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Washington Bets Big on African Minerals: Can the Lobito Corridor Deliver the Green Dream?

Washington's focus is on Africa, notably the Lobito corridor, a 2,600-kilometer rail network that connects the mineral-rich Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zambia to Angola's Atlantic coastline.

This ambitious \$2.3 billion project is a big gamble: can it produce the essential battery metals required for America's green transition?

The allure is unmistakable. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has massive amounts of cobalt, lithium, and copper, which are critical components for electric car batteries and renewable energy technology.

Zambia has huge copper and cobalt reserves, which further sweetens the transaction. Linking these resources to an effective export route, such as the Lobito corridor, has the potential to address a significant bottleneck in the green revolution.

However, the journey is filled with obstacles. Infrastructure ruin afflicts the corridor, with outdated lines and inadequate capacity impeding effective travel. Political instability in the DRC, along with worries about human rights violations in the mining industry, poses ethical and reputational risks to Western partners. Furthermore, China, already a big participant in the region, is a formidable competitor, having spent considerably on its infrastructure projects.

Despite the challenges, Washington views the Lobito corridor as a strategic

alternative to Chinese control.

By investing in this project, the United States hopes to ensure a consistent source of battery metals, diversify its supply chain, and offset China's rising influence in Africa. Furthermore, the initiative offers economic advantages to the member nations by creating employment and increasing regional commerce.

However, success is far from certain. The project's sheer size and complexity necessitate precise planning and execution. Addressing infrastructural concerns, negotiating political complications, and assuring ethical sourcing procedures would need close coordination among stakeholders. Furthermore, the long-term economic viability of the project is dependent on stable commodity pricing and careful resource management.

The environmental effect is also a cause for worry.

Mining activities frequently leave an imprint, and the Lobito corridor's growth must be balanced with sustainable techniques to reduce environmental harm and safeguard residents.

Finally, the Lobito corridor constitutes a high-risk venture. While the potential benefits of America's green objectives are great, the difficulties are also tremendous. Only time will tell if this enormous endeavor can supply the battery metals required for a cleaner future, or if it will collapse under complexity and ethical problems.

By Gladys Kapto (editorial specialist)

DISCLAIMER: The views and opinions expressed in this Issue are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Transport & Logistics News Zambia.

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Walvis Bay In Namibia Plays Key Role In Early Southern African Grape Exports

Logistics Company GoGlobal finds new solutions for South African and Namibian grape growers as problems in Cape Town continue.

An early season experiment by South African logistics operator GoGlobal, in association with shipping line MSC, to ship Namibian and South African grapes through the port of Walvis Bay in Namibia has been a success. Around 70 containers have been loaded in the port and are due to arrive in the UK and Europe next week.

“MCS has agreed to include Walvis Bay in their schedule to replace Cape Town,” said Delena Engelbrecht, CEO of GoGlobal. “With their call at the port of Ngura along the South African Eastern coast, it allows us two opportunities to load on a weekly basis. The first loading at Walvis Bay went extremely well and there were no delays.” On average last season delays of ten

days were experienced in Cape Town. “We simply had to find new solutions to get grapes without delay to the market,” she said.

The operation through Walvis Bay was more expensive than getting the grapes to Cape Town for shipment. “It is around 1,600 kilometres from Aussekenkehr in southern Namibia and for exporters from the Orange River it is even further,” Engelbrecht continued. “It is also costly to transfer containers to the Eastern Cape, but hopefully we will see the results in good arrival condition.”

From southern Namibia and the Orange River, containers are moved by road via Keetmanshoop and Windhoek to the west coast port of Walvis Bay.

“These first operations went off without a hitch and we are all pleased,” she confirmed. “Naturally, we would want Cape Town Container Terminal to

operate properly, to achieve the most cost-effective logistics chain.” The first specialised reefer vessel of the season, carrying stonefruit and grapes, has also loaded successfully at the FPT berth in Cape Town and has already sailed to Europe. Regular specialised reefers are expected to sail on a weekly basis from early January, carrying South African stonefruit and grapes.

The industry has been forced into making logistical changes due to ongoing problems at Cape Town’s container terminal, resulting in backlogs and delays. Shipping lines have increasingly bypassed Cape Town to avoid delays in their schedules.

