

Renewed hope for Lesotho and Madagascar

ADDIS ABABA - African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina, held several high-level bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union. Adesina met with His Excellency Andrei Rajoelina, President of Madagascar and His Majesty Letsie III, King of Lesotho.



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Madagascar

With President Andrei Rajoelina of Madagascar, discussions focused on issues relating to energy, infrastructure, job creation, agriculture and the Bank's support to the country's drive to accelerate development.

Adesina commended President Rajoelina for his recent election and vision for his country.

"There is renewed hope from the people of Madagascar and the international community in general and for this reason we would like the African Development Bank to be the country's first development partner," President Rajoelina said in response to Adesina.

Evoking challenges in Madagascar's energy sector President Rajoelina pressed for continued Bank's support, saying: "Our objective is to double the energy production capacity in five years. The country has great potential."

Adesina gave assurances that the Bank will continue to support Madagascar and extended an invitation to Rajoelina to attend the 2019 Africa Investment Forum scheduled for November in Johannesburg. He further encouraged the country to develop a solid pipeline of bankable projects to create investors' appetite during the forum.

Lesotho

Shortly after that, Adesina met with his Majesty Letsie III, King of Lesotho, ahead of the launch of the first continental nutrition accountability scorecard which will take place on 11 February on the sidelines of the African Union Summit.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to push for increased investment in "gray matter" infrastructure which is critical to overcoming Africa's nutrition challenges.

The bilateral meetings are part of President Adesina's agenda during the 32nd ordinary session of the 2019 AU summit.

Speaking at the high-level agriculture transformation scorecard side event chaired by Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, Adesina called for greater funding for agriculture and stressed the Bank's commitment to work with countries to improve agriculture as business through its various projects and initiatives.

The meeting was attended by African Heads of states, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and African Ministers of agriculture.

President Adesina wrapped up day one of his participation in the AU Summit with a dinner hosted by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

Adesina is expected to meet with the newly elected chairman of the African Union, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

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