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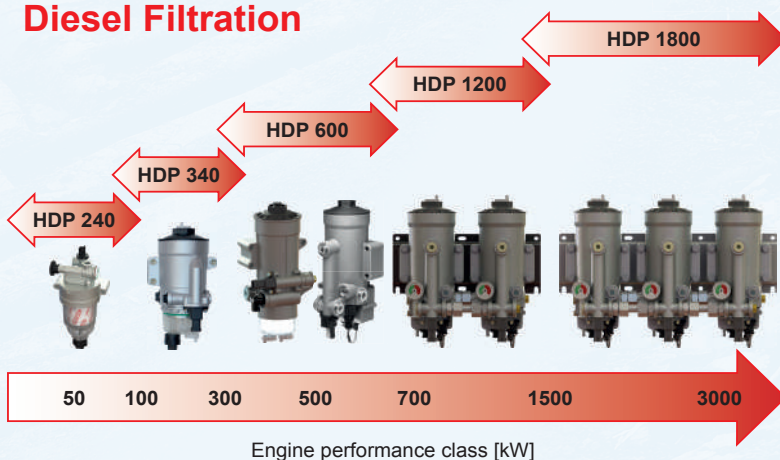
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# South Africa's agriculture must sharpen export strategies amid rising trade friction



Now that US President Donald Trump has followed through with his election promise to impose tariffs on imports from China, Canada and Mexico — and then suspended the latter two — what can we expect next?

And how should organised agriculture and the South Africa's government prepare themselves for this "new normal"?

Trump's use of tariffs to pursue America's mercantilist objectives is no surprise. Similar tariffs were deployed in his first term in 2018, but that was against China, and Western countries were in silent consensus that this was a strategic rivalry. Now also targeting close allies such as Canada and Mexico, this takes trade friction to a whole new level.

In the coming years, as trade friction persists globally, we suspect there will be a change to various regions' trade approaches, with some preferring more protectionism for their markets.

The EU is one such region. Farmers from France and other major EU countries have for months called for restrictions on imports of agricultural products. This is likely to intensify and in some instances it may take the form of less obvious nontariff barriers.

In the past EU officials have resisted pressure to impose tariffs, preferring to maintain a relatively open market approach. Nontariff barriers have

been the EU's preferred instrument to keep its producers happy. An example of this is SA's citrus industry, which has a pending case against the EU at the World Trade Organisation.

If trade fragmentation and economic nationalism intensifies SA agriculture and other exporting industries will be at risk. The SA agricultural sector generated much of its growth over three decades through increased exports. Roughly half of what SA agriculture produces in value terms goes to export markets.

For 2024 these exports likely exceeded \$14bn mark for the first time. Higher commodity prices and strong fruit exports were the main drivers. The actual figures we have so far are for 2023, where SA's agricultural exports reached a record \$13.2bn, according to Trade Map data.

The EU, broader Africa, Middle-East and Asia are part of our large export markets. In value terms the Americas accounted for only 6% of SA's overall agricultural exports in 2023. Still, the region is important, for two reasons:

Exports are concentrated in specific industries, mainly nuts, citrus, wine, grapes and fruit juices. This means while the risks associated with this market are not as significant as for overall agricultural exports, they present challenges to specific industries.

Negative sentiment arising from any confrontation with the Americas

would have a negative effect on SA agriculture. It is, therefore, vital that we maintain positive relations with this region.

SA must focus more on strengthening and revitalising relations with its trade partners beyond Europe. For each export-orientated industry there should be regular engagement between local business representatives, organised business and the government, to hone our export strategies.

In these times SA must maintain a posture as an open global actor that seeks to build relations across the globe on a pragmatic basis. This openness and pragmatism — rather than ideology and dogma — should be its leitmotif in bilateral and multilateral trade relations.

Beyond existing markets we must urgently widen exports of various agricultural products. This could be challenging at a time when the world is fragmented and looking "inward", which will require considered economic diplomacy rooted in strategic collaborations between the government and industry.

Both the department of trade, industry & competition, and international relations & co-operation have a pivotal role to play. Beyond working together to advance SA's economic diplomacy, these departments must build strong capabilities in their bilateral trade desks.



# FMO and TDB extend US\$394mn loan to ETG for African agriculture

Africa-focused global conglomerate ETG has secured a US\$394mn sustainability-linked loan aimed at supporting the company's working capital needs and facilitating agricultural development across the continent.

Dutch development bank FMO and the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB) serve as joint mandated lead arrangers and lenders on the facility, which has a tenor of three years with a two-year extension option.

They are joined by several other development finance institution (DFI) lenders, including DEG, a subsidiary of German state-owned bank KfW; FinDev Canada; the Opec Fund for International Development; and Proparco, the private sector arm of France's Agence Française de Développement.

FMO Investment Management and ILX, a Dutch emerging market asset manager, are also participants in the loan.

