

Gateway to West Africa

An ambitious country offers lucrative investment openings throughout its robust economy

With a strategic location in West Africa, the Republic of Senegal offers Chinese investors a wealth of golden investment opportunities that are fueling robust economic growth and driving strong socioeconomic development.

Rich in natural resources such as phosphate and iron ore, the ambitious country of 12.6 million people provides investors with a business-friendly environment supported by strong legal and regulatory frameworks and political, social and economic stability.

Famous for its hospitality, Senegal is situated on the continent's westernmost tip and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and countries including Mauritania, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and the Gambia.

With more than 500 kilometers of coastline, Senegal is a major maritime hub between Africa and the Americas, while its tropical climate, golden beaches, diverse wildlife, beautiful landscapes, and UNESCO World Heritage sites act as a magnet for large numbers of foreign tourists. Together with the agriculture, manufacturing and service industries, these sectors are the core ingredients of the Senegalese economy.

Since taking office in April 2000, the President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, has overseen the implementation of a broad range of pro-business measures aimed at attracting large numbers of foreign investors to this corner of the continent. These initiatives include the privatization of public companies involved in the delivery of vital utilities such as water, energy and transport, as well as increased private sector competition in other areas.

Senegal is not only one of Africa's most stable democracies, the nation also boasts one of the region's largest economies and has formed positive partnerships with many other countries in West Africa and beyond. With a skilled labor force and a vast range of investment incentives, Chinese investors are invited to take advantage of Senegal's close economic and cultural ties with China.

A key member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAMEU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOW-



Minister of Economy and Finance
Abdoulaye Diop

For more than a decade, Senegal has embarked on a policy of new reforms to create a world-class business environment that will attract significant FDI to our country."

ABDOULAYE DIOP
MINISTER OF ECONOMY
AND FINANCE

AS), Senegal celebrated 50 years of independence from colonial rulers France in 2010. Through ECOWAS, manufacturers, investors and service providers in Senegal benefit from regional economic integration with access to a huge market of more than 200 million consumers.

Goods produced in Senegal enjoy privileged access to the lucrative US and European Union (EU) markets though trade acts like the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This duty-free access to the vast US market has boosted exports of a wide range of products, especially textiles and clothing, that are shipped direct to ports located on the US West and East coasts.

Given its rich terrain and favorable climate, Senegal is also a producer and exporter of agricultural goods such as peanuts and fish. Total exports for 2010 are estimated at \$2.12 billion, up around 10 percent from the previous year. Meanwhile, total imports, including food, beverages and capital goods, were expected to reach \$4.47 billion, up slightly on 2009.

Senegal and China have enjoyed favorable political, cultural and trade relations for several years, with ministers, advisors and business executives meeting on a regular basis to explore mutually-beneficial issues.

During a two-day State visit to the bustling capital, Dakar, in February 2009, the President of China, Hu Jintao, spoke highly of Sino-Senegal ties and expressed appreciation for Senegal's support of the "One China" policy.

Following talks with President Wade and senior government ministers, President Hu pledged his commitment to Senegal's continued development through economic and cultural cooperation.

The Chinese President Hu's successful visit ended with the signing of several cooperation documents, including an "Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation". This important agreement acts as the platform for the further strengthening of bilateral relations and aims to boost levels of investment and positive cooperation in key sectors.

Earlier this year, Chinese Vice-Premier Hui Liangyu met with President Wade and outlined the way China can help build hospitals, roads and regional stadiums.