In trade negotiations between South Africa and Namibia, the two countries’ agricultural ministers decided to step up cooperation, with greater use of Walvis Bay being singled out to service the grape industry specifically.



Unlocking the Zambian and DR Congo Copperbelts Major Bilateral Logistics Initiatives

Kasumbalesa is the main border post between the Zambian and DR Congo Copperbelts and is extremely busy. It is reported that up to 1 400 vehicles pass through per day, both ways. Waiting time is often over a day even if all documentation is correct. On the day of our entry into DR Congo, the line of heavy vehicles waiting to cross from the Zambian side was kilometres long. The situation was far less onerous for pedestrians, however. The Zambians only required that we show our passports and fill in our details in a large exercise book.

It was a very different story on the Congolese side. We had just stepped into DRC territory when four youths in ragged soccer jerseys swamped us, offering their 'facilitation' services in a particularly forceful way. I pointed to the new customs and immigration building which a foreign donor had recently built, and asked them whether that was not the correct place for us to do our formalities.

Non. They assured me that everything could be done through them – at a very reasonable fee. After a few shouts of

Foux le camp! (Roughly translated as Scram) from me, they eventually dwindled.

After over an hour of arguing with bored officials and repeated form-filling, we emerged on the other side in a somewhat harassed state, and entered a cauldron of shouting street vendors vigorously proffering their wares – so typical of African border town markets.

Zambia's 'New' Copperbelt And The Need For A Better Link With The DR Congo

Zambia's North Western Province lies adjacent to much of the DR Congo's copper-rich Haut-Katanga Province and some 200 kilometres west of the country's historic copperbelt. From the beginning of this century, major mining operations for copper, cobalt and other minerals have developed there.

First Quantum is operating the Kansanshi and Kalumbila projects and Barrick (also of Canada), is developing the Lumwana concession. The sudden rise in mining and related activity in the area led many to name it the 'New Copperbelt'. Solwezi town is the pro-

vincial capital.

Zambia supplies a wide range of the needs to the mining houses operating in the DR Congo, including capital goods. There is a need for a stronger logistics connection between Solwezi and the DR Congo's mining centre of Kolwezi. The direct distance between the two centres is only 190 kilometres, and yet the driving distance between them (using the congested Kasumbalesa post), is a difficult 609 kilometres.

A Large-Scale Mining Operation Leads To Development Of An Alternate Cross-Border Route

Ivanhoe Mines of Canada and the DR Congo state mining company, Gécamines, are developing what they call the world's highest-grade zinc mine at Kipushi. Production is expected to commence before the end of 2024. The mine lies less than a kilometre from the Zambia border. The mine's developers stand to benefit substantially from the development of the 136-kilometre alternate Solwezi- Kipushi road trade route.

In mid-2023, the completion of the Solwezi-Kipushi road feasibility study

was announced. The project cost is estimated at US\$ 485 million, and the government hopes to raise the funding through its Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) Programme. Ivanhoe is working with the DR Congo government to establish a dedicated commercial border crossing into Zambia at Kipushi to facilitate transport of production from its Kipushi zinc and its Kamo-a-Kakula copper mines, and for the import of its capital and other requirements.

The Kipushi border post currently only operates a few days per week, and the road is in a poor state. The border facility project relates to more than a rehabilitated road, but is multi-faceted and includes fuel storage infrastructure and farming block development.

A Huge Rail Project To Unlock Both Copperbelts

In July 2023, it was reported that a consortium comprising the major multinational commodity trader, Trafigura, the construction company, Mota-Engil, and the private railway operator, Vecturis, had pledged US\$ 555 million for

the Lobito Atlantic Railway Project. The line will start from the Angolan port of Lobito extending 1 300 kilometres across Angola and 400 kilometres to Kolwezi. A link to Solwezi will be added in a later phase.

The project will establish a major western export and import rail route, negating the need to transport mining production southwards to South Africa. Some 1 500 wagons and 30 locomotives will be procured. An effective rail link will facilitate bulk transport and alleviate the operating costs of the mining companies. (Barrick for example, once reported that it was using 250 000 litres of diesel per day.)

Improved Cooperation Between Zambia And The Dr Congo Bodes Well For The Future Of Regional Transport Logistic.

The two countries are bedevilled by a historic colonial border, drawn through their common mineral-rich territory. In recent times, the two governments have increased their collaboration on transport logistics to their mutual bene-

fit. A number of border roads are being improved.