ETG is a diversified agricultural goods

trader, selling fertiliser and other agricultural inputs to farms as well as processing, shipping and selling soft commodities, including spices, pulses and nuts.

TDB says the "loan will contribute to a more resilient and sustainable agricultural sector in Africa". The sustainability of the facility will be assessed annually against six KPIs, including no deforestation, reforestation, impact on smallholder farmers and women, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, FMO's lead arranger for the loan Coen van Genderen tells GTR.

ETG has a margin incentive tied to meeting these targets.

The facility aligns with a similar US\$115mn commercial bank-backed loan secured by ETG in March, which shares the same KPIs.

Guus Werners, senior investment officer for FMO's syndications, says the involvement of DFIs in the loan served as a "stamp of approval" for its sustainability credentials, which played an important role in

encouraging commercial investors to contribute their tranche to ETG.

This is the first sustainability-linked loan in which FMO has acted as an arranger.

Fatou Bouaré, chief finance and operations officer and key account holder for ETG at FMO, says it is the "largest ever of its kind in the African agricultural sector".

"Few organisations have such a broad influence on African smallholders as ETG, providing them with market access and technical assistance to enhance yield quality. We hope ETG will lead by example, inspiring other multinationals to underpin their sustainability targets with a sustainability-linked loan," says Bouaré.

Sustainability-linked loans totalled an estimated €761bn globally in 2022, according to BBVA, but the market has since tightened over fears that the targets they set may be hard to enforce and audit.

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A photograph of a sawmill. In the foreground, a large stack of cut lumber is visible, showing the grain and texture of the wood. The lumber is stacked in a way that shows the length of the pieces. In the background, a circular saw blade is visible, mounted on a red metal frame. The saw blade is partially obscured by the lumber. The overall scene is industrial and shows the process of wood processing.

**CONSTRUCTION**

# THE BLACK BRICK



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# Africa targets 2035 start date for synchrotron construction



Africa is the only habitable continent that does not have a synchrotron. (Courtesy: Shutterstock/Runawayphil)

Officials at the African Light Source (AfLS) Foundation are targeting 2035 as the start of construction for the continent's first synchrotron light source. On 9 December the foundation released its "geopolitical" conceptual design report, which aims to encourage African leaders to pledge the \$2bn that will be needed to build and then operate the facility for a decade.

There are more than 50 synchrotron light sources around the world, but Africa is the only habitable continent without one. These devices use magnets to accelerate electrons in a circular ring to near the speed of light, which then emit intense beams of synchrotron radiation. The X-rays are used to study the structure and properties of matter.

Scientists in Africa have been agitating for a light source on the continent for decades, with the idea for an African synchrotron having been discussed since at least 2000. In 2018 the African Union's executive council called on its member states to support a pan-African synchrotron and the following year Ghanaian president Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo began championing the project.

The new 388-page report, which has over 120 contributors from around the world, lays out a comprehensive

case for a dedicated synchrotron in Africa, stating it is "simply not tenable" for the continent to not have one. Such a facility would bring many benefits to Africa, ranging from capacity building and driving innovation to financial returns. It cites a 2021 study of the UK's £1.2bn Diamond Light Source, which essentially paid for itself after just 13 years.

"Without its own synchrotron facility, Africa will be left further behind at a corresponding accelerated rate and will be almost impossible to catch up to the rest of the world," says Sekazi Mtingwa, a US-based theoretical high-energy physicist. Mtingwa is one of the founders of the South-Africa-based AfLS Foundation and editor-in-chief of the report.

The 2035 date is far away and gives us time to convince African governments

## Simon Connell

The AfLS Foundation believes its report will persuade African governments to back the initiative. "The 2035 date is far away and gives us time to convince African governments," Simon Connell, chair of the AfLS Foundation, told Physics World. He says it wants the funding to "predominantly come from African governments" rather than international grants. "The grant-funded situation is bedevilled by [the question of] where the next grant will come from," he says.

## A shining light for African science

Yet financial support will not be easy. Some have questioned whether Africa can afford a synchrotron given the lack of R&D funding in African countries. In 2007 African Union member states committed to spending 1% of their gross domestic product on R&D, but the continent still spends only 0.42%.

John Mugabe, a professor of science and innovation policy at the University of Pretoria in South Africa, notes that the light source is not even mentioned in the African Union's science plans or in the science, technology and innovation initiatives of the G20, an international forum of 20 countries. "I do not think that there is adequate African political backing for the initiative," he says.

However, a boost for the AfLS came on 12 December when the African Academy of Sciences (AAS), which is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and had been pushing for its own light source – the African Synchrotron Initiative – signed a memorandum of understanding with the AfLS to co-develop a synchrotron.

"[This] is a pivotal milestone in the continental effort to establish major infrastructures for frontier science in Africa," says Nkem Khumbah, head of STI policy and partnerships at the AAS.