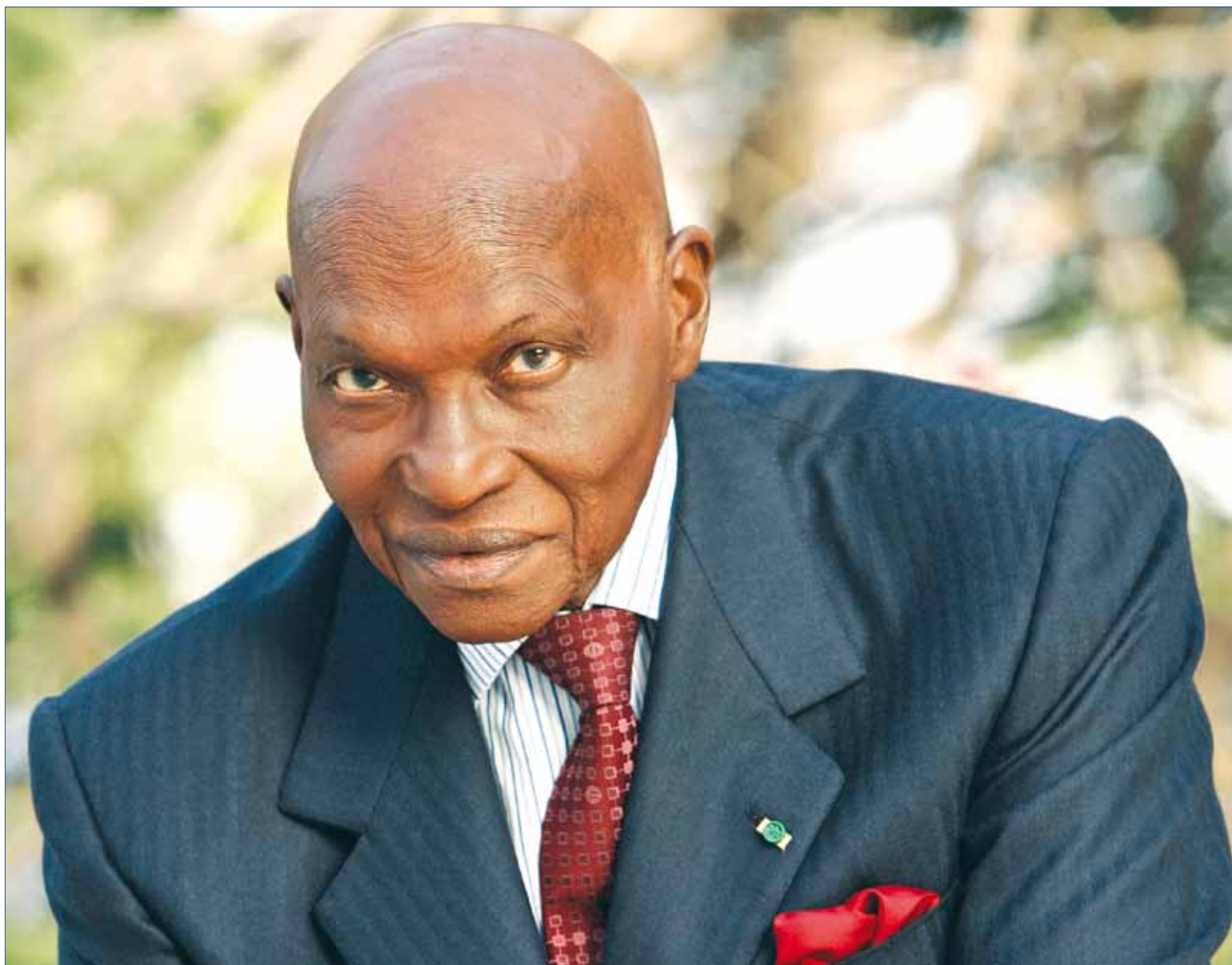
A great time to invest

In recent years, China has invested tens of billions of dollars in African countries, including Senegal. This injection of capital has attracted major foreign investment, created jobs, generated taxes for higher government spending and improved living standards, as the country strives to eradicate poverty.

"I wish to send a clear message to Chinese investors: It is a great time to invest in Senegal," President Wade said.

"There are two reasons for this positive outlook. The first is the fiscal incentive and the fact Senegal does not tax companies' profits for many years. The second is that we put a great emphasis on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the key areas of agriculture, energy, tourism, education, health and infrastructure, including airports and roads, in order to attract foreign investors."

Many of these crucial projects are designed, overseen and funded by Senegal's Ministry of International Cooperation, Air Transports, Infrastructures and Energy (MICATTI). Karim Wade, an experienced and dynamic corporate finance professional who has worked in Europe's leading financial capitals, Paris and London, is the man credited with generating much of the Min-



President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, has played a pivotal role in driving the African nation's socioeconomic development through pro-business policies.

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PRESIDENT OF SENEGAL

istry's success.

MICATTI's showcase project is the eye-catching new Blaise Diagne International Airport on the outskirts of Dakar that will boast an initial capacity of 3 million passengers per year, almost double the capacity of the capital's current main airport.

"Senegal has a unique geographical position on the main routes of international trades, especially between China and West Africa," he said. "We need to capitalize on this competitive advantage by ensuring Senegal has the appropriate infrastructure systems to be a player in world trade. Our political stability combined with our recent economic performance allows us to be the hub of the region; the gateway to several countries."

Minister Wade detailed new large-scale air, sea and land transport infrastructure projects and highlighted the role they will play in supporting the major new trade and commercial hub: Dakar Integrated Special Economic Zone (DISEZ).

"This new free zone will serve as an Africa-China trade center. DISEZ gives Chinese companies a unique opportunity to enter Africa and establish a foothold. The continent is booming and we have a positive rate of growth. There is a growing need for affordable, quality products of all types; China is a major supplier and will fulfill our market needs. We need skilled people to contribute to our nation's well-being.

"China has always been an economic role model and Senegal continues to open its door to Chinese investors wishing to establish businesses in Africa."

China is Senegal's third largest source of imported products — behind France and the UK — with the African republic importing billions of dollars worth of Chinese-manufactured goods each year.

President Wade, who has received praise from respected international observers for his sound and sustainable economic policies, highlighted Senegal's progress in many impor-

tant areas, including the reduction in fiscal deficit from 4.6 percent of GDP in 2008, to 5 percent in 2009.

"The government of Senegal is committed to modernizing Senegal from a structural point of view," he said. "This means reform of the judicial system, fiscal reform, health and public administration reform, and education reform. These are not just cosmetic reforms; they are really going to the bottom of the problem with the purpose to solve all negative aspects, abuses in public spending and inequalities, in order to have a very concrete way of allocating public resources."

Strong investment code

Private sector development is at the forefront of government policy, with Prime Minister, Souleymane Ndéné Ndiaye and his team of ministers particularly keen to secure funding for projects in the energy, financial services, transport, water and sanitation sectors.

President Wade continued: "Senegal has opened its markets to foreign investors and created an investment code which gives the same privileges to all investors. An investor entering the Senegalese market does not pay tax for between 5 and 10 years. In addition, a company that pays tax in China will not pay taxes in Senegal."

As a result of the global economic crisis and sharp rises in oil and food prices, Senegal's annual economic growth slipped to around 2.2 percent in 2009 but was expected to rebound strongly and jump by 4 percent in 2010 and 4.4 percent during 2011.

Like other developing nations, Senegal receives funding, advice and support from major global organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Both institutions are working on poverty-alleviation projects and social programs focused on the health, education, energy and sanitation sectors.

