

First German head of state visits the 'kingdom in heaven'

Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier made official visits to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho from 10 to 14 December. In Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu received him with military honours. Steinmeier emphasised that young Nigerians studying in Germany were wonderful bridge-builders. He also spoke with Omar Touray, President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas). At the meeting with President Cyril Ramaphosa, the Federal President emphasised the importance of the German-South African partnership and how important the economy is in relations between our countries. He emphasised the role of the more than 600 German companies that invest in South Africa. They have created more than 100,000 jobs here - and are safeguarding them. King Letsie III received the Federal President in Maseru. In conversation, the Federal President praised Lesotho's commitment to democracy and multilateralism.

Zimbabwe: Ecological disaster at Lake Chivero

The level of pollution in Chivero Lake, Harare's main water source, has reached alarming levels and is affecting both the aquatic and animal life. The increase in cyanobacteria due to pollution - mainly from raw sewage - poses a significant health risk to humans and animals. The toxic algal blooms have already led to the deaths of several animals, including four rhinos, three zebras, four wildebeests and four ospreys. In addition, more than 1,000 dead fish have been washed ashore, causing concern for local fishermen and consumers. 19.12.2024

Kente fabric recognised as a UNESCO cultural treasure

Ghana's iconic kente fabric has been inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This global recognition under the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage emphasises the cultural and historical significance of the vibrant, hand-woven fabric. Originating from Ghana's Asante and Ewe communities, kente is known worldwide for its vibrant colours, intricate patterns and deep symbolic meanings and embodies the creativity and identity of the Ghanaian people. 17.12.2024

Ghana: Historical

Ghana has turned a new page in its democratic development with the election of Professor Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang as the country's first female Vice President. Opoku-Agyemang will play a crucial role in shaping the country's future as part of the transition of power in Ghana. Her commitment to education, equality and national unity will guide her as she takes on this ground-breaking task. Since 2008, she has been the first woman to head a public university in Ghana, serving as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast. Her tenure has been characterised by far-reaching reforms, from improving infrastructure to promoting gender equality within the institution. 16.12.2024

Fighting back against projects like EACOP

East African activists and communities have stepped up their opposition to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and denounced reports of possible financial support from China. Protesters in Kampala and Dar es Salaam called on Chinese embassies to support

investment in renewable energy instead of EACOP, pointing out the devastating impact on communities and ecosystems. According to the Ugandan government, Chinese financial institutions, including Sinosure and China Exim Bank, will finance the project. The Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and various Chinese contractors are already playing an important role in the operation and development of EACOP. 16.12.2024

Motorway planned along the West African coast

Ecowas (Economic Community of West African States) is pinning its hopes on the construction of a 1,028 km motorway from Abidjan in the Ivory Coast through Ghana, Togo and Benin to Lagos in Nigeria. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2026 and \$15.6bn has already been pledged by various donors and investors. The plan to build the modern transport corridor along the West African coast was originally approved eight years ago - long before the coups that toppled civilian rule in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. The Coastal Transport Corridor project is designed to demonstrate the ability of the remaining member countries to work together and accelerate the growth of trade and the attraction of West Africa's urban coastal areas. The construction of the planned four to six-lane motorway is expected to create 70,000 jobs. Completion is planned for 2030. 15.12.2024

Withdrawal timetable for Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso

At its Heads of State and Government meeting in Abuja, Ecowas approved the timetable for the end of membership of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso - which are governed by military juntas. The official withdrawal of the countries is scheduled for 29 January 2025. There is to be a transition phase until 29 July. The three countries accuse Ecowas (the group of 15 member states) of 'inhumane and irresponsible' sanctions in connection with the coups in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. Ecowas had also failed to help the three countries to combat internal security problems. With the withdrawal of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, the bloc will lose 76 million of its 446 million inhabitants and more than half of its total geographical area as well as large parts of the Sahara.

Cyclone Chido leaves deaths and devastation in its wake

Several hundred people have died on the French island of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean after Cyclone Chido hit the island with wind speeds of 225 km/h and waves up to eight metres high. Cyclone Chido continues its path in a westerly direction and reaches Pemba in Mozambique. The storm then moves further inland through Mozambique and Malawi. Over the course of Monday, it will cross southern Malawi and then the Mozambican province of Tete before heading towards Zimbabwe on Tuesday night. 16.12.2024

Zimbabwe: Parliament abolishes death penalty

On 11 Dec., parliament passed a law to abolish the death penalty; it must now be ratified by President Emmerson Mnangagwa. The last execution took place in 2005 under President Robert Mugabe. Although there have been repeated death sentences, President Mnangagwa declared an amnesty in April 2024 and commuted all death sentences to life imprisonment. 16.12.2024

More Info: <https://netzwerkafrika.de/>