Since March 25, 2020

Confederation of International Contractors' Associations (CICA)

Strategic Watch: COVID-19 Overview by country and region (situation at May 8, 2020)

Based on FIEC's COVID-19 Construction Observatory, FIIC's, CIAN's and MEDEFI's data

For more detailed information check out the CICA Website: http://www.cica.net/cica-covid-19-overview/ and Dropbox: https://www.dropbox.com/home/Observatory%20COVID-19

Country/Region	General measures	Measures for construction
WORLD		
World	DEVEX produced an interactive visualization aggregating funding in response to COVID-19. The International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) has published a "FIDIC Covid-19 guidance memorandum to users of FIDIC standard forms of works contract". FIDIC's core purpose of drafting this Guidance Memorandum is to help Parties to a FIDIC contract to consider mutually satisfactory solutions and avoid disputes arising between them. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects global growth in 2020 to fall to -3%. This is a downgrade of 6.3 percentage points from January 2020. Assuming the pandemic fades in the second half of 2020 and that policy actions taken around the world are effective in preventing widespread firm bankruptcies, extended job losses, and system-wide financial strains, the IMF projects global growth in 2021 to rebound to 5.8% (14 April). IMF policy tracker summarizing the key economic responses governments are taking to limit the human and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (03 April). The OECD has launched a new platform for COVID-19-focused analyses and data. The European Commission set out plans for an EU response to support partner countries' efforts in tackling the coronavirus pandemic. A global envelope of €15.6 billion is foreseen, of which €3.25 billion is earmarked for Africa. EU action will cover €2.1 billion for the southern neighborhood and €962 million for the Eastern Partnership countries as well as €800 million for the Western Balkans and Turkey (8 April). A report by the WTO Secretariat indicates that to date 80 countries and customs territories have adopted export prohibitions or restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report draws attention to the current lack of transparency at the multilateral level and the long-term risks posed by export restrictions for global supply chains and public welfare. Global trade is expected to record a decrease of between 13% and 32% in 2020. The forecast growth for the construction industry in 2020 has been downgraded to 0.5%, according to a Global Data report. Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 the data and analytics company Global Data had predicted that the global construction industry would see growth of 3.1%, up from 2019's 2.6%. The current forecast assumes that the outbreak is contained across all major markets by the end of the second quarter, following which,	

	conditions would allow for a return to normalcy in terms of economic activity and freedom of movement in the second half of the year. However, there will be a lingering and potentially heavy impact on private investment owing to the financial toll that inflicted upon businesses and investors across a wide range of sectors.	
EUROPE		
FIEC Countries	**FIEC COVID-19 - Construction Observatory (28 April)** **FIEC Impact of Covid-19 Crisis on Construction** **FIEC requests to the European Commission in support of the construction industry** **FNTP COVID-19 Situation of the construction sector in Europe (French)**	
United Kingdom	The British Government is considering a revision of the lockdown measures by May 7th. The Scottish Government has confirmed that grant funding will be available in the coming days for newly self-employed people suffering hardship as well as for SMEs in distress. The £34m (€38m) Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund, which will be managed by local authorities, will be allocated as £2,000 (€2288) grants to the newly self-employed facing hardship. This funding is intended for those that are ineligible for support from the UK Government (23 April). The Department for Business, Energy & Industry Strategy announced the implementation of a £20 M (€23 M) fund dedicated to the financing of innovation and research projects that can contribute to the resilience of the United Kingdom in the Covid-19 crisis and others potential crises in the future. This would involve, among other things, the development of new ways of work or the strengthening of the agri-food, transport and service industry (03 April) (cf. MEDEFI). A UK industry group is calling for changes to international rules to allow export credit agencies (ECAs) to provide 100% insurance cover for trade transactions, helping ease the pressure caused by the global spread of Covid-19.	**The British Chambers of Commerce has told PM Boris Johnson that the country's construction industry will need long-term support, following the easing of its current lockdown status. In an open letter to the PM, the Chambers' president laid out policy proposals for reopening the country's economy: The Government should not shy away from sustaining high levels of public spending in order to restart and renew the economy in the short and medium-term. An expansionary fiscal policy, including a commitment to transformative infrastructure investment, will be needed in order to generate the returns that will help to pay down the national debt in the longer-term (5 May).** **The UK construction industry is losing £301.5m (€344m) a day during the coronavirus lockdown and the gross value added (GVA – total value of goods & services produced) has fallen from £462.1m (€527,83m) per day from before the lockdown was announced on March 23 to £160.6 m (€183,45m) a day by the end of April – a decline of 65%. In Scotland, where all construction sites have been closed, GVA has fallen by 90% (7 May).** Sales of construction and earthmoving equipment in the UK saw a significant drop in the first quarter (Q1) of 2021, according to the Construction Equipment Association (CEA). CEA reported a 21.8% fall, compared with the same period in 2019, showing the dramatic negative impact of the Covid-19 crisis. With the UK's lockdown measures remaining in place for the time being, it is likely that April's figures will be equally depressed (28 April).