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**OH WHAT A FEELING**

# Ford South Africa Achieves Sales and Exports Growth Despite Market Declining

Ford South Africa sold 32 765 vehicles in 2024 – an increase of 2 056 units or 6.4 percent compared to 2023, in a total industry that declined by more than 3 percent

Ford Ranger recorded 25 552 sales in 2024 – its highest volume since 2018, and 935 units up on 2023. Midsize Pickup segment share for Ranger increased from 22.7 percent in 2023 to 24.3 percent last year. Ranger maintained its status as the best-selling double cab

Ranger was South Africa's leading light commercial vehicle export with 66 284 units shipped to markets around the world in 2024 – up 15.7 percent compared to 2023, and the second-highest export figure to date. Total industry exports dropped by 2.2 percent year-on-year

Ford South Africa recorded encouraging growth in both its domestic sales and its export volumes in 2024, despite both segments declining year-on-year.

Having launched a raft of exciting new models over the past two years, Ford reinforced its commitment to delivering an even more compelling and competitive range of vehicles and services for its customers in the passenger car and light commercial vehicle (LCV) segments. This bold product strategy is bearing fruit, powering Ford's upward momentum on the sales charts despite overall industry sales declining by more than 3 percent in 2024.

Ford notched up a total of 32 765 new vehicle sales last year, which represented an increase of 2 056 units or 6.4 percent compared to 2023.

"During our Centenary celebrations in November 2023, we announced an aggressive new model launch programme supported by an unwavering commitment to giving our customers an exceptional range of services and experiences," said Neale Hill, president, Ford Motor Company Africa. "We are delighted to see the success of this strategy coming through in 2024 as we were able to grow our volumes and market share in an industry that came under immense pressure last year and declined by more than 3 percent."

Ryan Searle, director of Sales Operations, Ford South Africa, said: "Achieving 6.7 percent growth in the current economic climate, and with a flurry of new competitors entering the fray, is a significant achievement for the Ford brand and our current product line-up. It is also a positive indication that the extensive work we have done to reshape the Ford sales and product portfolio and the

ownership experience is paying off."

The locally manufactured Ford Ranger remained the company's leading contender in 2024. The 25 552 units sold in South Africa last year represented its highest volume since 2018 (30 135 vehicles), and was 935 units up on 2023. This helped secure a 24.3 percent share of the highly competitive LCV segment for the year, climbing from the 22.7 percent recorded in 2023 which helped cement its second place in the segment.

Ranger once again retained its prime position as the top choice for double cab buyers, ending 2024 with a total of 20 078 units sold (4 756 more than its closest competitor) and a 33.4 percent share of this segment. With an extensive line-up encompassing everything from the tough-as-nails Base model to the ultra-luxurious Platinum, there's a Ranger Double Cab to suit every application.

As the only imported model in the Ranger line-up, the Ranger Raptor still sets the benchmark for peerless performance and capability. Of the 25 552 Rangers sold in 2024, the Ranger Raptor accounted for an impressive 1 930 units, solidifying this peerless model's status at the pinnacle of the double cab segment.

Along with its success on the new vehicle sales front, Ranger remains one of South Africa's most popular used vehicles. According to AutoTrader, the Ranger was the best-selling used vehicle on its website in December 2024, reaffirming the continued high demand and trust in the Ranger amongst second-hand vehicle buyers.

The versatile seven-seater Everest sport utility vehicle (SUV) was Ford's second-best selling vehicle in 2024 with a total of 3 109 vehicles sold, just four units shy of its 2023 figure. It claimed 16.1 percent share of the year and second place in its segment.

starting with one derivative each. The combination of the run-out of the previous-generation models and the introduction of the all-new van and bus models led to a combined volume of 624 units last year compared to 638 in 2023. However, with the Transit and Tourneo Custom line-ups set to be bolstered with the introduction of a wider range of derivatives in 2025, there is sure to be growing demand for Ford's multiple award-winning Transit and Tourneo Custom in 2025. The large commercial Transit van, which is also due to be replaced this year, sold 288 units.

One of the major highlights of last year was the highly anticipated release of the seventh-generation Mustang – kicking off with the 5.0L V8 GT in November and the track-honed Dark Horse a month later. A total of 195 Mustangs were sold in 2024 (including the last of the sixth-generation models).

## Ranger exports

The Ford Ranger's success on the new vehicle sales front was not only emulated but surpassed by its export results for 2024. The locally manufactured Ranger has consistently been one of South Africa's top vehicle exports since 2011, and this was no different last year as it achieved a substantial 15.7 percent year-on-year growth despite the country's total export volume of 399 809 units resulting in a 2.2 percent decline compared to 2023.