A prominent example of this bilateral cooperation is the Chalwe-Kabila Border Port Project. The project is for the construction of a toll system, border post and bridge on the Luapula River that marks the border. It includes the construction, expansion and modernisation of a 184-kilometre highway. This will be the first one-stop border post between Zambia and the DR Congo, streamlining bilateral trade.

Sub-Saharan Africa has for long been grappling with the constraints imposed by the lack of inter-state transport infrastructure. Agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) has given rise to considerable optimism regarding the future of intra-regional trade in the continent. The success of AfCFTA will depend much on additional infrastructure and examples of effective cross-border collaboration. The border cooperation being realised between Zambia and the DR Congo is a good example.



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IDC Outlined Expectations For Zamcargo



The IDC has inaugurated the new board of directors for Zambia Cargo and Logistics Limited (Zamcargo), a strategic step towards enhancing the company's position in the freight logistics industry within the region.

Speaking during the inauguration, IDC CEO Mr Cornwell Muleya expressed the Corporation's high expectations for Zamcargo, emphasizing the goal of establishing the company as a market leader in freight logistics services. He pointed out that to achieve this goal, Zamcargo needed to continue expanding its operations in the region and improve its access to domestic, regional, and international markets, aligning with the broader goals of Vision 2030. He said IDC anticipates that the new board will provide the necessary over-

sight to ensure the timely implementation of strategic objectives. Mr Muleya encouraged the board to apply principles of good governance, promoting a high-performance culture within the organization's operations. Zamcargo is wholly owned by IDC. "The board's composition brings together different skills and a wealth of industry experience to Zamcargo," Mr. Muleya stated.



The board's composition brings together different skills and a wealth of industry experience to Zamcargo.

Mr Cornwell Muleya
IDC CEO

He expressed confidence in the board's ability to execute its duties diligently

and contribute effectively to the development of the company.

Meanwhile, Joseph Chikolwa, the newly appointed Board Chairperson, has pledged to work within the framework of the Zamcargo Strategic Plan 2022-2026. He said the board's primary aim is to ensure that the company attains its vision of becoming the market leader in providing freight logistics services in the region.

As the new board takes charge, Mr. Chikolwa emphasized their commitment to supporting the expansion of Zamcargo's operating centres in the identified trade corridors within the region. The development of inland dry ports in Zambia is also part of their strategic plan to strengthen the company's logistics infrastructure.



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thorough groundwork, encompassing meticulous planning, specialized equipment, and an experienced team. To assess site characteristics, particularly ground stability, we employ Dynamic Cone Penetration Tests (DCPs). Our process involves developing preliminary rigging assessments and lifting plans, and engineering assessments play a pivotal role in identifying load capacities, lift points, and appropriate rigging.

Fostering strong communication channels is absolutely crucial, demanding

frequent safety updates and briefings at every stage of the lift. Continuous interaction and collaboration with the customer, project participants, and pertinent authorities are absolutely vital, ensuring a thorough grasp of and unwavering commitment to the plan.

The integration of a diligently crafted contingency plan adds an extra level of assurance by strategically anticipating emergencies or unforeseen events, which in turn ensures an ironclad and smooth heavy-lifting experience from start to finish.

“

Our process involves developing preliminary rigging assessments and lifting plans, and engineering assessments play a pivotal role in identifying load capacities, lift points, and appropriate rigging.



Unlocking Mozambique's Logistics Potential

DSV hosted its third logistics workshop in Mozambique, with a focus on overcoming bottlenecks in Mozambique's transport and logistics network.

Organized with Standard Bank Mozambique, DSV Mozambique Managing Director, Philipp Büchler said the workshop was attended by more than 100 of the country's key role-players in the important transport and logistics sector.

According to the World Bank, Mozambique's medium-term economic outlook is positive, with growth expected to accelerate to 6% over 2023-2025, driven by continued recovery in services, increased liquefied natural gas production (LNG), and high commodity prices. However, downside risks linked to climate shocks, security risks, and food and fuel price pressures could lower medium-term gross domestic product (GDP) growth to 4.5%. Philipp said the company had benefited from the country's growth in renewable energy and

oil and gas. "The workshop brought together role-players to help resolve challenges around logistics challenges and bottlenecks, customs, exemptions processes, pricing and explore opportunities. To this end, we requested the presence of those institutions which play a decisive role in the decisions importers and exporters take each day and were gratified at the response and attendance at the workshop", Büchler said.