	Self-employed people unable to work due to government's lockdown will be able to claim taxable grants of up to £2,500 (€2827) per month (27 March). But now the National Federation of Builders (NFB) is warning that many of its members are likely to run out of money before the Treasury gets its act together to get the scheme started (2 April). Coronavirus action plan (03 March): a guide to what you can expect across the UK. Guidance for employers, employees and businesses during the pandemic • In the Budget (11 March 2020) the Chancellor announced a package of measures to provide support for public services, individuals and businesses to ensure the impact of COVID-19 is minimized; • A new Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, delivered by the British Business Bank, will enable businesses to apply for a loan of up to £5 million, with the Government covering up to 80% of any losses with no fees.	Market information gathered by the Builders' Conference suggests that UK construction firms are continuing to win new business during the Covid-19 crisis. The Builders' Conference has found that during the five weeks since the lockdown started, a total of 613 construction contracts have been awarded, which is however a 22% reduction on the previous five-week period (789 contracts) and a 31% reduction on the same period last year (884 contracts) (29 April). The Scottish Government has announced £10m (€11.5) in funding to support 'pop-up infrastructure' to help cyclists and pedestrians maintain physical distancing. The new infrastructure programme will cover new 'pop-up' walking and cycling routes or temporary improvements to existing routes (29 April). Major contractors now have nearly 70% of their construction sites in England and Wales back at work. The majority are construction (81%) and infrastructure (78%) sites, with members that include housing in their portfolios confirming that fewer than half of their housing sites (46%) are open for business. In Scotland, however, the regional Government is still taking a hard line of what constitutes essential work during the health crisis (29 April). The Scottish Government on public health has made it clear that work on construction projects should only continue if it is directly crucial to combating the coronavirus pandemic. Even essential projects can only continue operating if they can comply with guidance on social distancing, safety and welfare during the Covid-19 outbreak. A list of essential projects was published (08 April). Unite Scotland has called for all non-essential construction sites to remain closed and for there to be legislation on keeping workers 2m apart. The demand follows a virtual meeting involving its leading construction representatives across Scotland (24 April). After a four-week shut-down, some of Britain's biggest housebuilders are preparing to get back to work very soon. Most major housebuilders like Vistry and Taylor Wimpey started closing their sites after the Government announced the lockdown on 23rd March, and the suspension of all non-urgent work, to

		prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Sites have now been closed for four weeks (23 April). The Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSIC) has launched the i-Con initiative which consists of an online collaboration portal. CSIC is asking public and private sector organizations, trade associations and the wider construction sector to register their challenges arising from the current crisis on the portal. The challenges will be widely communicated in a bid to attract industry and academic experts to step forward with proposed solutions (16 April). March data pointed to the steepest downturn in UK construction output since April 2009 as emergency public health measures to halt the spread of Covid-19 led to sites closing and a slump in new orders. Civil engineering activity saw the steepest rate of decline in March, followed closely by commercial building work (06 April). **Construction activity in the UK now fell to a record low in April 2020 as the industry closed sites to arrest the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic (6 May).** According to the Unite union, which represents construction and other public service workers, highways maintenance operatives are being prevented from following social distancing guidelines (07 April). The Under-secretary of State for business has reaffirmed that house-building and other construction work must keep going to help the economy survive the devastation of the coronavirus pandemic (30 March). There is no direction to close construction sites and therefore it is expected that all contracted work will continue as per the agreed schedule. Unless the Government announce a force majeure is implemented or instruct construction sites to close, contractors are contractually bound to the contract. The UK's construction industry is seeking urgent clarification from Government (24 March) on what the new social isolation measures will mean for construction and building sites. An industry-government task force on COVID-19 has so far interpreted the new guidance to mean that not all activity needs to cease

		immediately. Despite another three weeks lockdown (17 April), most of the major contractors appear to be now back at work on many of their sites, heeding the government's call to keep the economy moving, while also trying to observe Public Health guidelines on social distancing. Although many majors, including Mace, BAM, Wates and McAlpine, have furloughed staff, there is evidence that the industry has started to move in the direction of reopening sites and resuming works. The Cabinet Office has confirmed that it is preparing guidance to public sector customers about how to deal with delay and disruption under public contracts, including force majeure claims. Industry will liaise with Cabinet Office to offer support in this work. The Construction Leadership Council (CLC) and leading sector trade bodies wrote to prime minister Boris Johnson outlining the immediate difficulties faced by the sector (17 March). The letter calls for: • Government to ask all public sector construction clients to continue to pay their contractors and supply chains; • Government to ensure all construction sites throughout the UK are able to remain open, as long as they are able to do so responsibly; • Government to consider implementing financial measures, such as the deferral of VAT payments. The Association for Consultancy & Engineering has also written to the prime minister outlining a series of immediate, short- and near-term measures: • A grant of up to £50,000 (€56,548) to SMEs in the sector to enable them to meet the digital requirements of working from home; • Acceleration of the pre-construction phase of government programmes, including schools, hospitals and roads, to mitigate the downturn in private sector work; • Turning the high-level commitment of an "infrastructure revolution" into a reality with a clear published pipeline of projects in the Autumn to stimulate the wider economy;

		• Providing tax incentives for the housebuilding sector and further city deals to devolved mayors to encourage private sector development.
Russia	**Russia reported an increase of 10,600 in confirmed cases – the biggest daily rise since the crisis began – and the figure for the entire country now stands at more than 145,000 cases (4 May).**	**A report from the Eastern European Construction Forecasting Association (EECFA) has revealed that, as confirmed cases of the Covid-19 virus soar, the government is insistent that construction projects remain on track. Only projects in Moscow and the Moscow region have been curtailed, where the largest number of virus cases have been recorded. EECFA reports that the construction industry is likely to be one of the hardest hit, with social distancing on construction sites extremely difficult to maintain. The Ministry of Construction is under pressure to develop an anti-crisis program for the industry, set to include subsidizing interest rates on mortgage loans to support demand for property, as well as credit and tax moratorium for developers and measures to reduce the cost of project financing. According to EEFCA, the government is also considering the possibility of having state-owned companies purchase unsold apartments from developers. Furthermore, until January 1, 2021 housing developers will not face punitive action, should the completion of residential building projects be delayed. In non-residential and civil engineering segments, as support measures, the Ministry plans to increase several government contracts and lift advances on those contracts from 30% to 50% (cf. Construction Europe) (5 May).**
LATIN-AMERICA		
Argentina	Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru have announced temporary expansion of some of their cash transfer and in-kind programs, and additional transfers to reach vulnerable people not covered by existing programs. Some financial intermediaries are postponing credit payments for the most vulnerable firms and households. To help business and household cash flows, Argentina (and others such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Paraguay and Peru) has announced the deferral or temporary reduction of certain tax payments, as well as temporary payment cancellations for selected public utilities or the suspension of social security contributions. Compulsory social isolation extended until April 26, 2020.	The Construction Workers Union of the Republic of Argentina (UOCRA) launched a new health protocol designed for Argentina's construction industry. The protocol was put up with the help of the Argentine Chamber of Construction and includes protection and prevention practices against COVID-19 issued by the World Health Organization and the country's Ministry of Health (16 April). The UOCRA Foundation manufactured 3D-printed facial protection masks which were donated to hospitals in Buenos Aires. The construction sector has been practically stopped at least until 31/03. Only essential works have been carried out such as expansion and improvement of hospitals. Construction activity has been very limited (around 20% still operational) due to the breakdown of the supply chain, local restrictions on the