A total of 66 284 Rangers were exported last year – the second-highest figure to date, just 3 193 units shy of its 2018 record. This entrenched the Ranger's status as the top export in the LCV segment, and placed it third in the overall export volumes accounting for passenger and light commercial vehicles combined. The Ranger is exported to more than 100 global markets, including Europe where it is the top-selling vehicle in its segment.



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# Africa's Big 7 rebranded as Africa Food Show



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In recent years, Africa has experienced strong economic growth and with its growing population, thriving economies and the emergence of a wealthier middle class, it's expected that the food and beverage market will exceed \$1tn by 2030 according to the African Development Bank.

To address this demand, Africa's Big 7 has been rebranded to the Africa Food Show, supported by Gulfood, and organised by dmg events and Kaoun International, who will bring the event to Cape Town from 10-12 June 2025 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC).

As part of the Gulfood series, Africa Food Show builds on the unparalleled success of the world's largest food and beverage exhibition in Dubai, the dynamic growth of the Saudi Food Show, and the legacy of Africa's Big 7.

Addressing attendees at the exclusive launch preview on 10 October 2024, Matt Denton, president of dmg

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events remarked that, "dmg events and Kaoun International bring together extensive experience in the F&B sector, a strong local presence across Africa, and a vast global network. This powerful combination positions us perfectly to deliver an exceptional event for exhibitors and visitors. The launch also builds on the momentum of the Saudi Food Show, another successful partnership."

Through the Africa Food Show, opportunities presented by innovation across the F&B industry, highlighting the untapped potential in Africa and playing a part in the continent's emergence as a global F&B player will be unlocked.

Investment in Africa's F&B sector, and its impact on food security and industrial diversification, will be crucial in realising the continent's economic goals," comments Mark Napier, vice president, Portfolio Growth Food & Hospitality, Dubai World Trade Centre.

"With specialty foods on a massive trajectory, and brand adjacency

identified as a super important trend, this is a fantastic opportunity to showcase our amazing under-utilised indigenous products and superfoods to a wider audience with a view to exporting these products in future," adds Ailsa Wingfield, managing director of Circana South Africa, addressing the audience, sharing the latest trends and industry insights into the current food and beverage landscape.

The inaugural Africa Food Show 2025 will be co-located with the Hotel & Hospitality Expo Africa. This combination creates a comprehensive platform for industry professionals across the food, beverage, and hospitality sectors.

Food Next, a strategic conference with the theme of 'Transforming healthy food systems for climate and health', will feature as part of the Africa Food Show.

For more, go to [www.theafricafoodshow.com](http://www.theafricafoodshow.com).

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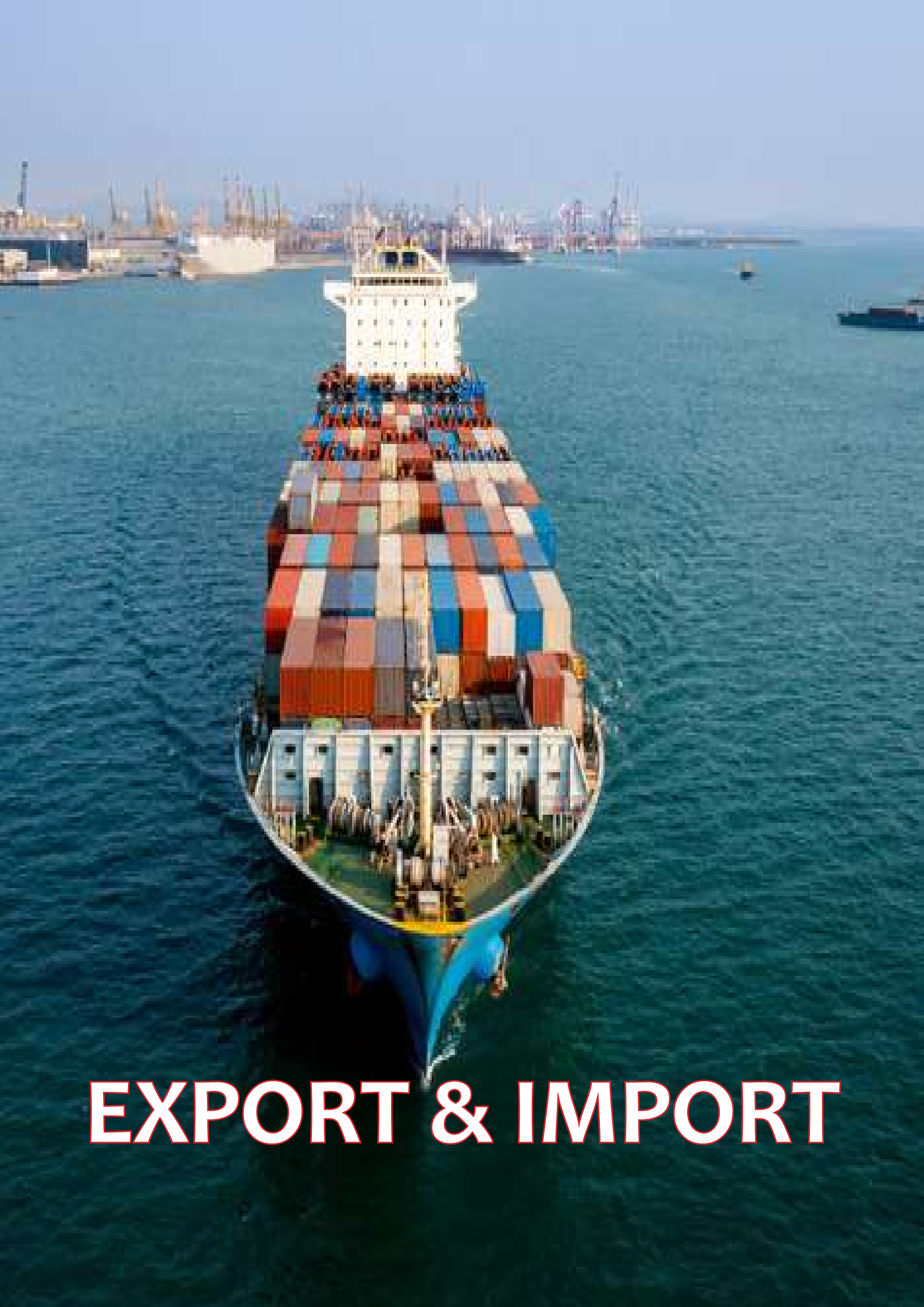
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# ‘Egypt gateway for Korean defense exports, trade to Middle East, Africa’