DSV's head of Customs, Shabnam Essa, said compliance was critical and the foundation for much of DSV's work, she further said the company made a point of working with companies who had the same commitment and respected the legislation of the host country.

The high level speakers included:

Castigo Magalhaes - Standard Bank spokesperson on customs payment terms. Mauro Pereira - Vice President of Chamber of Customs brokers of Mozambique (CDA) outlining challenges encountered in customs clearance processes.


Geraldo Albasini - INNOQ (an autonomous body operating under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, responsible for the promotion of standardization and quality in the manufacturing of products and the performance of services) presented a paper on conformity assessment programs.

Avelar Silva - General Director of INTERTEK (which supports exporters to Mozambique with conformity assessments and certification for the Mozambique CAP) spoke about the implementation of the Conformity Assessment Programme in Mozambique.

Fausto Mussa - Standard Bank assessed Mozambique's economy and outlook
Elthon Chamane - ACLM (local content association) spoke on local content
Fabio Vidulich - ESA (a civil engineering consultancy) presented on "Bottlenecks in Logistics-route Investigation"
Pedro Ascencao - General Director of Transcrane Logistics with a team led an open discussion on logistics bottlenecks and how to fix them.

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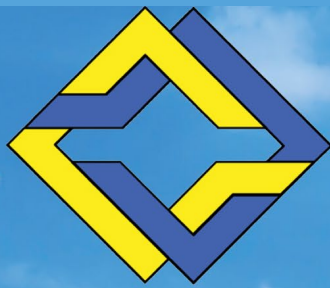
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Clearance Time Reduced to One Third at the Critical Border Post in Zambia

As a land-linked country, it is critical for Zambia to reduce the time and cost for transportation toward affordable and stable commodity price and economic growth. The North-South Corridor, which connects the Port of Durban, the biggest port in South Africa, and Lusaka, carries about 40% of international transport in Zam-

bia. However, the time it takes to cross the borders is the biggest ongoing challenge faced.

Zambia and neighboring countries introduced “One Stop Border Post (OSBP)” to address this challenge. OSBP enables passengers and cargo to cross borders more efficiently by inte-

grating exit and entry procedures. However, operational structures and the capacities of stakeholders are limited.

In this regard, JICA commenced “The Project for Capacity Development on Smooth Operation of OSBPs on the North-South Transport Corridor” with the countries which are located on the Corridor which are Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa. The Project is establishing the operational structure and building capacities of stakeholders on the 3 OSBPs.

In 2022, a survey on the progress of the Project was conducted, and the report was launched in August 2023. The survey found that the clearance time for cargo at Kazungula OSBP, which is located at the border of Zambia and Botswana, has been highly reduced from 30 hours to 12 hours, approximately one third. Moreover, the transit time for passengers has been reduced to a few minutes only.

Though the Project has achieved significant outcomes, there remain some challenges. The cargo vehicles still take several hours to cross the border. One of the reasons is that stakeholders have not fully utilized the pre-clearance option. The Project will seek further improvement for smooth logistics, toward “Zero Stop Border Post” in the future, as was advocated by H.E. Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia.

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Navigating Agricultural Logistics in Sub-Saharan Africa with Unitrans

Unitrans outlines how their agricultural teams ‘make it happen’, optimising efficiency and reliability.

Optimising efficiency to ensure reliability

Sub-Saharan Africa’s dynamic landscape presents unique challenges for supply chains. From unpredictable weather patterns to diverse terrain, ensuring efficient and reliable transportation requires ingenuity and expertise. This is where Unitrans steps in, not just as a hauler, but as a strategic partner, designing and implementing an integrated value chain that tackles regional hurdles and empowers agricultural businesses. Unitrans’ tailored approach to each agricultural customer’s needs enables their teams to make it happen.