The government is pursuing a prudent fiscal and debt policy in

order to maintain macroeconomic stability, increase public and private sector spending on key infrastructure projects, enhance fiscal transparency, stimulate private sector growth, and attract significant investment from China and other developed countries around the world.

In November 2010, the Senegalese government sent a comprehensive report to the IMF detailing its fiscal strategies and economic policies for the country's short, medium and long-term socioeconomic development. The detailed report contained a firm commitment to the scaling up of infrastructure projects to improve the nation's competitiveness and boost exports of goods and services. Funding for these ambitious investment plans and projects will come from a range of sources, including international donors and foreign investors.

The following month, IMF Executive Board Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair, John Lipsky, outlined how Senegal plans to become an emerging market economy through strong, sound and sustainable growth.

"The Senegalese authorities are to be commended for the satisfactory implementation of their economic program under the Policy Support Instrument (PSI)," he said. "Economic growth recovered in 2010 and is expected to strengthen further in 2011. Significant progress on the policy front has been made and the authorities are committed to pursuing further reforms to address the important challenges that remain."

"Policies under the successor PSI will focus on increasing economic growth and improving resilience to shocks to help Senegal meet its development and poverty reduction objectives. Macroeconomic stability will be maintained through sound fiscal policy. Measures to increase revenues and improve the quality of spending will help create fiscal space for more priority spending, including infrastructure investment."

Lipsky concluded: "Key structural reforms under the program include consolidating gains in public financial management and strengthening public investment planning and debt management."

"To reap the full benefits of additional investment and unlock the

economy's growth potential, the program focuses on improving the business climate, supporting better governance and promoting efficient energy and financial sectors. These reforms will help address key bottlenecks to growth and create a business-friendly environment conducive to private sector development."

Banking sector grows

The banking and financial services industry is playing a leading role in the development of the Senegalese economy, with the number of financial products available to investors, commercial enterprises and individuals, expanding at a rapid rate.

"For more than a decade, Senegal has embarked on a policy of new reforms to create a world-class business environment that will attract significant foreign direct investment (FDI) to our country from leading nations such as China," said Abdoulaye Diop, minister of economy and finance. "In the financial sector, these reforms have led to a consolidation of the regulatory framework; restored the solvency of banks, and increased profitability."

"Combined with political and macroeconomic stability, they have created lots of business opportunities, particularly in Dakar's financial sector that is seen as a gateway to the WAMEU."

"Lately, many new banks that are subsidiaries of large foreign groups have arrived. Foreign nationals have taken stakes in some banks to establish a strategic presence in the Senegalese banking landscape, while also consolidating their international position."

Minister Diop said he is upbeat about the financial sector's future and its role in attracting fresh FDI. "I'm very positive about our financial sector in relation to foreign investment, especially given its contribution to the rehabilitation of the economy and the vital role banks play to support FDI in other prominent sectors," he stated.

"In terms of innovation and the modernization of business practices, the financial sector has improved the quality and quantity of banking services available to businesses, investors and individuals in Senegal."

InFocus provided the story.

Chinese shine a light on Senegal's energy future

Ministers plan to diversify Senegal's energy sector to reduce its reliance on oil imports

Senegal's energy industry is at the core of the government's infrastructure modernization program. Ministers are pursuing a policy of energy diversification as they look to reduce the country's heavy reliance on oil imports for electricity production.

Officials want the power industry to switch to other fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas and are also seeking foreign investors to finance and develop renewable energy technologies, such as bio-fuels, solar and wind power.

Senegal is a net importer of crude oil and refined oil products that increase the economy susceptible to sharp rises in global oil prices.

To alleviate this susceptibility, the government has developed an eight-point "Major Energy Strategy" to tackle the range of problems facing the national electricity company, Senelec, find proper solutions and overcome challenges.

As part of the power industry overhaul, Senelec will be restructured, with the recovery plan for the sector implemented and monitored by industry experts and professionals. The measures, which will be introduced over the next four years, will boost capacity, improve efficiencies, and ensure the sector's financial health.

The government wants the industry to strike a better balance between supply and demand, and adopt a pricing policy that may require reforms to current pricing legislation and regulations. It is determined to increase generating capacity by 100 megawatts in the short term through a series of construction works.

Through a major Sino-Senegalese deal signed in October 2006, China is spending \$71 million on the construction of a major energy plant in Dakar. The project will boost electricity supply and capacity in the capital by 2015.

Other major energy projects in the pipeline include wind farms at Taiba Ndiaye and Saint Louis that will generate an extra 125 megawatts and 15 megawatts of electricity, respectively.

In addition, a solar power station due to be built at Ziguinchor, will boost capacity by 7.5 megawatts, while a state-of-the-art bio-mass facility at Ross Bethio will generate an extra 30 megawatts of power.

The energy strategy's key points

include the increased use of hydro-power and greater regional cooperation, particularly in the river basin area and with other members of the West African Power Pool (WAPP).

Through this impressive regional cooperation, Senegal is actively involved in the development of energy trade with neighboring countries through the integration of various power generation projects along key rivers. The realization of these local and regional projects over the next four years will drastically increase Senegal's electricity capacity and is certain to leave its appeal among foreign investors.

Modernization program

This progressive energy network improvement plan follows the success of an ambitious modernization program for the 2006-2010 period when Senelec boosted production capacity and expanded distribution networks.

These new power plants included modern facilities at Kounoune and Kahone capable of producing 120 megawatts of electricity. During the past decade, Senegal has made significant strides in rural electrification programs through a combination of heavy investment in efficient technology and the formation of PPPs.

This progress is illustrated by the fact that in 2000, only 7 percent of Senegal's rural areas were electrified, but by 2010 that figure had more than tripled to 22 percent.