		transport of inputs, difficulties in organizing work teams and very serious debt owed by the State to its contractors prior to the pandemic.
Brazil	On the supply side, activity has come to a halt due to containment measures but also disruptions in global value chains and imports of intermediate inputs. Central banks in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru have reduced interest rates or adopted liquidity measures to uphold domestic demand and facilitate business. However, the exchange rate pass-through to inflation makes these policies temporary and limited (cf. OECD). Closure of land borders with all border countries.	The commercial bank CAIXA intends to inject an additional BRL 43 billion (US$ 8.2 billion) to the real estate sector. The fund intends to avoid construction shutdowns and layoffs. This brings the bank's total credit provided to the sector since the start of the COVID-19 crisis to BRL 154 billion (US$ 29 billion). Currently, around BRL 35 billion (US$ 6.6 billion) has already been released (cf. BWI). Construction sites are not stopped, contrary to most of the country's activities but the effects of the coronavirus pandemic are causing major equipment manufacturers in Brazil to suspend operation, while work comes to a halt on thousands of projects in Colombia (6 April). The recommendations from the Brazilian Chamber of Construction mainly include measures for hygiene and distancing of personnel: • Teleworking; • reducing the number of people on worksites and sites; • prohibiting access to sites by people not working directly for the company.
Chile	The Government announced to mobilize fiscal resources of up to US$11.75 billion in the coming months, transforming itself into a package of economic and social measures, such as: • Reinforce the Health System Budget; • Employment protection allowing for the reduction of working hours; • Suspension of provisional monthly payments of income tax for companies for the next 3 months (providing up to US$2.4 billion for the next 3 months); • Postponement of VAT payment for the next 3 months for all companies with sales under UF 350,000 (US$11805,000) • Deferred payments of contributions for companies; • Relief measures for the treatment of tax debts for SMEs and people with lower incomes;	The Chilean Chamber of Construction (CChC) said the country's construction sector is facing a significant downturn this year because of the COVID-19 outbreak. The industry was already struggling following the social unrest in October last year. CChC is forecasting a 9% fall in infrastructure and a 13.2% decrease in housing. Similarly, the unemployment rate in the sector could exceed 12% by the end of 2020, equivalent to about 75,000 fewer jobs. The Chamber called on companies in the sector to intensify prevention measures on sites, in order to protect workers, employment and to avoid new stoppages. More than 350 projects have been suspended (7 April). The CChC proposes a protocol of action to maintain the health of the personnel who collaborate in construction projects: • Preventive isolation of the person suspected or confirmed to be infected;

