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"Overcoming our challenges to build back better"

We looked to 2021 with a lot of hope and belief that the world had put behind the unprecedented challenges of the previous year. The news of the development and

approval of various vaccines to curb the COVID-19 pandemic justified our hope in the New Year. But the resurgence of new waves of the pandemic and the reinstatement of lockdown restrictions in various parts of the world also reminded us of the extraordinary efforts required to build back from the damages caused by the pandemic.

African countries have made commendable efforts in averting the high incidence of cases and fatalities predicted but have not escaped more severe socio-economic impacts due to challenges such as high national debts, infrastructure deficiencies, reduced trade and investments, and reduced export revenues.

The challenges highlighted by the pandemic bring to the fore the rationale for establishment of the Facility and the issues underpinning our Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2022 (MTS). We were established to enhance the legal capacity of African countries to successfully undertake sovereign commercial transactions, especially relating to sovereign debt, extractives and natural resources, and infrastructure transactions; and our current MTS is informed by the need for increased investment in infrastructure (including, telecommunications, water, and energy sectors), public-private partnerships (PPPs), and natural resource projects, and prudent debt management in African countries. Our MTS also emphasises mainstreaming good governance, gender equality and environmental and social considerations into these sovereign transactions.

Thus, the Facility is well placed to continue supporting African countries to overcome the above-mentioned challenges. Specifically, the Facility aims to reduce the severe economic and social impact of the pandemic on its RMCs and Africa's private sector through measures such as negotiation/renegotiation and execution of equitable and sustainable commercial transactions and public debt transactions - including debt restructuring, refinancing, and reprofiling, developing accounting approach to contingent liabilities for sovereign guaranties, commercial creditor and vulture fund litigation strategy and defence, developing debt management strategies and advising on Eurobond issuances and related hedging arrangements. We are accessible and able to deploy our services rapidly through highly responsive and innovative tools and processes, a competent and dynamic staff, and a top rate legal panel. We currently have 112 ongoing projects in about 40 countries and are already in discussions with many countries planning to submit new requests for support this year.

Our ongoing mission to train and equip African professionals with relevant skills and knowledge to negotiate deals with more sustainable and equitable outcomes for their countries is fundamental to our shared hope of building back better. So, we are continuing to reach and train more professionals through our online platforms and collaborating with various strategic partners to exchange information, deliver the required training, and promote efficient solutions. Additionally, we are intensifying our collaboration with our partners, including the African Union High level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows (AU HLP), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Africa Capacity Building Forum (ACBF), and the Coalition for Dialogue on Africa (CoDA), to implement the recommendations on curbing illicit financial flows from Africa, which should improve the fiscal space for African countries to implement their recovery strategies.

On a personal note, I wish to inform our stakeholders that I will be ending my ten-year tenure as the Director and CEO of the Facility by the end of the year. Until then, I assure you that the Management Board and I are working hard to ensure a smooth transition to a new and competent person to lead the important work of the Facility.



Ethiopia natural gas development project - the ALSF supports the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in the negotiation of the sale purchase agreement for a newly discovered gas field

Boosted by new discoveries made of gas reserves in Calub, Hilala and Shilabo areas, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has embarked on the plan to develop and produce natural gas for domestic use and export (the "Project"). Accordingly, the government has been negotiating various agreements with contractors in order to start the Project. As natural gas development and production is a new field in Ethiopia, the government approached the African Legal Support Facility ("ALSF" or "Facility") for advisory services and capacity building support in order to negotiate the Gas Sale Purchase Agreement, to safeguard the interest of the country and its people.

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African Legal Support Facility's private entity framework joins the list of Facility services to beneficiaries

Development costs are an integral part of all infrastructure projects and their importance is accentuated for African governments that do not necessarily have available funding to cover them. Thus, they are often faced with a conundrum: whether or not to accept private funds to cover development costs such as the cost of legal services for the negotiation of the project agreements. Generally, project developers are keen to contribute as government advisors significantly ease the development of the project. However, governments seldom accept funds from private parties or that developers pay directly their legal costs as it inevitably implicates ethical questions of impartiality of counsel ...

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ALSF's continued support to Eswatini brings first competitive IPP procurement to a close despite COVID-19.

The ALSF is supporting the Kingdom of Eswatini's first competitive procurement process through the launch of a request for proposals ("RfQ") for the procurement of 40MW of solar PV. The capacity for each solar PV plant will range between 5-15 MW and each project shall utilise proven ground mounted solar PV technology. The RfQ was launched on 7 June 2019 by the Eswatini Energy Regulatory Authority (ESERA). During the RfQ stage, there was an excellent response from the market and ...

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The African Legal Support Facility receives GBP 1 million over two years from the United Kingdom

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 15th February 2021 - The African Legal Support Facility (ALSF) and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which provides modalities for cooperation between them, including a GBP 1 million grant from the FCDO to the ALSF to support Building Debt Management Capacity in Low-Income Countries over a two year period.

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