Several major rural electrification programs will start later this year and push that figure even higher, while the government recently introduced an initiative giving local authorities more control over electrification projects.

The Senegalese government has also succeeded in strengthening transmission and distribution networks as it looks to improve general living standards and drive economic growth.

One such project, funded by China, involved the installation of 29 kilometers of fiber-optic cables in Dakar. The multi-million dollar project will secure the power supply to the capital by improving service quality and operational flexibility. It will also generate increased savings and efficiencies for government-owned Senelec as the new technol-



Minister of International Cooperation, Air Transports, Infrastructures and Energy (MICATTI) Karim Wade

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MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION,
AIR TRANSPORTS,
INFRASTRUCTURE & ENERGY

ogy will drastically reduce energy losses.

The comprehensive industry blueprint aims to secure the supply of local oil by strengthening local processors, increasing supply logistics, improving cooperation and relations with oil-producing nations, and developing storage facilities for refined petroleum products and butane gas.

Rural electrification

The strategic plan is also designed to ensure that energy infrastructure can be adapted to meet the needs of public and private sector companies, give greater control of energy demand, and improve energy efficiencies and governance of the sector. In addition, the strategy underlines the importance of electricity to an area's socioeconomic development, particularly in rural areas.

Power projects, rural electrification works and improved energy services play a crucial role in com-



PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Senegal is investing billions of dollars in key new infrastructure projects with the help of foreign investors such as China.

mercial and social activities. To meet the plan's goals, Senelec is investing huge sums in an ambitious program of emergency rural electrification of more than 400 villages.

Because electricity production and distribution problems have applied the brakes to Senegal's economic and social development, ministers have designated the sector's development an urgent priority.

Chinese collaboration

With the help of foreign investors and financial institutions, the government plans to pump billions of dollars into the power sector to ensure the rapidly growing demand for electricity is matched by an increase in production capacity.

Minister of International Cooperation, Air Transports, Infrastructures and Energy, Karim Wade said: "This rise in capacity is a key priority and, as an emerging country in the sub-Saharan region, Senegal will benefit from the added value these major developments will generate."

Minister Wade acknowledged China's expertise and vast experience of energy matters and revealed positive negotiations with Chinese enterprises interested in contributing to the power industry's development had recently taken place.

"We have held discussions with several Chinese groups who wish to

help us develop our energy sector. We already have some Chinese companies working here that are mainly involved in upgrading the transport and distribution capabilities of our national power company."

The Wade Formula

In March 2010, Minister Wade and Gong Yuanxing, Chinese ambassador to Senegal, put pen to paper on a major agreement for the

sions with Chinese firms about a solar energy project worth \$128 billion. This project would be profitable for Senegal since the country needs more power generation."

Despite unfavorable conditions and high oil prices in recent years, Senegal has recorded a series of significant achievements. These include the "Wade Formula" that was invented by President Wade.

The formula aims to counter the

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modernization and expansion of the electricity grid in a Dakar suburb.

The project involved the construction of about 500 electricity substations and the installation of 350 kms of underground cabling, plus the purchase and installation of 100,000 pre-payment meters for consumers.

President Abdoulaye Wade, who is the coordinator of energy issues for West Africa development group ECOWAS, said: "I have held discus-

negative impact of oil price rises on African economies. It uses 3 variables to ensure economic stability. The variables comprise: excess profit from oil firms operating in Africa, royalties or revenues from the oil-producing African nations, and the oil import surcharge paid by non-oil producing African states.

InFocus provided the story.

New transport infrastructure projects drive growth

Transport networks are being constructed to speed up business and boost efficiency

The modernization of Senegal's transport infrastructure is one of the government's top priorities, with officials investing billions of dollars in new roads, highways, bridges, airports, railways and rolling stock, plus port facilities.

With the help of international investors from the public and private sectors, as well as international organizations that promote development in Africa, the dynamic nation is rapidly improving its road and rail networks as it gears up for further economic expansion.

Given the importance of the country's highways — up to 90 percent of passenger and freight journeys are made by road — the foundations for Senegal's present and future socioeconomic development most certainly lie in its road network.

Public investment in the roads sector tripled in the 2000 to 2008 period compared to the 1993 to 2000 period. Regional towns and cities are now better connected to the capital, and massive urban projects have improved the quality of life for countless people.

China has played a prominent role in the rehabilitation of existing roads and the creation of safe new highways that can handle the large traffic volumes created by the tens of thousands of cars, buses, lorries and trucks that use the roads daily.

In addition to designing, plan-

ning and constructing these new highways, Chinese enterprises have financed a large number of projects, and Chinese-made machinery and technology has been utilized during all phases of the construction cycle.

Many of the impressive projects have not only improved efficiency levels and raised living standards for the general population, they have also attracted foreign businesses and facilitated trade with import and export partners in countries throughout Africa and

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around the world.

"The infrastructure sector is the basis for improving economic competitiveness. This is the basis for sustainable development because, ultimately, it comes to mobility, a major thrust to eradicate poverty," stated President Abdoulaye Wade. "We need to construct tens of thousands of kilometers of roads made from higher quality materials. Like all infrastructure projects open to foreign bidders, our transport-related tenders are published in China, the US, and Europe. I invite China

to participate in these very important projects and enjoy Senegal, its skilled workforce and high level of expertise."

Current major road-building programs include the construction of a major toll road between Dakar and the new Blaise Diagne International Airport. This important new wide-lane highway will ensure businessmen, tourists and workers can reach their hotels or luxury resorts faster than before.