	• All the expenses of the companies associated to face the sanitary contingency will be accepted as a tax expenditure.	• Guidance on what an employer should do in the event of a suspected/confirmed case of Coronavirus; • Guidance on what the employer should do for the proper handling of people who have been in contact with a confirmed Coronavirus worker.
Colombia	*Refer to similar economic measures as in Argentina and Brazil.* The IMF approved a successor two-year arrangement for Colombia under the Flexible Credit Line (FCL), designed for crisis prevention, of about US$10.8 billion (1 May).	Colombia is expecting construction to be one of the first sectors of the economy to be restarted from April 27, the day on which the mandatory quarantine decreed by President Iván Duque was to end. Colombia's construction industry employs 7% of the national workforce and generates 8% of GDP. Among the construction sectors being considered as part of the restart are contractors and the construction supply chain. Excluded will be non-professional builders, which will continue to be subject to the lockdown (27 April).
Costa Rica	**Economic measures taken:** • Law that allows for the deferral of the payment of some taxes (VAT and Selective Consumption Tax); • Law that allows for the reduction of working hours with a proportional reduction of wages and allows the employer to implement it by means of a unilateral decision. This applies for a period of three months, but it is possible to extend it to two more months under exceptional conditions; • Commercial banks should make credit conditions more flexible and improve them. There are legislative initiatives in this area but they have not been implemented yet.	There has been no halt or suspension of construction work. However, measures are being implemented to protect employees and prevent contagion. Works continue as usual for road infrastructure projects. A protocol is pending to be issued to address the cases of infected workers on work sites. For now, companies are following the recommendations issued by the Government authorities to prevent contagion.
El Salvador	Gatherings of more than 50 people prohibited. Access to the territory is prohibited for 30 days (as of 14 March) to all foreigners, except for residents and diplomats quarantined on entry. All persons arriving from abroad will be systematically placed in confinement. Airport San Salvador International Airport has been closed since 17 March 2020 for 15 days.	The construction industry is on halt, except for a hydroelectric power generation project and the construction of a new hospital that the Government wants to build to deal with the pandemic. There is currently a debate about who will pay for the employees (whether it should be the Government through Social Security contributions or the private sector itself). Concerning public works, the Government has called for the definitive suspension of all projects that have not begun to be implemented and the projects that are at an advanced stage should be suspended in their current state, since uncommitted resources will be frozen and redirected towards meeting the needs and priorities arising from the emergency (defined by the President).

		The construction chamber of Salvador, CASALCO, proposes a protocol of action to maintain the health of the personnel who collaborate in construction projects (13 March): • Raising awareness on enhanced hygienic measures (disinfection, washing hands); • Depending on the number of workers in a workplace, companies will establish staggered feeding schedules for their employees in order to reduce the number of people grouped together; • Isolation for contaminated workers; • Companies will ask their suppliers and subcontractors to comply with these measures in order to help prevent the disease in the workplace.
Guatemala	As of April 10th, Guatemala has reported 126 confirmed cases and three fatalities of COVID-19. On March 13th, the Government declared a State of Calamity. Through April 12, unessential activities in the private and public sectors are suspended, all national borders are closed, and a curfew (4pm until 4am) is in force (cf. IMF).	The National Trade Union of Construction and Services of Guatemala (SINCS-G) has reported that the Guatemalan Ministry of Labor and Social Security has approved a ministerial agreement, which authorizes employers to perform full employment contracts suspensions in all industries and allows suspensions to take place without compensation payments for workers. The Government said that the measure will only be temporarily implemented due to the nationwide lockdown it declared as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic (16 April) (cf. BWI).
Honduras	The Honduran Government has ordered the public and private sector (other than food chain industry, supermarkets, gas stations and pharmacies) to an absolute shut down (cf. Grimaldi Alliance).	The Honduran Chamber of Construction (CHICO) is dealing with the Government to allow for a gradual reactivation of the construction industry's works in rural areas for road maintenance. In this regard the CHICO has developed a guidance note to comply with the instruction of a gradual reactivation of construction activities.
Mexico	A state of health emergency has been declared. Non-essential activities are suspended and gatherings of more than 50 people are now prohibited. A slowdown in the United States will lead to a reduction in trade, foreign direct investment, tourism flows, and remittances. Key agricultural exports as well as trade flows through the Panama Canal could also be adversely affected by lower global demand. Local outbreaks will strain economic activity in the next quarter and aggravate already uncertain business conditions.	Mexico has extended until May 30 the social distancing measures. According to the Mexican Construction Chamber of Commerce (CMIC), about a fifth of its 12,000 members are at risk of closing permanently due to the halting of construction and building works. They are mainly SMEs located in the states of Nuevo León, Quintana Roo, Baja California Sur, Yucatan and Mexico City. Between March 13 and April 6, almost 19,500 construction workers lost their jobs, and CMIC assumes that this figure might be 25 times larger by the end of the month (23 April).