Weathering every storm

Unpredictable weather patterns often lead to unfavourable outcomes within the agricultural sector. Torrential rainfall, especially out of season, can lay waste to the all-important harvests. For agricultural customers in Sub-Saharan Africa, this was a harsh reality until Unitrans introduced its robust wet-weather logistics solution. Special-

ised equipment – mud – conquering trucks and trailers – navigate difficult terrain, ensuring harvests reach processing plants on time, even during torrential downpours. This innovative solution minimises weather-related losses, leading to improved profit margins for farmers and sustainable growth for the entire agricultural sector.

Beyond transportation

Unitrans’ commitment goes beyond transportation. Acting as an extension of their customer’s operations, Unitrans operates in an integrated way, actively involved in the full supply chain. From land preparation to drone technology solutions, we optimise every step.

Our fleet also provides mechanical harvesting and efficient transportation to mills. Within the processing plants, our equipment further streamlines workflows, handling finished products and by-products with precision. The holistic approach enables agricultural customers to focus on what they do best – cultivating quality crops – while we handle the intricate logistics with expertise and innovation.

The Unitrans difference

Certification serves as a stamp of ob-

jective approval, with Unitrans being certified on several aspects of servicing the agricultural sector. The numerous accreditations include:

- ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems.
- ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems.
- OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.
- RTMS (Road Transport Management System).
- PBS (Performance Based Systems).
- CNB 253.
- NOSA Integrated System.

Building agricultural partnerships

Unitrans’ collaborative approach enables optimal outcomes for the agricultural sector. Beyond simply being a logistics services provider, Unitrans strives to ‘make it happen’ by being a true collaborator within customers’ operations.

By tailoring integrated solutions to each region’s specific challenges, Unitrans optimises for efficiency, increased reliability, and improved profit margins.



Botswana Reviews global Bids for new Rail line as South Africa's Logistics Woes Force Re-route

Botswana is considering bids from investors for the Trans-Kalahari Railway, a 1,500-kilometer project aimed at circumventing South Africa's logistics crisis. As Transnet struggles, unsolicited offers from global players like the UAE, China, and India indicate strong interest.

The alternative route could benefit South African companies and ease transportation woes in the region. Initially conceived for coal exports, the railway now targets the Kalahari Copperbelt. With 12 companies expressing interest, construction is set to commence in January 2025, offering a crucial transport link for Botswana's diamond and beef exports.

Crumbling South African Rail Prompts Botswana to Forge New Route

Botswana has received unsolicited bids from investors to build a rail line to a Namibian port that will help avoid South Africa and its disintegrating logistics network.

The 1,500-kilometer (930-mile) Trans-Kalahari Railway project is gathering momentum as Transnet SOC Ltd., the state rail and ports monopoly in Botswana's southern neighbor, struggles to ship goods, according to Transport and Public Works Minister Eric Molale.

"We learned in June that the waiting period at all South Africa ports to off-load and load can be a minimum of two weeks, floating on the sea for that period," he said in an interview Monday in Gaborone, the capital. "The UAEs, the Qataris, the Chinese, the Indians have also come to say this is not a long line

for them and it is in fact, a comparatively short one that they can do very quickly."

Transnet has become one of the biggest drags on South Africa's economy and, along with power outages, resulted in a surprising contraction in growth in the third quarter. Snarled transportation also has the potential to crimp expansion in neighboring countries, including landlocked Botswana, one of the world's biggest diamond producers and a major beef exporter that relies on South Africa for most of its trade.

An alternative route may also attract companies in South Africa, offering shorter travel than to the nation's own ports, Molale said.

Coal shipments on Transnet freight-rail network have plunged to 30-year lows and iron-ore railings are at their low-

est in a decade. Port gridlock has led to delays to the loading and offloading of ships and some fashion retailers have resorted to flying in apparel.

“We see ourselves as best placed especially for companies in the Johannesburg, Pretoria area of Gauteng because either way, going west or east, they cover the same distance and some of them, like vehicle manufacturers have come to us,” the minister said.

The Trans-Kalahari Railway has been slow to develop since Botswana and Namibia signed an agreement in 2010. The original impetus was to export coal from eastern Botswana, yet prices declined

and financiers have shunned backing the fuel. It will rather focus on exports from the fast-developing Kalahari Copperbelt in the west of the country.

The line would run from Gaborone, through the Kalahari Desert to Gobabis in Namibia and Walvis Bay on the Atlantic Ocean.

