

## **KENYA, IRAN EXPAND ECONOMIC TIES**

Kenya and Iran strengthened their bilateral economic relationship by signing protocol agreements in a number of sectors in February 2009. These agreements were concluded in Nairobi during the two-day official visit of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran H. E. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Kenya during 24-26 February 2009. The Agreements included those on Veterinary, Animal Health and Livestock Development and Protocol of Cooperation that were signed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Hon Moses Wetangula of Kenya and Dr. Mohammed Abdi Kuti of Iran. The two G-15 countries also agreed to establish direct flights between Nairobi and Tehran, to set up a shipping line between the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas and the Kenyan port of Mombassa and to build an Iranian Trade Center in Nairobi. Iran will also reportedly supply Kenya with 4 million tons of oil annually.

During bilateral talks with Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki at State House Nairobi, the two Heads of State also noted with appreciation that the five sessions of the Kenya/Iran Joint Commission of Cooperation had facilitated an increase in trade between the two countries. Iran currently exports industrial oil, carpets and chemicals to Kenya and imports tea. Kenya plans to add beef and fish products to its list of exports to Iran. Analysts believe the new agreements could increase the volume of Iran-Kenya trade to \$500 million by the end of next year.

Source: mfa.go.ke, 25 February 2009 & [www.presstv.ir](http://www.presstv.ir), 6 March 2009

## **ARGENTINA, NIGERIA TO COOPERATE IN AGRICULTURE**

In a bid to boost agriculture, the Lagos State government in Nigeria is to collaborate with Argentinean consultants and investors who visited Nigeria in February 2009. The collaboration will be in the areas of fish and rice cultivation as well as tourism. The consultants and investors had visited the Lagos State Fish Farm in Ikorodu on 14 February 2009 to assess the farm with a view to move the fish industry forward in the state. Argentina is one of the largest food-producing and food-exporting countries of the world.

Apart from the Lagos State Government, the Argentinean consultants also had various meetings with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Nassarawa State government and some captains of industry. The Nassarawa State government is to work with the investors for the local assembly of tractors and other farming equipment. The visiting Argentinean delegation included representatives of firms with a strong reputation for large-scale agriculture and agro processing projects.

Source: This Day (Lagos), 16 February 2009

## **MALAYSIA, INDONESIA AGREE TO STRENGTHEN COMMODITY PRICES**

Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed to work together to strengthen commodity prices - in particular palm oil and rubber prices – in a coordinated response to the current fall in world prices for these commodities. Malaysia's Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Peter Chin Fah Kui and Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia Dr. Ir. Anton Apriyanto met on 25 February 2009 in Kuala Lumpur to discuss bilateral cooperation on the matter. Both G-15 countries, in a joint statement stated that they have also agreed to take appropriate measures to ensure stable prices in particular for palm oil. The ministers agreed to accelerate replanting of oil palm and rubber trees which are above 25-years old, increasing domestic demand for crude palm oil and jointly engage major importing countries of palm based methyl ester in addressing non-tariff barriers for the exports of biofuel.

Malaysia and Indonesia jointly account for 85 percent of global palm oil production and 40 percent of natural rubber production. The ministers hope that these measures will reduce price volatility and contribute towards stability of both palm oil and natural rubber prices in the longer term.

Source, Antara, 27 February 2009.

## **IRAN, MALAYSIA TO COOPERATE IN AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY SECTORS**

The Malaysian Minister of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Mustafa Mohamed has expressed his country's willingness to make use of Iranian expertise in the development of agriculture. In a meeting with Iran's Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Planning and Economic Affairs, Jafar Khalaqani, on 25 February 2009, he called for Tehran-Kuala Lumpur cooperation in conducting joint research projects to develop agriculture. On his part, the Iranian Deputy Minister outlined Iran's technical and research potentials as well as the country's use of modern technologies in the agricultural fields and expressed Iran's readiness for exchange of agricultural experiences and implementation of the agreements signed by the two countries.

Meanwhile, the PNPI Group Sdn Bhd, an Iranian firm, has offered to supply Malaysia with vaccines to combat bird-flu and foot and mouth disease. The PNPI Group is the franchise holder of various vaccines from Iran's biggest veterinary research institute - the Razi Vaccine & Serum Research Institute. The company's general manager, Vahid Tahmasebi, said that the vaccines offered to Malaysia had been tested extensively in Iran and had proved to be effective in preventing the diseases.

Source: Bernama and IRNA, 25 February 2009.

## **INDIAN COMPUTER FIRMS SET TO OPEN BRANCHES IN EGYPT**

A number of Indian information technology (IT) companies are opening service delivery centers in Cairo whilst others are actively participating with the Egyptian government in training university graduates to acquire the proper set of skills needed to work in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. The main reason for this is that the IT- BPO industry in Egypt is growing. It is now establishing itself as an attractive location of global outsourcing. The country set itself an ambitious target for increasing its share of the global outsourcing market and aspires to achieve an industry turnover of US\$1.3 billion in the year 2010. This sector has managed to maintain an annual growth rate of 20%, and has attracted local and foreign investments of more than US\$8 billion since 2006. As the market leaders in the field with revenues expected to touch US\$60 billion by end-2009, Indian IT firms are seeking to outsource some of their contracts.

Source: [www.africanews.com](http://www.africanews.com), 6 February 2009.