## **Egyptian ambassador stresses deeper mutual benefits of defense, infrastructure and industrial cooperation between Seoul, Cairo**

Egypt’s strategic location and growing defense industry position it as a key partner for South Korea to expand its military exports into the Middle East and Africa, according to Egyptian Ambassador to Korea Khaled Abdel Rahman.

In an interview with The Korea Herald ahead of the 30th anniversary of Egypt-Korea diplomatic ties, Rahman emphasized the mutual benefits of deeper defense cooperation.

Egypt and South Korea established diplomatic ties on April 13, 1995, with embassies in Cairo and Seoul. Egypt views South Korea’s rapid post-war development — fueled by International Monetary Fund and World Bank support and leveraging low-cost labor for exports — as an economic model for its own growth, often referred to as the “Miracle on the Han River.”

In 2022, South Korea designated Egypt as an official development assistance priority partner to strengthen the African country’s industry and secure major manufacturing contracts.

Egypt is rapidly expanding its military capabilities and tightening control over strategic sectors.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, between 2015 and 2019, the country was the third-largest global importer of weapons, sourcing from Germany, Russia, France and China.

The Global Defense Market Yearbook 2022 also ranked Egypt third in global arms imports from 2017 to 2021, with a 5.7 percent market share.

“Egypt’s decision to procure K9A1 howitzers and K11 vehicles reflects the high level of trust we place in South Korea’s defense capabilities,” according to Rahman, referring to a 2022 contract with South Korean company Hanwha Systems.

Hanwha Systems exported two core systems — the fire command system for the K11 Fire Command Armored Vehicle and the fire control system for the K9A1 self-propelled howitzer — to Egypt. The deal was reportedly worth 2 trillion won (\$1.39 billion).

The move shows Cairo’s confidence in South Korea’s defense capabilities and opens avenues for deeper military cooperation, he said.

“With growing security challenges in the Middle East and Africa, demand for cost-effective and technologically advanced defense systems is increasing,” according to Rahman.

South Korean expertise meets Egypt’s evolving military needs, he stressed.

Two memorandums of understanding were signed for defense industry cooperation and logistics support, alongside agreements on joint research and development and military expertise exchange, according to Rahman.

He said that although Egypt is set to expand defense manufacturing through local production and technology transfer, fostering self-reliance, Egypt-Korea bilateral trade hit approximately \$3 billion in recent years, with infrastructure, renewable energy, electronics, manufacturing and automobiles as key sectors.

Korea is supporting Egypt’s El-Dabaa nuclear power plant, with Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power building turbines in partnership with Egypt’s Petrojet, while a Korean shipbuilding company is constructing a shipyard near the Suez Canal to boost maritime infrastructure.

In 2022, KHNP signed an agreement with Rosatom’s Atomstroyexport (ASE) to build 82 facilities, including turbine buildings, water treatment and air conditioning systems, for Egypt’s first nuclear power plant in El Dabaa.

The \$30 billion project, commissioned by Egypt’s Nuclear Power Plants Authority, will include four reactors with a combined capacity of 1,200 megawatts, constructed by ASE.

Construction is expected to be completed by 2030 and the first reactor is set to begin commercial operations in 2028.