Nations in the region are seeking ways to better get their goods to global markets. The US is backing a rail line from the copper and cobalt mines in Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo to Lobito in Angola, while China’s government selected a state-owned compa-

ny to negotiate a concession to operate a railway connecting Zambia with the Tanzanian port of Dar es Salaam.

Copper and cobalt are important minerals in the global transition to cleaner fuels.

Botswana and Namibia set up a bi-national project office in 2015 to push the project. According to its website, 12 companies submitted expressions of interest last month. A request for proposals will be released in March and construction is due to begin in January 2025.

“There is a lot of money out there in the world and unsolicited bids have been coming in,” Molale said.



Mozambique: Logistics Corridors to Transition Towards Specialized Management – Report

The government will at the beginning of this year create a management entity for the country’s development corridors, with as its main functions coordinating and bringing together the different interests involved in this sector.

According to Notícias, the government hopes to implement a corridor manage-

ment body to add synergies and stimulate the necessary reforms to turn the corridors’ potential into real productive opportunities.

The Minister of Transport and Communications, Mateus Magala, expressed satisfaction with the determination of all stakeholders to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of development

corridors, through the implementation of projects structuring rehabilitation, expansion and modernization of railway and port infrastructures in Maputo, Beira and Nacala.

As a result of this work, Mozambican ports and railway lines are recording records in terms of cargo handling, attracting ships with deeper drafts, never before docked in the country.

Mozambique, Malawi, and Zambia signed agreements for the Nacala Corridor management



Mozambican President, Filipe Nyusi, and his Malawian and Zambian counterparts, Lazarus Chakwera and Hakainde Hichilema, signed three agreements on Saturday for the management of the Nacala Corridor, in the northern Mozambican province of Nampula. The rail corridor runs from the port of Nacala to landlocked Malawi and Zambia, and is regarded as a backbone for regional economic development.

These agreements, signed at the reopening of the rehabilitated, expanded and modernized infrastructures of the local port, budgeted at 249 million US dollars financed by Japan as a soft loan, are part of the Southern African

Trade and Connectivity project. Work on expanding and modernizing the port of Nacala began in 2018. This will increase its cargo handling capacity from 100,000 to 252,000 containers per year. Overall, the port will have a handling capacity of more than ten million tonnes per year.

Nyusi urged that the signing of the agreements aim to strengthen the corridor's operations and foster development in the region.

"These agreements represent the introduction of a new paradigm in the management of the Nacala Corridor, in a tripartite approach to the concerns of economic agents, ensuring integrated mechanisms for the continuous move-

ment of people and goods", he said.

These mechanisms, Nyusi said, also aim to reduce transport costs and transit times in order to improve the competitiveness of the Nacala Development Corridor, thus making it more attractive to its users.

For the Malawian President, whose country uses the Port of Nacala to import and export products such as fuel, clinker, wheat, fertilizers, rice, and vegetable oil, among other goods, the port and railway are key infrastructure for Malawi's connectivity with the region and the world.

Chakwera has no doubt that the infra-

structure is boosting economic growth in the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region and facilitating the flow of goods from Malawi, Zambia and northern Mozambique through the Nacala corridor for export to various parts of the world.

These countries are connected via rail systems from northern Mozambique, through Malawi, to Zambia, via the Chipata-Mchinji rail section, with a road link as well.

“The importance of the port is shown by the economic development it continues to generate in the region, generating efficiency in the transport of goods, people and services. I’ve been here before and it’s nice to see the development that the port is generating with the increase in its cargo handling capacity. That’s why Malawi will continue to be at the center of all the activities around this port”, said the Malawian leader.

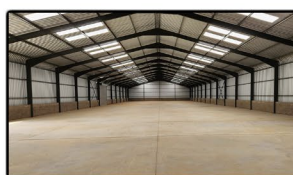
For his part, the Zambian President, Hakainde Hichilema, said “The port has been improved and this is important for the three countries, because of the role it will play in structural development projects. This shows the importance of this corridor for the hinterland countries. With this initiative, we will increase our imports and exports in the region”, he said.

According to Hichilema, importing and exporting will become more efficient and effective, and could generate benefits for the region’s economies, given how large the port has become today.