Road and rail projects

In a clear sign of the progress made, a 2008 government study showed that nearly two thirds of Senegal's classified roads are in a "good" or "average" condition, compared to just 30 percent in 2000.

The challenging target is for 90 percent of roads to be in satisfactory condition by 2012. This ambitious goal forms part of a comprehensive five-year highways improvements strategy that will be supported by foreign governments, organizations, donor agencies and

private investors.

Priority projects include:

- Rehabilitation of the road Rufisque-Bambilor-Mboro-Lompoul
- Completion of the Passy-Sokone corridors, Niore-Gambia border
- Development of the road Touba Toul-Tivaouane Khombole
- Rehabilitation of the road Touba Dahra Linguère and Louga-Dahra

In addition, the government has identified the main Dakar-Bamako rail corridor as an "important axis of development and economic liberation" for Senegal's trade relations with Mali. Further improvement works to the Port of Dakar will also be carried out.

"The combination of the port and airport will make us a major hub of international trade and economic exchanges; Senegal will have the advantage of being connected to major markets," said Karim Wade, minister of international cooperation, air transports, infrastructures and energy (MICATTI).

"Our objective is to build highways north to south from Dakar to Mauritania, and east to west. These projects will help Senegal take advantage of its excellent geographical position."

Mining sector open

Meanwhile, Senegal's mining industry has attracted millions of dollars of investment from foreign companies over the past few years. Rich in minerals like phosphates, iron ore and marble, the industry



Major new roads and highways are being constructed throughout Senegal.

has embraced the Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) method of project financing.

BOT projects are popular in Africa as they enable a company to construct a building, network or facility in return for a concession. This concession then enables the firm to recover its original investment, as well as the operating and maintenance expenses created by the project.

"China is very interested in our mining sector because the sector's potential is massive," stated President Wade. "I was recently contacted by a Chinese company that wants to extract and manufacture our marble."

"We own significant amounts of phosphate and require the involvement of Chinese investors to take advantage of these mutually beneficial opportunities. Senegal wants its Chinese

friends to invest in such growth sectors; we welcome Chinese investors with open arms."

China and Senegal further cemented their close cultural bonds in March 2011 when President Wade announced Chinese construction companies had won the coveted contract to build the magnificent new "Seven Wonders" complex in Dakar.

The eye-catching arts and cultural center will cover 10 hectares of prime real estate and feature a national theater, school of fine arts, national library, concert hall and art museum.

The large family-oriented center, which is expected to attract leading international artists and thousands of tourists, will also house an art school and feature an attractive museum of African history.

InFocus provided the story.



Work on the stunning new Blaise Diagne International Airport on the outskirts of Dakar is proceeding at pace.



PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

The eye-catching airport will be the operational headquarters of the country's new flag carrier, Senegal Airlines.

Lifting Senegal and West Africa to new heights

Two-phase construction of Blaise Diagne International Airport now well under way

The jewel in Senegal's transport crown, Blaise Diagne International Airport (Blaise Diagne) is one of the largest and most ambitious infrastructure projects in the country's history, with the state-of-the-art facility set to become the new gateway to the nation and West Africa.

Spread over more than 2,600 hectares, the \$400 million airport meets all international safety and security standards and will replace the limited capacity Léopold Sédar Senghor International Airport at Dakar-Yoff.

The old airport currently serves as the main entry and departure point for foreign visitors to Senegal, but senior public and private sector figures have expressed their satisfaction with the pace of construction work at the gleaming new airport, which, according to official forecasts, will serve as many as 5 million people per year by 2025.

Following the January 2011 launch of new government-owned aircraft operator, Senegal Airlines, the new Blaise Diagne aviation facility marks a further milestone in the nation's journey to economic prosperity and civil development.

The flag carrier will use the new airport as its main base and operational headquarters, as will sister airline Air Teranga that is due to begin operations later this year. The low-cost carrier will focus on domestic destinations across the country.

Senegalese ministers and business leaders believe the construction of a modern airport is crucial for consistent socioeconomic development and that it sends out a positive signal to international investors that Senegal is stepping up to the world stage.

President Abdoulaye Wade is confident the multi-million dollar facility will act as a powerful magnet for fresh investment from China and beyond.

"As Senegal prospers and the revitalized private sector becomes the principal employer, investor and economic actor, so our magnificent

new airport and Port of Dakar will become two of the core pillars of our economy," he said. "We will see soon the deployment of Senegal Airlines' networks to Europe, the Middle East and North America.

"Our ambition is to make Senegal Airlines one of the leading companies in Africa, offering the best service on all its destinations. It will be a key instrument for the development of tourism, commerce and industry and enhance the prominence of Senegal in West Africa and the continent."

Located east of the capital, close to the busy tourist beaches, Blaise Diagne is expected to become the region's leading air traffic hub, with major airlines providing direct and connecting flights to cities across Europe and the Americas.

Our magnificent new airport and Port of Dakar will become core pillars of the economy."

ABDOULAYE WADE
PRESIDENT OF SENEGAL

Among the leading airlines currently offering services to Dakar from destinations around the world are: Air France, Alitalia, Iberia, TAP, Condor, SN Brussels, South African Airway and Lufthansa Cargo.

Phasing in construction

The new airport is being constructed in two phases. Work on the first phase of the project began in April 2007 and includes the construction of a runway that can handle 25,000 planes per year.

The attractive new terminal will have an annual capacity of 3 million passengers and freight capacity of 53,102 tons per year. The second development phase is a medium

to long-term target that will start once Phase 1 passenger capacity is reached. The final phase comprises the building of a second runway and all related airside and non-airside facilities capable of handling 10 million passengers a year.