“South Korea’s cumulative investments in Egypt stand at nearly \$800 million, reflecting growing economic ties,” he said.

South Korean tech giant Samsung Electronics has invested \$700 million in Egypt to establish a manufacturing facility, marking its first production plant in the Middle East and Africa.

Located in the Beni Suef industrial complex, the new factory is set to position Egypt as a regional export hub, supplying products to 55 countries across the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Rahman noted that 85 percent of the factory’s TV screens are exported to over 55 countries. Since 2015, Samsung has led engineering exports.

The factory is expected to create 5,000 jobs in Upper Egypt, Rahman told The Korea Herald citing Egyptian media reports.

Upper Egypt refers to the southern Nile region, characterized by a desert climate with red, sandy soil. The ancient Egyptians called the region as Dshret, meaning Red Land, due to its proximity to the Sahara Desert.

Egyptian Ambassador to Korea Khaled Abdel Rahman interacts with The Korea Herald ahead of the 30th anniversary of Egypt-Korea diplomatic ties at the Embassy of Egypt in Seoul. (Sanjay Kumar/ The Korea Herald)

Egyptian Ambassador to Korea Khaled Abdel Rahman interacts with The Korea Herald ahead of the 30th anniversary of Egypt-Korea diplomatic ties at the Embassy of Egypt in Seoul. (Sanjay Kumar/ The Korea Herald)

Beyond these ongoing projects, Rahman sees immense untapped potential in Egypt as a strategic trade gateway to Africa and the Middle East.

Experts suggest Egypt can serve as a gateway to Middle Eastern and North African markets, with Korean companies leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, or AfCFTA. The agreement covers the largest free trade area in the world, encompassing 54 of the African Union’s 55 countries, representing 1.3 billion people and a combined gross domestic product of \$3.4 trillion.

“We encourage even greater involvement, particularly in technology, logistics and industrial automation,” he said, adding that Egypt’s Vision 2030, an ambitious national development blueprint, aligns with South Korea’s expertise in smart infrastructure, digital governance and industrial innovation.

The envoy also pointed out that collaboration with South Korea in renewable energy, artificial intelligence and vocational training is critical for Egypt’s future workforce.

“South Korea’s rapid technological and industrial advancement serves as an excellent model for Egypt’s economic transformation and Korea’s expertise positions Egypt as a regional hub for innovation and advanced industries.



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# 5 ways to improve security governance and prevent future illegal mining

After six months trapped underground, roughly 246 illegal miners were rescued at Buffelsfontein gold mine in Stilfontein, South Africa, in mid-January following a court order and intense public outcry.

An estimated 2,000 miners had been trapped underground after police blocked food and water from families and supporters in an attempt to force them into surrendering for arrest. In total, 87 died, many from starvation or dehydration, according to civic groups. Some survivors reportedly resorted to eating cockroaches or the flesh of their deceased colleagues to survive.

Illegal miners, known as “zama zamas” in South Africa, are people who enter mining sites without authorization to extract leftover gold and other minerals, often under dangerous and exploitative conditions.

This incident highlights the current failures in security governance at abandoned mining sites. Rather than ensuring safety and protecting lives, the police response contributed to the scale of the tragedy.

To prevent similar tragedies, security governance at abandoned or closed mining sites must be improved, and inclusive policies that address employment needs must be implemented.

## A dangerous occupation

As more mining sites in South Africa and across the world reach the end of their life cycles, the number of mine closures will increase, along with the need for more effective security governance.

The value of remaining minerals, combined with the dearth of alternatives to sustain livelihoods, has led some people to engage in illegal artisanal mining, despite the significant risks involved.

While illegal mining provides financial support for households in impoverished regions, it also releases pollutants into the environment, disrupts and degrades water resources and supports criminal networks.

A group of men are escorted while handcuffed by police officers

Illegal miners are escorted by police officers after being rescued from an abandoned gold mine for months, in Stilfontein, South Africa, on Jan. 14, 2025. (AP Photo/Themba Hadebe)

South Africa is a prime example of these challenges. The country is home to an estimated 6,000 abandoned mines and 30,000

illegal miners. Security governance challenges are a major part of South Africa's socioeconomic reality, and these challenges continue to grow despite government crackdowns in recent years.

Current enforcement efforts are doing little to address the decades of poor post-mine closure management. South Africa's Petroleum and Mineral Resources Development Act requires mining companies to rehabilitate sites after closure, although compliance is sporadic, leaving communities and ecosystems at risk.

With limited job opportunities in the formal sectors of the economy, many young people aged 15 to 34 have turned to informal sectors, including illegal mining, due to its low entry barriers. Compounding the problem is the government's failure to legally distinguish between illegal and informal mining.

## 5 ways to improve security governance

The Buffelsfontein incident is a grim reminder that security governance cannot rely solely on policing tactics. Addressing the worsening socioeconomic cycle of miners trapped in abandoned and uncontrolled mines will require governments, companies and local communities to build stronger relationships before crises arise.

