situation. But the agencies' call to spend more money -even on job creation- could have difficulty gaining traction in the current climate of budget cuts. Many countries, especially in Europe, are being forced to slash their budgets to win back the confidence of investors, who are concerned that deficits and debts are out of control. Greece, for example, is teetering on the brink of default because it can't afford to pay its bills while also paying down its debts. Public sector payrolls have been slashed savagely and economic uncertainty is keeping businesses from hiring. Maurizio Sacconi, Italy's labor minister, said at Monday's meeting that governments have to "stimulate growth with employment because we are aware of the danger of a jobless recovery, of jobless growth." The bind the most indebted countries like Greece find themselves in is that they have little or no money to spend. They need to cut costs or raise taxes or both to pay down debts, but will never pay them down sufficiently if growth doesn't increase. But as the global economic slowdown intensifies, unemployment has risen on governments' lists of concerns. **2008 CRISIS DESTROYED 20 MILLION JOBS. 2011 CRISIS COULD SCRAP ANOTHER 20 MILLION** Currently, 200 million people are out of work worldwide -a figure that approaches the worst depths of the recession- according to the ILO and the OECD. The two groups say slow growth since the 2008 crisis has resulted in a shortfall of 20 million jobs in the G-20 countries. If average employment growth slips just two-tenths of a percentage point more -to 0.8 %-that figure could grow to 40 million by 2015. By contrast, those economies taken together would need an average of 1.3 percent employment growth over the next three years to absorb that 20 million. "This is the human face of the crisis," the heads of the two organizations said in a letter to the G-20 employment ministers on Monday. "Governments cannot ignore it." The ministers are expected release a statement laying out their commitments at the end of their meeting on Tuesday. The economic figures - and the sometimes violent protests by people resisting cuts - are beginning to change government priorities. Politicians in several of countries, including Greece and Spain -with 16 and 21 percent unemployment, respectively- are agitating for an increased focus on job-creation. Nicolas Sarkozy will give a speech later that is expected to focus on jobs. How to create jobs is a topic of much debate. Some say governments should steer clear of spending money to boost employment but only create a good climate for businesses. "That means reduce the regulatory pressure, the fiscal pressure that weighs on companies in terms of hiring," said Marc Touati, the chief economist at investment company Assya. It's not a just a matter of cutting spending, he said, but also rethinking spending. The OECD and ILO insist that while austerity may be necessary, governments have a role in creating jobs. "For those countries where there is some fiscal space, our message will be, use it," Stefano Scarpetta, the leading employment expert at the OECD, told reporters on Monday. "For those countries where the fiscal space is very limited, try to create this fiscal space." He conceded that countries do need to reduce their budgets, but said money must be found to give businesses the confidence to hire. He praised in particular to the Obama administration's plan to cut payroll taxes for employers who take on new workers. Without those incentives, he said that even companies in good financial standing would stay on the sidelines, waiting to see if the economy is starting to grow before hiring. The danger is that a vicious cycle

might ensue. The economy won't grow in a meaningful way until hiring picks up, but hiring is unlikely to pick up until employers feel the economy is going to start growing. Scarpetta says the G-20 has to find a way to give businesses that confidence. "Our concerns about the labor market situation have, if anything, become even more serious" in recent weeks, said Scarpetta. (See [G20 Labour Ministerial: Joint Statement by OECD and ILO](#) and full text of all [Reports prepared by the OECD and ILO for the G20 Labour and Employment ministerial](#)) (AP)

THIRTEEN) – SOUTH AND EAST AFRICAN REGION IN \$3B INFRASTRUCTURE FACELIFT PLAN

Regional leaders are seeking to raise at least \$3 billion for a planned infrastructure facelift to boost East and southern Africa as an investment destination. Leaders from four regional trading blocs — Southern African Development Community (SADC), East Africa Community (EAC), Common Market for Eastern, Southern Africa (COMESA) and InterGovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) — are set to meet in Nairobi next week hoping to attract funding from donors and investors for projects. The projects include key corridors in East and southern Africa.

Under the direction of the Tripartite and IGAD, they will avail resources for the logistical and planning components for the conference that will provide resources to develop bankable infrastructure projects for investments in East Africa. Targeted sectors include roads, railways, inland waterways, ports, pipelines and power generation and transmission.

Amos Marawa, director of infrastructure at COMESA, said development of an efficient regional transport system will reduce the prohibitive transport costs and facilitate trade expansion and investment for economic growth in the Eastern and Southern region. "In East Africa, the Northern and Central Corridors, anchored by the port of Mombasa in Kenya, and the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, make up the principal transport routes for national, regional, and international trade", said Mr. Marwa adding that the corridors' extensional focus includes the DR Congo and links to Southern Sudan, Ethiopia and Zambia. He however noted that due to inadequate physical infrastructure and inefficiency, these corridors are characterised by long transit times and high cost.

It is estimated that freight costs per kilometre are more than 50 per cent higher than costs in the US and Europe; and for landlocked countries, transport costs can be as high as 75 per cent of the value of exports. The Northern and Central Transport Corridors and their support infrastructure, notably ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam, are key transport pillars that have been neglected. "As the gateways for the two corridors, the ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam must have adequate capacity and be able to perform efficiently in order for the overall corridor performance to improve," Mr. Marawa said.