Creating opportunities

Designed by industry experts and financed through a combination of public and private sector funding, Blaise Diagne will be operated by a local subsidiary of German airport management company Fraport AG and its consortium partners.

Fraport was awarded the coveted 25-year contract following a highly competitive international bidding process. Subsidiary Daport SA will handle all terminal, flight, retail and real estate operations, with the airport expected to create hundreds of new jobs for local people. Of the 2,400 workers constructing the airport for leading Saudi Arabian company, SBG, at least a quarter live in villages surrounding the site, with many others residing in nearby urban areas.

"Major investment in important new infrastructure such as Blaise Diagne will turn Senegal into a major international hub from a business and tourism perspective," said Karim Wade, minister of international cooperation, air transports, infrastructures and energy (MICATTI).

"The technologically-advanced airport and comfortable and modern airline will make Senegal a major aviation force in Africa and internationally."

In order to ensure regional airports located near towns and cities can handle the arrival of new domestic carrier Air Teranga, government officials plan to upgrade several existing regional facilities and construct new airports. "We are currently in discussions with a Chinese company about the possibility of improvement works to 15

regional airports," added Minister Wade. "These important works will provide a significant boost to Senegal's domestic air transport infrastructure as we prepare for the future launch of Air Teranga."

These long-awaited airport improvement projects herald a bright new dawn for Senegal's aviation industry, with expanding ground and terminal operations

The potential purchase provides extra evidence of the determination to establish an efficient national airline following the poor performance and eventual 2009 demise of its predecessor, Air Senegal International.

"The operational efficiency and passenger comfort offered by the Airbus fleet will enable Senegal Airlines to prosper and grow into a major player in the African aviation

popular with art lovers thanks to its many galleries, artists' studios, outdoor art events and activities, museums, and festivals.

The welcoming city is also a shopping paradise and exquisite crafts produced by craftsman skilled in traditional ways are sold in markets, on the streets, and in stores.

The Port of Dakar is one of Africa's busiest ports for cruise liners, with

Combined with Blaise Diagne, Senegal Airlines will allow us to showcase our beautiful and ambitious country to the world and boost tourism and business development."

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MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, AIR TRANSPORTS, INFRASTRUCTURES AND ENERGY (MICATTI)

backed up by the launch of Senegal Airlines. The new airline is the result of a strategic partnership with award-winning Dubai based-flag carrier Emirates. The UAE-headquartered airline recently pledged its commitment to Senegal through the launch of a non-stop route between Dakar and Dubai.

Commercial aviation operations will be further enhanced by major changes to ground maintenance procedures and improved monitoring of aircraft equipment. A new service and repair center designed to international standards has been established in Dakar to meet the increasing demands of the domestic and regional market.

"Senegalese law firm EMA Industries was established in partnership with EAS Industries to enable national and foreign operators to have a high level technical workshop for the maintenance of their aircraft," President Wade confirmed. "Along similar lines, the creation of a new aviation training center will provide civil and commercial aircraft operators with qualified technical personnel"

In November 2009, the government signed a letter of intent to buy a six-strong fleet of Airbus planes worth \$750 million for Senegal Airlines. The 4 A320 family aircraft and 2 A330 planes would transport passengers to destinations on several continents.

market and become a key partner in the economic development of our country," said Minister Wade following the signing of the potential order. "These various initiatives will continue to be strengthened and improved so that the national aviation sector can fully play its role as a vehicle for growth and economic development engine of Senegal."

He continued: "Combined with Blaise Diagne, Senegal Airlines will allow us to showcase our beautiful and ambitious country to the world and boost tourism and business development."

Building up tourism

As part of the government's drive to diversify the economy and take advantage of Senegal's rich heritage, and natural and cultural assets, ministers are exploring ways of developing the fledgling tourism industry.

Senegal has several UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Gorée Island in Dakar Harbor that was used as the point for the millions of slaves shipped to the New World.

Dakar today is a vibrant and safe city that has something for people of all ages. The city is especially

visitors to the bustling city of 2.8 million people offered duty-free shopping and excursions to many local places of interest. Luxury hotels, golf resorts and beachside accommodations provide an ideal base for leisure activities, such as horseback riding, swimming, and aquatic sports.

With many tropical rainforests inhabited by rare flora and fauna, Senegal is eager to cash in on its natural beauty and expand the selection of eco-tourism packages available to foreign visitors.

One of its most popular eco-tourism destinations is the small archipelago called Saloum Delta Islands. Situated near the border with The Gambia, the tranquil coastal and marine park is a natural paradise teeming with bird and marine life.

"We have at least two competitive advantages in fishing and tourism, which offer huge potential to foreign investors," said President Wade. "Many Chinese enterprises are already active in Senegal's economy, and well placed to take advantage of the opportunities created by an under-developed tourism sector."

InFocus provided the story.

Ministry of International Cooperation, Air Transports, Infrastructure and Energy (MICATTI)

Immeuble Tamaro, Rue Mohamed V x Jules Ferry
PO Box: 23592 Dakar Senegal. www.micatti.gouv.sn



Built at a cost of \$400 million, Blaise Diagne will eventually be able to handle 10 million passengers a year.



Situated around 40 kms from Dakar, the airport will provide direct and connecting flights to Africa and the world.

Port of the Future: An ambition on the move

Expansion work begins next year to upgrade West Africa's busy and historic port

Already one of the largest ports in West Africa, the Autonomous Port of Dakar is undergoing major infrastructural expansion as it aims to become one of the most important industrial centers in the region.