Solutions must recognize that zama zamas work with no safety equipment and face daily threats from criminal syndicates who control mining territories. We propose five solutions that, together, address the socioeconomic and governance challenges:

The Petroleum and Mineral Resources Development Act should be amended so mining permits are only granted when firms provide a mine closure security plan. This plan must include physical barriers like fencing and sealed shafts, with local communities involved in security enforcement. Funding would come from an independent relinquishment fund via annual contributions over the active lifespan of the mine to an interest-earning annuity held by a local financial institution and monitored by government and civil society.

Security efforts should combine private security firms with community-based approaches, including hiring local residents in monitoring roles. This approach will foster trust, create jobs, improve security governance and enhance environment, social and governance (ESG) investment ratings.

Drawing from successful models in other countries like Chile, drones, unmanned aerial vehicles and artificial intelligence monitoring methods can help monitor and secure high-risk areas. When used ethically, such technologies can reduce unauthorized mining activities.

With unemployment in South African mining regions exceeding 40 per cent, governments and the private sector must focus on renewable energy, agriculture and entrepreneurship as economic alternatives for mining communities. Germany's Emscher Park Project, for instance, has transformed coal mining regions into renewable energy hubs that create jobs and revitalize local economies. South Africa can also repurpose abandoned mining sites for such initiatives.

As South Africa turns its attention to critical minerals, it has an opportunity to expand its green bonds to include funding for post-closure financial recovery for mining communities. These funds could finance infrastructure projects, vocational training and education so mining communities can transition successfully to other economic sectors.

A man in a yellow t-shirt walks at the entrance of a mine shaft

A miner walks at the entrance of a goldmine shaft in Springs, South Africa, in October 2023. (AP Photo/Denis Farrell)

## Lessons for Canada

Canada is no stranger to the challenges of managing mines after closure. Across the Yukon, Northwest Territories and northern parts of several provinces, tailing pond failures have led to environmental pollution during the post-closure phase of the mining cycle.

Investing in post-closure mine rehabilitation can prevent future harms to the environment, as well as enhance the human security of local communities. Green investors and sustainable finance funds like those informed by the Institute for Sustainable Finance must take a more active role in funding these efforts.

The Buffelsfontein tragedy should serve as a wake-up call: security governance must evolve from punitive enforcement to proactive protection. Providing alternative livelihoods to illegal mining weakens criminal networks, removes dangerous working conditions, reduces environmental harms and saves lives.



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The image features several pieces of brown cardboard on a light blue background. There are two large rectangular pieces at the top, one on the left and one on the right, both slightly overlapping. Below them, there is a smaller, narrower rectangular piece on the left and another larger rectangular piece on the right. The text 'MANUFACTURING & PACKAGING' is centered over the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a red outline.

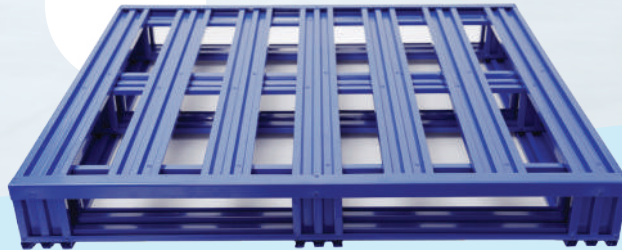
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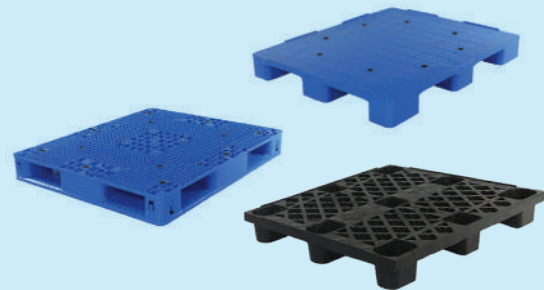
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# Africa's Progress Towards Sustainable Local Manufacturing Health Products

Africa has made significant progress towards local vaccine and other health products manufacturing—securing funding for manufacturers, improving regulatory instruments and mobilising support to establish local markets—all key to advance health security and self-reliance on the continent.

The 2nd Vaccine and Other Health Products Manufacturing Forum in Cairo, convened by the Africa CDC, Gavi, the Regionalized Vaccine Manufacturing Collaborative, hosted by Egypt's Unified Procurement Authority (UPA) on 4-6 February, heard.

Since the first Manufacturers' Marketplace for Vaccine Manufacturing among African Union Member States held in Marrakesh, Morocco in 2023, the forum's mandate has expanded to coordinate local manufacturing of not only vaccines, but other health products, medicines and diagnostics, said Dr Abebe Genetu Bayih, Coordinator for local manufacturing at Africa CDC. This year's forum was meant to discuss progress and challenges that partners have faced, identify necessary adjustments and guide implementation.