		According to European contractors, worksites have been closed by the Government for 1 month (2 April). Most activities and gatherings are suspended in over 60 local CMIC offices and central headquarters in Mexico, as well as training (ICIC), CMIC university (ITC) classes. The CMIC issued a containment protocol for Coronavirus on construction work sites including mostly • Raising awareness on enhanced hygienic measures • Preventive isolation of the person suspected or confirmed to be infected; • Minimize physical contact and increase the spacing of workers at all times, etc.
Panama	The IMF approved Panama's request for emergency financial assistance under the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) of about US$515 million. The pandemic has weakened Panama's macroeconomic outlook for 2020 and opened a balance of payments gap estimated at about US$3.7 billion (16 April). Closure of all social premises and companies which are not essential to the functioning of the country. Essential businesses/value chains entail: Food value chain; medications and hygiene products (e.g. pharmacies); safety equipment; construction materials (railways, production and distribution of gas tanks); veterinary and agricultural inputs; maintenance, operation and distribution companies of medical equipment; sea, air and haulage shipment logistics; restaurants (only to-go orders); fuel distribution companies; financial services.	According to European contractors, maintenance works can still be carried out. Civil engineering works are on hold. Companies within the concrete industry in Central America and South America are joining the effort against the Coronavirus pandemic by offering their help in various ways, including participating in public space cleaning operations. Cemex Panamá initiated this effort, which has now branched out to Cemex Colombia as well. Companies are using their mixer trucks to bring soap and water to public spaces where more intensive cleaning is required in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (1 April).
Peru	The Government will unleash a package of measures committing around 12% of Peru's GDP to it. It would be the largest rescue package on the continent, with some USD 25 billion in spending (10 April). Since March 16, President Martín Vizcarra has decreed a strict confinement of the population.	**With the lockdown measures implemented on March 16, construction works were suspended. Essential commercial activities however were allowed to operate (transport of supplies).**

ASIA		
China	According to MEDEF, corporate profits in the industrial sector declined by 36.7% in Q1 2020. Profits of state-owned companies contracted by 45.5% in Q1 2020, compared to 29.5% for private companies. The impacts on sector benefits are as follows in Q1 2020: oil and gas industry (-187.9%), metal materials, machinery and equipment (-84.3%), automotive (-80.2%) and chemicals (-56.5%) (29 April). According to MEDEF, the economy would operate at 82.8% of its normal capacity: 83% for large companies and 82.6% for SMEs. Per capita disposable income fell by 3.9% in the first quarter of 2020 to RMB 8,560 (USD 1,210). Government revenue declined in the first quarter of 2020 (-14.3%), but Government expenditure also fell by 5.7%. Concerning the Central Bank policy: The one-year and five-year Loan Prime Rate (LPR) rates were lowered to 3.85% and 4.65% respectively (21 April). Negative growth estimated at -6.8% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2020: the services sector contracted by 5.2%; the industrial sector fell by 9.6%; and gross fixed capital investment contracted by 16.1% (-24.5% in January and February) (cf. MEDEF). **According to the IMF, China's growth is projected to decline from 6.1% in 2019 to 1.2% in 2020. This sharply contrasts with China's growth performance during the global financial crisis, which was little changed at 9.4% in 2009 thanks to the important fiscal stimulus of about 8% of GDP (15 April).** Chinese exports fell by 17.2% in January/February while imports fell by 4% putting the trade balance in deficit by US$7.1bn. Euler Hermes estimates that China will lose US$108bn in merchandise export revenues, US$72bn in tourism revenues and US$10bn in transportation services, or a total of US$ 190bn in foreign revenues (cf. La Chine hors les murs).	The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), a quasi-governmental entity, has issued 5,637 Force Majeure certificates to exempt Chinese companies from their contractual obligations. Though not formally defined, 'Force Majeure Certificates' can be said to be certificates issued by trade councils or commercial chambers of different countries, to certify a particular event as a Force Majeure event. This has been rated as proactive and forthcoming step from the Chinese Government (4 May). The Ministry of Finance has increased the quota of special purpose bonds by US$140 billion to boost infrastructure (21 April). Infrastructure construction has accelerated across China in the past month as the Government invests to counteract the economic effects of the coronavirus lockdown. Data from the China Construction Machinery Association shows that excavator sales reported a 12% year-on-year increase. Meanwhile, the output of cement and steel rose, according to data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, reached 94% of its pre-coronavirus level. Demand in the construction industry has allegedly recovered to last year's level. However, outside China, the country faces a fall in exports as its trading partners suffer the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and international construction projects face delays (15 April). China has resumed construction on just under 90% of 'key projects' according to an official with the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) although this figure does not include the Hubei Province. All major railway projects have resumed operation, with 97% of major highway and waterway projects and 87% of airport projects also resuming construction (25 March). **Safety requirements have been implemented on construction worksites (use of masks, fever checks, tracking of the workers' journey). Tenders can be completed remotely, and operating licenses have been extended.**

