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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

DR Congo mining transparency site launched

A website has been launched to promote transparency in the Democratic Republic of Congo's mining sector, which is plagued by conflict and corruption. The Carter Center said it helped launch [congomin.es.org](http://www.congomines.org) to give people more information about the mining sector, including contracts and payments. Hundreds of mining documents and maps will be published on the site, it added.

<http://www.congomines.org/>

TRADE

Ghana likely to sign EPA

The Ghana government is likely to tell the *Economic Community Of West African States* (ECOWAS) of its plans to go solo on the signing of the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (IEPA) when Trade Ministers in the sub-region meet in the country later this month. The Trade and Industries Minister, Hannah Tetteh, told the media that the country would have preferred to join other member-countries within ECOWAS to sign the IEPA as a body; however, negotiations on the trade agreement with the European Union have stalled – pushing the government to consider its options. "The reason why we have to take a decision on signing the IEPA is that the European Commission has made a proposal to the European Parliament to halt ACP countries' access to the EU market by January 2014" he added.

<http://www.bilaterals.org/spip.php?article20535>

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Regulating the rush for land

The consensus adoption of the voluntary guidelines - a text detailed, despite the large number of interests at stake - has been postponed until 2012. Direct foreign investments in Africa continue to grow at unprecedented levels. They increase social inequalities. The guidelines, in preparation for several years, should strengthen the voice of local communities and reduce the "land rush" that generates hunger, conflict and violations of human rights.

<http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/19542>

New approach needed on hunger in Africa

Talking to a room full of people who believe in the power of hybrid seeds and fertilizer, Mr Buffett tried to convince them that agriculture needs above all a better understanding and good use of soil. Africa has hundreds of soil types. This requires a variety of approaches and more attention to be given to soil conditions.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/10/12/ap/business/main20119025.shtml>

CLIMATE CHANGE

Inaction on climate change threatens health and income in developing countries

This UNDP report highlights that equity and sustainability are inextricably linked. It notes that, if bold actions are not taken, environmental damage, including climate change effects, can slow or reverse development progress made in recent years. The Report argues that sustainability must be approached as a matter of basic social justice, for current and future generations alike.

http://www.aefjn.org/index.php/376/articles/Report_of_UNDP_-_2011_Human_Development_Report.html

[UNDP Press Release](#)

CONTROL OF SMALL ARMS

Global Arms Sales Decreases in 2010 compared to 2009

The sale of arms in 2010 decreased to around \$40.4 billion, 76% of which went to developing countries. This was a substantial 38% decrease in arms sales compared to 2009, and the lowest since 2003. Due to the global financial crisis developing countries have experienced a decrease in purchases in the last couple of years. Most arms are sold to developing countries and 10 countries account for some 60% of all sales in the period 2003 to 2010. The arms trade is big business. The 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council (US, Russia, France, United Kingdom and China), together with Germany and Italy, account for approximately 84% of the arms sold between 2003 and 2010. Some of the arms sold go to regimes where human rights violations will occur. Corruption often accompanies arms sales because of the large sums of money involved.

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/74/the-arms-trade-is-big-business>

MEDICINES AND HEALTH

An “electronic nose” to detect TB on breath

Indian researchers are close to developing an « electronic nose » able to detect TB in patients' breath, thus allowing a fast and sure diagnosis. The technology could potentially save hundreds of thousands of lives in the developing world where TB kills around 1.7 million people a year, making it the second most deadly infectious disease after HIV/AIDS. The device will produce a diagnosis in minutes – as opposed to weeks, as is the case with traditional tests. A quick diagnosis could save about 400,000 lives each year. Tuberculosis is spread through the air by coughing, talking and spitting. If not treated, each person with active TB can infect on average 10 to 15 people a year. Among the 15 countries with the highest estimated TB incidence rates, 13 are in Africa, while a third of all new cases are in India and China.

<http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/scientists-pioneer-electronic-nose-to-detect-tb-on-breath/> (English)

AFRICA

EU ignores impact of financial reforms on developing countries

According to a new report published by the non-profit organisation SOMO (the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations), the European Financial Reforms ignore Developing Countries and Sustainability. The financial crisis that erupted in Europe in autumn 2008 resulted in an economic crisis that severely affected many developing countries. The lack of export opportunities and bank credit for trade, badly hit the income of developing countries. In order to prevent a new crisis, the European Union (EU) started to reform its financial sector. But the EU did not sufficiently take into account the impact of the financial reforms on developing countries. The EU focussed on financial stability instead of financial services benefiting society as a whole. The EU's lack of reform to its food derivative market continues to influence food prices in developing countries, putting people at risk of aggravating poverty. This report is part of a project that aims to ensure that the interests of developing countries as well as sustainable development are taken into account when the EU decides on its series of financial sector reforms.

<http://somo.nl/news-en/fixing-global-finance>

 [The Missing Dimension](#)

Africa - Is the Continent Emerging?

There **is** good news on Africa's emerging economies, but the bases for sustainable economic development are not measured by transactions only. While Africans have been transacting with the world as long as they have lived, the continent seems to remain in lethargy and stagnation. The volumes of transactions hardly transcend to national gains as most African countries cannot sustain their needs without reliance on royalties from extractive industries and foreign aid. Africa has not invested in the extractive industries because no African bank can afford to place \$1b in loans on such capital intensive industry. Recently in Uganda, there was need for about \$200m for a telecommunication venture. A consortium of Ugandan major banks could not come up with the loan. The same scenario occurred in Nigeria in the early 1990s when the government was putting together the Natural gas project, a \$12b venture. Nigerian banks sought participation and the President agreed to set aside 10% - \$1.2b of the project cost for Nigeria banks to fund. They could not.

<http://www.africanexecutive.com/modules/magazine/articles.php?article=6203&magazine=360>

African Mobile Observatory 2011

The first African edition of the GSMA Mobile Observatory series provides a comprehensive review of the African mobile communications industry. The report focuses on how mobile operators and African governments can work together to continue the remarkable growth story of the African mobile industry. The benefits that mobile services have already brought to hundreds of millions of Africans can be extended to those who have yet to connect. By so doing, the African continent can continue to bring not only communication services, but also improved financial services, healthcare and education to its people and drive an increase in the economic wealth and development.

http://www.gsmworld.com/documents/African_Mobile_Observatory_Exec_Summary_0711.pdf