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News Worth Knowing

The Daily Brief is taking a summer break from August 12 - August 23, and will be back on August 26.

Editor's note

Gabon on Monday secured \$341m in funding to [expand capacity at its Owendo port](#) in the capital Libreville. On the same day Namibia launched a \$268m expanded container terminal at its main port of Walvis Bay.

Both countries are part of surging investment into sea ports in Africa.

From Benin and Côte d'Ivoire, to Djibouti, Congo and Somaliland, countries are expanding port capacity to boost trade and economic diversification. [Morocco's Tanger-Med](#) port has just become the Mediterranean's largest, while Kenya is about to launch a [decades-long 'master plan'](#) to transform shipping and logistics.

Some of this is being driven by a mix of government spending, donor funding, and private investment from companies including France's Bolloré and Dubai's DP world,

But the game changer is China. According to [research by Deloitte](#) 52.8% of the billions Beijing has pumped into infrastructure in Africa since the turn of the century has gone to ports, shipping and logistics projects. These could add 85m tonnes of new annual capacity.

This has [predictably been criticised](#) as a neo-colonial ploy in the West, but is more about shifting trade patterns and China's strategic commitment.

The bottom line is that Africa sorely needs infrastructure to drive trade and investment. On a

continent usually associated with failed or underfunded projects, ports are a refreshing bright spot.

Today's picks

From the continent

Mozambique's ruling Frelimo party and former rebel group Renamo on Tuesday signed a deal formally ending years of conflict between the two. It's hoped that the agreement will provide stability needed to fast-track the development of vast untapped gas reserves. **More:** [AFP](#)

Zimbabwe's main opposition Movement for Democratic Change has said it is planning to hold anti-government protests next week over its failure to tackle a spiralling economic crisis. Pressure is mounting on president Emmerson Mnangagwa, who has failed to deliver on promises of a revival following the Robert Mugabe years. **More:** [Independent Online](#)

The Daily Stat

25%

The share of the world's population facing extremely high water stress - mostly in the Middle East and North Africa - according to new research. **More:** [World Resources Institute](#)

The Global Perspective

Credit ratings agency Moody's on Tuesday warned that South Africa's struggling state-run power utility Eskom urgently needs a turnaround to avoid collapse and stabilize the

country's debt. The comment by Moody's - the last of the big three ratings agencies that still has an investment grade rating for the country - sent the rand to a two-month low. **More:** [Reuters](#)

Pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline is handing over development work on three potential Ebola vaccines to the Sabin Vaccine Institute in Washington, D.C. despite an ongoing, and worsening outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo. The company insists the decision is not financial, and that continued work by Sabin could help prevent future outbreaks. **More:** [Reuters](#)