	The State Council announces an extension until 2023 of tax benefits for credit institutions lending to VSEs, to self-entrepreneurs and private farms. The Asian Development Bank has revised its growth forecast for China downwards by 5.2 % to 2.3% for 2020 (9 April). According to information from MEDEF, Trivium China estimates that if economic activity returns to normal by the end of June, China's GDP growth should be around 2.9%. On the other hand, if the rate of recovery was 80%, GDP growth will become negative (-3,6%). China's exports went down by 17% in February. According to MEDEF, Trivium estimates that the Chinese economy was operating at 78.3% of its capacity (80.6% for large companies; 76.8% for SMEs). Industrial enterprises would be operating at 80% of their normal level (2 April). According to MEDEFI, 80% of French companies have resumed their works in China (6 April). The Chinese central bank announced a decrease in the required reserve ratio for business loan renewals, releasing CNY 550 bn (€70.6 bn) to support the economy. Chinese stock exchanges have implemented a series of measures to limit the volatility of commodity prices (oil, gold, rubber, palm oil, eggs, etc.). For example, the Shanghai International Energy Exchange has increased the margin call on its crude oil futures contracts to 11% (24 March). China has imposed quarantines and limited travel across the country to contain the disease. These restrictions are now being loosened and industrial activities start again.	According to MEDEFI, China is reportedly preparing a CNY 2,800 billion (US$ 394 billion) stimulus package to support investment in infrastructure and accelerate the deployment of 5G (19 March). The housing market continues to deteriorate (decline in sales volume of both commercial and residential properties). Construction activity has still been suffering, as a majority of long-distance travel between workers' homes and construction sites is limited. It is estimated that things will become normal in mid-April for the whole business and its activities. The spread of the coronavirus across Asia is putting the brakes on China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, with dozens of infrastructure projects slowed or halted entirely due to limitations on supplies and travel. With the growing impacts, managers of road, bridge, hydroelectric and communications projects across Asia are having to make do with limited staff and material resources. China's Belt and Road infrastructure projects in Africa appear so far to be less affected by personnel and travel issues, but still face delays and limited availability of construction equipment and materials.
Japan	In April, Japan provided an additional US$100 million contribution to the IMF's Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust as immediately available resources to support the Fund's capacity to	Major Japanese construction contractors Kajima Corporation, Obayashi Corporation and Taisei Corporation have all revealed that they plan to halt construction nationwide until early May in response to the expanded state of