The rehabilitation of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam ports, rail, road, lake transport and transit facilitation projects, are estimated to cost over approximately \$4.2 billion.

FOURTEEN) - WEST AFRICA: JOINT ACTION AGAINST PIRACY

There have already been more than thirty pirate attacks on ships along the West African coast so far this year. Regional governments will meet in Cotonou, Benin in October to discuss coordinating efforts to stem piracy. The figures for attacks come from incidents reported by ships' masters to the International Maritime Bureau's Piracy Reporting Centre and underline the growing threat to shipping in this oil-rich region. Among the most recent attacks was the Sep. 15 seizure of the oil tanker *Mattheos I* and its 23-person crew off the coast of Togo. Ten days later, the ship's Spanish owners told media that tanker and crew had been released; no ransom was paid, but the company said the pirates stole some of the vessel's cargo of diesel fuel.

Governments along the length of the West African coastline have expressed concern about a surge in the number of attacks on cargo ships, and are seeking to combine limited resources to take concerted actions, such as recent joint patrols in the Gulf of Guinea. "But we don't want to limit ourselves to joint patrols between Benin and Nigeria; we will very shortly extend this to include the Togolese and Ghanaian navies," told Commandant Maxime Ahoyo, Benin's Naval Chief of Staff.

"If we take care of problems with piracy in Benin's territorial waters but, for example, Togo doesn't take

necessary security precautions, and we don't collaborate with Togo and other countries, this phenomenon - which has such long tentacles - will only spread."

Economic consequences

The president of the Economic Community of West African States Commission, James Victor Gbeho, has called for action against piracy to be widened to include all the states along the coast. "The navies of all our coastal states should permanently combine their operations," told Gbeho, underlining his belief that the problem of piracy must be addressed comprehensively. "The phenomenon is becoming worrying and could have serious economic consequences for our countries. That is why we will act firmly against it."

Piracy has already led maritime insurers in London to put Benin on a list of high-risk zones for shipping. Maritime insurers represented by the Lloyd's Market Association are demanding higher fees to cover ships which pass through the region.

According to Bénetti Gagalo, Assistant Secretary General of the Togolese Association of Consumers, the situation will certainly have repercussions on income in regional ports as well as on the cost of consumer goods.

External assistance

The urgency of the situation has pushed regional governments to ask for support from France and the United States, who have both deployed naval vessels to the area.

A French frigate, the *Germinal*, is already carrying out surveillance along the coasts of Benin, Togo and Ghana to try and neutralise the pirates, as well as training naval personnel from all three countries. "We have hosted these sailors, and they've taken part in all the security exercises and patrols that we have carried out to prevent acts of piracy. And they have helped us with their intimate knowledge of the area of operations," told Sébastien Chatelin, captain of the French vessel.

A U.S. Navy vessel, the *HSV Swift*, is also in the Gulf of Guinea, supporting the fight against piracy with training for Beninois, Togolese and Ghanaian sailors as part of U.S. military cooperation programme called Africa Partnership Station. "Our mission is to try and train African partners on safety and security," said the captain of the U.S. vessel, Rhet S. Mann.

"The APS programme will allow us to work together to face the problems which affect our coastal waters," added Sam Nkruma, a Ghanaian naval officer.

His Beninois colleague, Christian Oussa, welcomed the training received on board the two naval ships. "This will allow us to face pirates and various traffickers on the sea. We have learned how to board suspect vessels to inspect them; the training was really appropriate," he said.

FIFTEEN) – FIRST MEETING OF EU/TUNISIA TASK FORCE TO SUPPORT TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The first meeting of the EU/Tunisia Task Force will take place in Tunis tomorrow. The Task Force will ensure better coordination of European and international support for Tunisia's transition. It will be co-chaired by EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton, and Tunisian Prime Minister Béji Caïd Essebsi. Stefan Füle, the European Commissioner for Enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy, and Bernardino León, the EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region, will also participate in the event.

The EU-Tunisia Task Force is the first task force in the Southern Mediterranean since the Arab Spring began. In Tunis, HR/VP Ashton and Commissioner Füle will reiterate the full support of both the European Union and the international Community to Tunisia's transition towards an open and democratic society, less than a month before the elections scheduled for 23 October. The Task Force will follow up the implementation of its decisions and will meet again in 2012 to continue work on medium and long term projects.

It will put a strong focus on support to the economic recovery in Tunisia. Concrete actions will aim in particular to assist the recovery of frozen assets, and to boost Foreign Direct Investment and job creation. A number of EU grants, which are part of a 1 billion € multi-donor programme, will be signed during or in the margins of the event.

Market access, mobility of persons, education and research and support to civil society will also be high on the agenda – including in a session with civil society representatives – and the EU will offer enhanced cooperation and new partnerships in these areas.

The European Union acted swiftly to support Tunisia in the wake of the revolution. EU political solidarity to the Tunisian transition was demonstrated by a series of high-level visits, the first by High Representative Catherine Ashton on 14 February 2011.

Considerable humanitarian aid amounting to more than €150 million has also been made available, in particular to help Tunisia to cope with the influx of refugees fleeing war in Libya.

Following the request by the Tunisian authorities, the EU is also carrying out an election observation mission and assistance to civil society and to the three commissions looking into political reform, and corruption and abuses of power under the previous regime.

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