"Africa CDC has made remarkable progress in 2024 in transforming the local manufacturing landscape," said Dr Jean Kaseya, Director General of Africa CDC.

During the 37th Assembly of the African Union in 2024, the Heads of State and Governments decided to upgrade the Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM) into the Platform for Harmonized African Health Products Manufacturing (PHAHM). "It means we are not just considering vaccines but all health products," said Dr Kaseya.

The continent has witnessed important announcements and commitments from partners to ensure investments in the local manufacturing of health products in Africa. In June 2024, USD1.2 billion for the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA) was launched. This innovative financing mechanism will be available over 10 years to accelerate the expansion of commercially viable vaccine manufacturing in Africa. Additionally, Afreximbank unveiled a USD 2 billion pledge in support of African Health Products Manufacturing in 2024. The 37th AU Assembly decided to establish a Pooled Procurement Mechanism (PPM) with the support of the Afreximbank and UNECA to improve affordability, availability and equitable access to high-quality medical supplies across the continent.

On the sidelines of the 2nd Vaccines and other Health Products Manufacturing Forum, National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) from seven African countries—Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Senegal, and Rwanda—signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The agreement marks a significant milestone in strengthening regulatory systems across the continent by fostering collaboration and mutual reliance on regulatory decisions among signatory agencies while also creating an enabling environment for the local production of medical products. By streamlining approval processes, the MoU will ensure that Africa is better equipped to respond to public health emergencies and reduce dependence on international suppliers.

"It is fulfilling to see the commitment that the Heads of African NRAs have towards collaborating with a common goal of ensuring timely access to safe, quality and effective medical products in Africa," said Dr Mimi Darko Chief Executive Officer, Ghana Food and Drugs Authority.

As we sign this MoU, we—the ML3 NRAs on the continent—commit ourselves to leading efforts toward a more harmonised regulatory landscape that strengthens local manufacturing and improves access," he said. In another first, the African Manufacturing Landscape survey showed that 574 manufacturers were active in Africa, and 25 of them were involved in producing vaccines.

The chairman of the Egyptian Unified Procurement Authority, Dr Hisham Stait, emphasised Africa's growing commitment to self-sufficiency in manufacturing all health products to ensure equity and access. "The target is not just a strategic ambition but a reflection of our sheer determination to create a resilient healthcare system," he said. Dr Stait highlighted key initiatives, such as the African Union's goal of producing 60% of Africa's vaccine needs locally by 2040. "The journey toward self-sufficiency in vaccine and health products manufacturing is no longer a vision – it is a necessity inspired by the experience gained from the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

As a leading medical manufacturer, Egypt plays a central role in the ongoing transformation of production and procurement patterns on the continent, Dr Stait said. The country has nearly 20% of Africa's vaccine manufacturing capacity and plans to produce 380 million doses annually by 2030.

He also highlighted the unprecedented funding

commitments made to support Africa's health manufacturing sector, noting over \$5.5 billion in pledged investments. These commitments reflect global confidence in Africa's capacity to produce high-quality health products, including vaccines. "We see value-based procurement as a catalyst for change," he noted. "Our role extends beyond unified procurement; we foster economic growth, sustainability, and local industrial innovation."

Dr Stait praised the launch of the African Pooled Procurement Mechanism (APPM), highlighting its transformative impact on market sustainability and demand certainty. By consolidating procurement across African nations, APPM enables manufacturers to scale production, advancing Africa's self-sufficiency in vaccine and health product manufacturing. "As we convene today, the world remains deeply divided. The unfolding mpox outbreak serves as a stark reminder that we have not progressed much since Covid-19 pandemic in terms of equitable access to essential health products," said Dr Fredrick Kristensen, Managing Director of the Regionalized Vaccine Manufacturing Collaborative.

Dr Kristensen said that while mpox has killed more than 1,500 people, half a million children die from preventable diseases every year. Emerging and reemerging infectious diseases will continue to threaten Africa's lives, livelihoods, economies, and society, but efforts to combat these problems are being complicated by climate change, risk of deliberate use of biological knowledge, and the spread of misinformation. "This forum is a collective drive towards countering some of these challenges," he said.

Dr Kaseya said Africa continues to face outbreaks of mpox, cholera, Marburg, measles, and many others, as well as humanitarian crises such as the ongoing conflict in Eastern DRC, which could trigger widespread outbreaks.

According to the World Economic Forum, the African market for vaccines and medicines is valued at over USD 50 billion annually, yet the continent imports most of the healthcare products that it consumes. "We must reverse this trend," said Wamkele Mene, Secretary-General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). "This meeting provides an opportunity to refine our strategy, our plan, and our vision for regional manufacturing of essential health products in Africa, particularly in light of policy documents that support our goal of producing 60% of Africa's vaccines by 2040."

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