He urged the government to make the same investments in the port of Beira, in Sofala province, an infrastructure that also plays an important role in hinterland trade. He was also grateful to Mozambique for the projects that help connectivity between the two countries, giving the example of the new Mapu-

to-Lusaka route, launched by Mozambique Airlines (LAM), which in a short time is already showing signs of rapid growth in terms of passenger demand. Japan’s deputy foreign minister, Hosaka Yasushi, said that his country considered it important to develop the Nacala Corridor, as a regional route that will increase connectivity between Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia.

“The port of Nacala is the gateway that connects the countries of the Southern African hinterland to the Indian Ocean and one of the best natural ports in East Africa. Japanese businessmen are also very interested in the port and the joint public-private mission sent in May this year also visited the port”, said Yasushi. hinterland to the Indian Ocean and one of the best natural ports in East Africa. Japanese businessmen are also very interested in the port and the joint public-private mission sent in May this year also visited the port”, said the diplomat.



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Newly launched SCA Container Tippers Enhance the Efficiencies of Containerised Bulk Handling



Specialised Container Agencies (SCA) designs and manufactures a wide range of containerised bulk material handling equipment that ensures safe and efficient off-loading from both rail wagons and road trucks. Key advantages of this equipment include improved productivity, product protection, and lower operating costs in container handling.

Included in the locally-manufactured SCA portfolio are SCA Container Tippers for fast unloading of open-top containers, of either half or full height; the Big Tipper – a 12 m Elevated Container Tipper Frame (ECTF) and the 4-Way Tipper – a versatile tipping frame compatible with most 6 m/20 ft

skeletal trailers. Also in the range are Intermodal Side Tipper Bins for quick off-loading of materials from rail wagons and road trucks and Side-Tip Reception Feeders that receive bulk materials directly from tipping trucks and loading shovels.

“SCA specialises in the design of containerised bulk material handling products for high-speed, heavy-haul, and intermodal functions for both road and rail infrastructure. Although the company supports the global initiative to move freight transport from road to rail, we believe in a combination of the benefits of rail and road transport,” says Ken Mouritzen, Director, of Specialised Container Agencies. “Key advantages

of rail infrastructure over road transport, include less long-haul bulk traffic on national roads, resulting in reduced congestion and decreased wear of road surfaces. Other benefits are improved safety for drivers and cargo, decreased road-related freight emissions, and reduced insurance premiums throughout the logistics chain.

“The robust SCA Container Tippler has been developed for the efficient unloading of containerised material from open-top containers. This advanced system allows for fast and efficient engagement, unloading, and repositioning of closely spaced ISO-sized open-top containers, from the road or rail transport wagons. Once the container

is safely engaged, the control system takes over full functionality to lift, unload, and reposition the empty container, without the need for operator intervention.

“This bulk material transport system, which ensures ease of loading, handling, and transport by either road or rail, enables traditionally locked-in markets – including mining and production sectors – to deliver material batches to terminals for export.”

To overcome the shortcomings of existing container tippers, SCA specialists focused on designing a dependable tippler system that could accurately engage an ISO-sized open-top container, closely spaced on either a road or rail wagon. It was critical that the tippler could safely lift the container, rotate it, and unload the material at a predetermined position. The system further had to be able to engage, lift, unload, and reposition either half-height or full-height containers at a rate comparable to dedicated bulk material handling systems, like wagon tippers or bottom dumpers.

The basic concept of the SCA Container Tippler system is based on advanced technologies, where the container tippler grab is aligned relative to the container twist-lock pockets, by long travelling of the complete assembly, relative to the container position. This can be done for both half-height and full-height containers. The container tippler engages the container twist-lock pockets of the container to be unloaded, using a mechanical grab assembly, which clears the adjacent containers. This design allows for the safe engagement of closely spaced containers on road or rail wagons.

The SCA Container Tippler lifts full containers through counterweight as-

sisted pivot drive assemblies while keeping the container orientation horizontal, with the help of a dual-tip cylinder arrangement. Once fully retracted, the tip cylinder is locked in position, which allows the container to commence the tip process, while being supported on grab support beams.

With the container in a 90-degree position, the material can flow from the container into the chute assembly, which guides it into the receiving bin. To complete the tip process, tip cylinders are extended and pulsed to finalise the emptying of all stored materials from the container into the receiving bin. On completion of the unloading process, the tip cylinders and pivot drive assemblies orientate and return the empty container to its original lift position.