Handling 95 percent of Senegal's foreign trade, the port is a privileged partner of the domestic private sector and plays a vital role in regional integration as the gateway to the landlocked countries of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Thanks to exceptional nautical conditions related to its geographical location, the medium-sized, deep-water port is able to host all types of ships and traffic, including container ships, cargo vessels, carriers, tankers, fishing vessels, ore tankers, and cruise ships.

In an average year, the full-service, split site, port handles around 8 million tons of cargo, including around 3 million tons of liquid bulk (made up of refined hydrocarbons, crude oil, 391.5 phosphoric acid, oil, and gas products, sugar cane, bitumen, caustic soda, chemical products, and wine) — and almost 3 million tons of containerized cargo. It also handles 2.2 million tons of solid bulk, including clinker, BLE, sulfur, coal, attapulgite, rice, and fertilizer. Other

and growth in facilities, the port is a key factor in the country's socio-economic development.

Bara Sady, general manager of the Port of Dakar, said: "President Abdoulaye Wade has a clear vision which translates to the building of a modern airport, highways with tolls and an efficient port to add to our existing infrastructure."

"In 2005, these elements gave birth to our visionary project for the port, which has several chapters that contribute to this modernization. As part of this, my management team is currently positioned to complete the Port of the Future. This major work will rehabilitate and expand Jetty 2 and build a terminal road for vehicles," he said.

Port of the future

DP World, a leader in international marine terminal operations and development, logistics and related services, has been entrusted to carry out the works for an investment cost of. Work is scheduled to begin next year.

This new works marks the latest in a long line of developments for the port and the city of Dakar, which, in its colonial heyday, was one of the major cities of the French Empire,



General Manager of Autonomous Port of Dakar Bara Sady

people, with a strong commercial and financial center.

Attractions include major markets, Dakar Grand Mosque (built in 1964), Dakar Cathedral, Gorée Island, the African Arts Museum of West African culture, the newly completed African

Renaissance Monument, cliff-top walks and beaches, and Hann Park, which is home to Senegal Zoo.

As well as the port, the well-connected town is home to the Léopold Sédar Senghor International Airport. It is also the terminus of the Dakar-Niger railroad line.

When the Port du Future project is complete, the port manager hopes to see exponential growth in the shipping traffic beyond 1.5 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) promotion of the port's activities and performance, a transfer of international know-how from Dubai firm DP World, and a substantial improvement in the port's finances.

Quality and safety

The Port of Dakar has been awarded several quality standards and prides itself on its top-level security record. Given the level of competition in the region, Sady wants to assure customers of an even better service:

"I am committed to delivering quality," he said. "Significant investment in security in recent years means we have a very secure harbor with an electronic monitoring device."

In order to ensure our port remains efficient and safe, we are



Port of Dakar: a thriving center of commerce for the West African region.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

working on the implementation of a program to extend our container terminals to a size of nearly 300 meters. For this, we will need further development in terms of equipment, technology and so on which requires massive investment.

"The construction of a third berth will result in the filling in of the basin between the TAC and Jetty 8. The objectives are simply to increase the areas dedicated to container traffic (8 additional hectares), increase the quay by 300 meters, enhance the capacity of host-based platforms to — 13 meters and improve productivity by the presence of gates. We also need a platform of 21 hectares long with warehouses that will have a capacity of 800 meters squared (approximately 50 000 tons).

"I invite all potential investors to come and take look at all possible investment opportunities in this sector."

Mali connection

The Port of Dakar manager is also

working to complete a dry port in Bamako, Mali, which will have a total of 14 cold storage warehouses including 2 reefer warehouses. This project will facilitate all transport of goods between Dakar to Mali.

"We have about 1200 kms of road and railroads, therefore 65 percent of all international departures are going to our neighbor Mali," said Sady. "To carry out these projects, we have launched an investment program focused on opening the PPPs to all foreign investors."

Message to China

The Port of Dakar manager had the following message for potential Chinese investors:

"I would like to convey a strong message to our Chinese compatriots in order to take advantage of

the efficiency of the Port of Dakar. Our infrastructure has all the necessary equipment, labor and technology to ensure the smooth running of all commercial exchanges that occur between Senegal and China.

"As general manager of the Port of Dakar, I wish to clarify that the port is not only an open door to the Senegalese market, but rather to all 16 of the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) member countries which represent a potential market of more than 210 million consumers.

"I invite all Chinese businessmen to enter the Senegal and take advantage of all the business opportunities our country offers."

InFocus provided the story.

Port Autonome de Dakar, 21, Bd de la Libération
BP 3195 Dakar, Sénégal
Tél: +221 33.849.45.45 Fax: +221 33.823.36.06 -
pad@portdakar.sn.



Our infrastructure has all the necessary equipment, labor and technology to ensure the smooth running of all commercial exchanges that occur between Senegal and China. The port provides an open door to more than 210 million consumers."

BARA SADY
GENERAL MANAGER OF THE AUTONOMOUS PORT OF DAKAR

solid bulk cargoes included corn, urea, gypsum, and Jonah crabs. On top of that, the port handles around 1.3 million tons of transit and 800,000 tons of transshipments.

Access conditions are very favorable, with the routes clearly marked and regularly dredged. With the ever-increasing passage of goods

home to offices, mills, breweries, refineries, and canneries, attracted by the port and rail facilities.

It was also strategically important to France, which maintained an important naval base and coaling station in its harbor.

Today, Dakar is a thriving cosmopolis of more than a million

Tourists soak up rare natural and cultural treasures

Tropical paradise seeks Chinese visitors and investors in bid to become a tourism hotspot

Famous for its lovely climate, golden beaches and broad range of natural and cultural delights, Senegal has been a popular destination for millions of European and American tourists for more than 30 years.

