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## **Auction nets over \$40 million for AIDS in Africa**

Contemporary art collectors opened their wallets on Thursday and shelled out \$42.6 million at a Valentine's Day charity auction spearheaded by rocker Bono and British artist Damien Hirst to benefit the fight against AIDS in Africa.

The \$42,584,300 total easily eclipsed even the highest expectations of about \$29 million for the sale, which Sotheby's said was among the biggest single charity events in history. Proceeds from the sale were earmarked for the United Nations' Global Fund's fight against AIDS in Africa in conjunction with Bono's "Red" brand, wherein products from major corporations including Apple, the Gap, Microsoft and Hallmark have generated \$58 million for AIDS.

Five Hirsts were among the top 10 lots in the sale, which also set 17 artist's records. Sotheby's lowered its commission for the auction and made no profit, using the 10 percent fee to fund the event's costs and donating any remainder to the U.N. fund. Many but not all of the 83 works on offer were specially created for the Valentine's Day auction and were rendered in vibrant shades of red, or used the color as a thematic element.

*Source: Reuters Africa, 15 February 2008*

## **South Africa expresses readiness to assist Algeria in the nuclear domain**

The South African ambassador to Algeria, Mozofikili Makitoka showed his readiness to make Algeria benefit from his country's experience in the domain of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. This is taken within the framework of strengthening the bilateral ties between both countries, notably within the NEPAD.

Talking in the forum of "Al Moudjahid" on Tuesday the ambassador who took office five weeks ago, insisted on fostering cooperation between Algeria and South Africa to extend it to the sector of energy to secure the continent's self sufficiency in this field.

The ambassador announced that the final touches of this agreement will be put during the next meeting due to take place in Algeria bringing together the joint committee of both countries. South Africa is encouraging developing countries to acquire the nuclear technology since the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) guarantees this right.

Both Algeria and South Africa are exchanging their experienced in the military field, though the ambassador pointed out that this is a complicated issue, he nonetheless revealed that the biggest South African arms factory "DENAL" has a subsidiary in Algeria.

*Source: Echorouk Online, 13 February 2008*

## **Experts to discuss African land issues**

An Experts Group Meeting (EGM) on Land in Africa targeting African government representatives involved in the preparation of the sixteenth United Nation Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD-16) opens at the United Nations Compound in Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya from 21-22 February 2008, according to a statement from UN-HABITAT.

The meeting is funded by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), an international network that aims to establish a continuum of land rights and develop pro-poor land management and land tenure tools.

GLTN has identified land rights, records and registration together with land administration/information as two of its key themes in developing pro poor land tool. As an interna-

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## **Experts to discuss African land issues**

tional network, GLTN has developed joint-partnerships with a range of partners including FAO, World Bank, IFAD and FIG. The EGM is benefiting from inputs from United Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The meeting provides a forum for exchange to take the land agenda forward.

*Source: UN-HABITAT*

## **Bank Group participates in discussions on Greenbelt**

The Bank Group participated in a two-day meeting of experts and the Ministerial Conference on the Great Greenbelt and the inland basin project, which took place from February 12-13, 2008, in Saly Portudal, Senegal. The great greenbelt is an initiative of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) that has been endorsed by the African Union and it is part of NEPAD's environment action plan.

The initiative is a 15km wide greenbelt stretching from Dakar to Djibouti and it contains wildlife that has been chosen for its ability to adapt to drought and can serve the region's economic interest. Besides its wildlife units that are capable of developing production systems, the initiative also includes a network of inland basins and other basic social infrastructure.

The meeting aimed at identifying the greenbelt path and defining its structure and components, especially the fauna and flora. It also examined the role of the inland basins in the implementation of the Great Greenbelt, examined the terms of reference for the design of the greenbelt project document, and estimated the project cost and financing modalities.

*Source: AllAfrica.com, 14 February 2008*

## **Leadership key in continent's growth**

The team leader of the African Peer Review, Prof. Shadrack Gutto, has said that Africa would not grow if the present attitude of leadership is not changed. Gutto who is also of the University of South Africa decried the situation in which Africa remains poor inspite of being one of the richest continents.

He made this known at a stakeholders' interactive session in Jos. He revealed that what the APR was aimed at was to stop leaders in the continent from seeing leadership as an avenue to loot state treasury and plunder their country's resources. He said this had informed the thematic areas that formed the basis of their review to include democracy, and political government, socio-economic and corporate governance.

Gutto decried the continuous contradiction of how a rich nation remained poor and suffered leadership crisis, adding that Africa take her destinies in their hands in order to grow.

He urged Africans to re-orientate themselves and learn from their past, because very little had been learnt by most countries in the continent. He said it would be difficult to review a country that does not want to be reviewed and insisted that beyond the review there has to be a concerted effort to make the APR a source of strength rather than weakness.

*Source: Leadership (Abuja), 13 February 2008*

### **UPCOMING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY:**

**3-23 February:** APRM Country Review Mission for Uganda.

**21-22 February:** Expert Group Meeting Land for Sustainable Urbanisation in Africa (UN-Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya)

**27 February:** 1st US-Africa Tourism and Sports Seminar (New York)

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**DID YOU KNOW?** The first pan-African satellite worth \$380M is due for launch. It is considered a turning point for the development of the continent in the sectors of new technologies and telecommunication, to a number of problems that Africa suffers from. The project was co-financed by continental and regional banks. The main aim of the project is to spread the telecommunications network into rural areas on a large scale and at low costs. Furthermore, the satellite will lower the costs for interconnectivity of networks within Africa. At present, African telecoms operators pay a high transit cost to foreign satellites that provide linkage between the different networks. The implementation of this project will therefore realize savings of millions of dollars currently paid out annually to satellite operators outside the continent as well as the lowering of costs for telecommunications end-users across the continent. **For more information:** [http://www.africanews.com/site/list\\_messages/1728](http://www.africanews.com/site/list_messages/1728)