SCA plans to soon launch a new fully-mechanised tippler system, with automatic container position detection, engagement, unloading, and re-positioning. The company provides technical advisory and support services throughout the African continent, as well as internationally.

Specialised-container-agencies-sca-container-tippers-efficient-containerised-bulk-handling... three.

Additional information

Other equipment includes the SCA 4-Way Tipper, which can easily tip in four directions – front, back, right and left – of any bin, container, or accessory with a standard 6 m/20ft ISO container bottom interface, by simply locking any two of the four corners or hinge points of the frame. This machine, which is a versatile tipping frame that uses a simple ‘plug-and-play’ standard air and hydraulic interface, complies with legal road limits in terms of weight and height.

The SCA Big Tipper, with a modular tipping frame, has been designed to tip a 12 m container, with a gross mass of up to 32 000 kg, 50° to one side. This ECTF is a fully functioning unit and does not require any external electric or hydraulic systems to function. An elevated, loose-standing frame facilitates the tipping of any container or accessory with a standard 40 ft. ISO container bottom interface. This system also reduces unloading time and fuel costs as the truck is easily maneuvered to the correct position to off-load, requiring less space to operate.

SCA Intermodal Side Tipper Bins are easily moved onto and off container rail wagons and road trucks by container handlers, without the need for the investment in double-handling cargo.

These side tipper bins can be stacked four-high for storage, increasing payload on rail wagons, from 54 metric tons to 60 metric tons. In areas that are not fully serviced by rail, the Intermodal Side Tipper can be loaded onto road transport, for closed loop, short-haul operations. Road vehicles are then used to carry the tipper bin containing bulk material to the railhead. This means cargo can be received at non-rail serviced facilities, for example in mine terminals and ports.

SCA's tracked or wheeled Side Tip Reception Feeders for road and rail side-tip vehicles, receive bulk materials directly from tipping trucks and loading shovels, providing a buffer storage capacity and a controlled rate discharge. This system, which is a flexible alternative to traditional underground hoppers, is installed above ground, with no need for deep pits and costly civil engineering works. A wide belt design means any material can be reliably conveyed without the risk of bridging or blockage.



Namibia takes another Giant leap towards Becoming a Regional Logistics Hub

The maiden export of Namibian and South African-grown table grapes from the Walvis Bay harbour marked a significant milestone in Namibia's pursuit of becoming a regional logistics hub. The event on Wednesday signalled Namibia's commitment to economic development and poverty alleviation in the region.

During the event, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Namibian Ports Authority (Namport), Andrew Kanime, stressed the importance of extending the company's focus and market beyond Namibia's borders to landlocked neighbouring nations. He stated that Namibia had set a courageous goal of becoming the logistics hub for the region as part of its overarching intent for economic development.

"This marks a great and historical occasion for the Namibia Grape Company, the Namibian logistics industry, Namport, and our entire country. To effectively compete for the landlocked regional market, we must present a

value that justifies being the ports of choice and the logistics hub for the region," he said.

Kanime stated that the essential components of a competitive logistics hub include efficient, cost-effective, and extensively connected ports, a responsive support infrastructure, and a supportive regulatory environment. He stressed that a cost-effective and efficient end-to-end logistics value chain would determine the choice of trade corridors and ports.

He pointed out that it was not sufficient to rely solely on patriotism, and if the Namibian logistics industry could not meet the requirements of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, it could not expect clients like the Namibian Grape Company to use Namibian ports for export to international markets. For years, Namibian-grown grapes had been transported to Cape Town for export to Europe due to perceived uncompetitiveness in terms of costs and logistics efficiency.

However, the vessels that transported these grapes from Cape Town to Europe passed through Namibian ports on their way, highlighting the missed opportunities for the Namibian logistics sector. Kanime acknowledged that the Port of Lüderitz had attempted to handle these exports in the past but faced high costs that made it unsustainable.

He stressed that Wednesday's occasion was an opportunity to showcase Namibia's ability to cheaply, competitively, and efficiently deliver goods.

Kanime commended Namibia's role in rescuing neighbouring ports under operational strain and called for meticulous delivery at the lowest possible cost for the 2023 grape export season to support the home-grown logistics sector.

He also stressed the need for unity in the Namibian logistics chain.

"A single weak link could result in losses. Namport is, however, up to any challenge," Kanime stated.



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