The welcoming country is now hoping to repeat this outstanding success in the lucrative Asian travel market and is inviting Chinese tourists and investors to tap into the sector's rich potential.

From a relatively small industry that started with the introduction of the first Club Med resort in the 1970s, tourism has grown to become an important part of the Senegalese economy through foreign exchange earnings.

Over the last couple of decades, Senegal has made a major effort to attract visitors from outside its traditional strong markets of France and Belgium.

Natural places of interest include the Sine-Saloum Delta, the Grande Côte (north of Dakar), the Lac Rose, and the Senegal River, while the present and former capital cities — Dakar and Saint Louis — guarantee visitors a warm welcome.

Unfortunately, the impact of the global financial crisis and increased competition from rival destinations in North Africa, like Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, have resulted in a drop in tourist arrivals to Senegal in recent years.

According to recent figures put together by industry groups, around 500,000 foreigners visited in 2010, with that total expected to slip again this year due to a combination of external factors — like higher oil prices — and internal factors such as lack of investment in tourism infrastructure.

However, with the opening of the

new Blaise Diagne International Airport later this year or in early 2012, and the recent launch of Senegal Airlines and expected arrival of domestic carrier Air Teranga in the near future, that downward trend should soon be reversed.

Statistics compiled by the government paint a far rosier picture and earlier this year, tourism officials unveiled figures showing a 62 percent year-on-year rise in foreign visitor numbers to the southern province of Casamance.

Natural beauty shines bright

Given its vast natural and cultural wealth, Senegal rightly considers itself one of the safest and most beautiful countries in Africa, with the tourism industry seeking large sums of fresh FDI in order to take

Our aim is to turn Senegal into the most preferred destination on the West African coast."

IBRAHIMA SARR
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF
THE NATIONAL TOURISM
PROMOTION AGENCY

advantage of these unique assets.

Ministers are keen for Chinese investors to exploit the nation's untapped potential through the building of hotels and launch of new tours and companies catering to Chinese guests and foreign visitors.

Driving developments across the sector is the National Tourism Promotion Agency (NTPA) — a govern-

ment-run organization that arranges trade events and shows on the world stage to highlight Senegal's natural and cultural treasures.

"Senegal is only five hours' flight time from some of Europe's greatest capital cities and only seven hours from the US," said NTPA Director General, Ibrahim Sarr. "Senegal has lots to offer tourists from those continents as well as visitors from major nations across Asia, including China."

"Our aim to turn Senegal into the most preferred destination on the West African coast. We have several hundred kilometers of wonderful coastline with beautiful sandy beaches and a great climate that provides sunshine all year-round."

"When combined with our famous hospitality and diverse range of scenery that offers unforgettable tours through gorgeous savannah, lush tropical rainforests teeming with animal and bird life, and the stunning Lompoul Desert, you can see why Senegal most certainly has a winning formula."

According to Sarr, Senegal offers something for everyone and satisfies the needs of all types of travelers. "We have nature reserves and wildlife parks that are home to West Africa's largest mammals; more than 400 bird species; a rich and varied culture; and monuments such as the African Renaissance — built at a cost of \$28 million and unveiled in April 2010 — and the wonderful 1,800 seat Grand Theater built and funded by China."

"All these natural, cultural and historical attractions are supported by a broad range of tourist facilities such as hotels, hostels and restaurants, all of which meet international standards of comfort and quality."

"I encourage Chinese travelers and people from across Asia to discover and enjoy all the memorable adventures and experiences Senegal has to offer and urge them to come and sample our legendary 'Teranga' welcome."

Maritime trade key to exports

Given the country's extensive coastline and waters rich in fish and marine life, Senegal's maritime sector is a leading source of government revenue, employment and foreign exchange earnings.

The fisheries sector alone involves tens of thousands of people, while the maritime industry comprises more than 20,000 businesses and enterprises of varying sizes.

Maritime transport also plays an important role in the development of commercial trade between Africa and other regions of the world. The sector holds an important position in terms of strategic national reforms for sustainable economic development and has been earmarked for reform by President Abdoulaye Wade and his team of ministers.

"The Senegalese government is making a huge effort to grow the economy and focusing on prominent sectors like fisheries and maritime activities," said Khouraiichi Thiam, minister of maritime economy, maritime transport and fisheries.

"The fisheries sector represents



Senegal's dramatic coastline. The National Tourism Promotion Agency (NTPA) is charged with driving the country's tourism industry forward.

about 30 percent of total exports, while the maritime sector contributes greatly to our economy and generates around 70,000 jobs through direct and indirect employment. My ministry controls the exploitation, production and export of fish and ensure the promotion of such products by encouraging their export."

Minister Thiam explained his team of staff is also responsible for promoting and monitoring the development of fish farming in Senegal, as well as the careful management and environmental protection of the nation's seabed. In addition, his ministry plays a vital role in domestic and regional shipping issues and trade exports made via established shipping routes.

"We need to establish rules and quotas in order to avoid destroying or impoverishing the natural marine environment," he said. "My ministry is the official representative of Senegal in all international meetings on fisheries and fisheries agreements."

"We are introducing many reforms to encourage businesses in the sector and boost the economy."

InFocus provided the story.

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an adventure waiting to be explored

Agence Nationale de Promotion Touristique Lot N 4 Almadies - Route des Almadies
- Ngor. BP: 29 843 Dakar Senegal | Tel: +221 33 869 59 80 | Fax: +221 33 869 59 84