	provide grant-based debt service relief for the poorest and most vulnerable countries to combat COVID-19. In order to provide emergency financing for broader emerging markets and developing countries, on April 16, Japan announced that it is aiming at doubling its contribution to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust from the current SDR 3.6 billion. Japan will make available the first SDR 1.8 billion immediately. Japan calls on other member countries to follow quickly, and Japan will match an additional SDR 1.8 billion with their contributions (30 April). The Japanese Government has expanded its subsidy program to provide companies with additional financial support to secure the employment and incomes of their workers. In addition, there are other measures, such as interest-free loans and subsidies, and a safety net guarantee scheme, to help workers address the financial constraints of the health crisis (21 April). As of April 16, 2020, the declaration of state of emergency is effective in all 47 prefectures across the country to prevent the further spread of the Covid-19. As of April 7, the state of emergency has only been declared in Tokyo and six other regions (Saitama, Kanagawa, Chiba, Osaka, Hyogo and Fukuoka). The declaration, which became effective the same day, will remain valid until at least May 6. Even under the state of emergency, prefectural governors do not have the legal power to enforce extremely restrictive actions. The economy was already weakened, and it is estimated that it will enter recession in 2020. The first two support plans of the Japanese Government are considered insufficient and a new recovery plan of up to 10% of GDP is expected (cf. MEDEFI). COVID-19 pandemic under control but increased health surveillance: any individual can be hospitalized or subjected to examinations by simple decision of the authorities (at the expense	emergency called by the Japanese Government over the COVID-19 pandemic. Kajima, which has about 700 construction sites across the country, said some projects may go ahead as usual if they are urgent (20 April). As of April 17, 2020, some of major construction companies (Shimizu Corp., Nishimatsu Const., Tokyu Const., Obayashi Corp. and Toda Corp.) have decided to suspend construction at each contractor's discretion after consultation with employers or clients. As of April 8, 2020, construction sites in Japan can basically be continued in spite of the state of emergency as long as they keep avoiding the 3Cs (closed spaces, crowded places, and close-contact setting).

	of the Japanese State). Entry ban for foreign travelers who have stayed in Europe, China, Korea and Iran within 14 days of arrival. The Government announced the basic measures for the emergency. • Preventing COVID-19 from spreading of infections (Teleworking, Flexible time commuting, Possible locking down of affected areas); • Responses for shrinking business activities and employment; • Emergency measures that adapt to situational changes including a new legislation for emergency response and responsive boarder control measures etc.	
Korea	**According to the IMF, downward revisions of economic growth are substantial, estimated at 3.5 percentage points in the case of Korea which however appears to have managed to slow the spread of the coronavirus while minimizing prolonged production shutdowns (15 April).** The National Tax Service announced an extension of the deadline to report and pay corporate tax for companies suffering from new coronavirus infection and an early VAT refund. Bank of Korea (BOK) carried out a reduction of the interest rate from 1.25 to 0.75% and provided 16, 7 billion dollars as a response to Covid-19. From 1 April, compulsory 14-day isolation period in an official center for all short-stay travelers (less than 90 days).	***Webinar by the French Chamber of Commerce in Korea on Korea's tracking strategy (including data privacy) in response to the Covid-19 crisis. The MOLIT (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation) participated in this response through a "Smart Management System" previously developed in the framework of their Smart City program.*** *Webinar by the French Chamber of Commerce in Korea on how Korea managed the COVID-19 pandemic so far on April 9, 2020 at 10am. (Paris time).*
Singapore	After first appearing to have brought the coronavirus under control on its shores, Singapore now faces a fresh crisis, with cases soaring almost exclusively among foreign workers. The health ministry reported a total of 11,178 cases on 23 April, up from 3,700 last week on 15 April, a rise of 202% (23 April). A nationwide lockdown had been announced (6 April).	**Most worksites stayed closed apart from some essential activities aimed to secure the safety measures on sites or to enable social distancing infrastructure.** From 20 April, 180,000 foreign construction workers were ordered to stay home until 4 May to halt transmission of coronavirus on sites. The Government is racing to build temporary accommodation both to decant uninfected men from the crowded dorms, where social distancing has been described as "impossible", and to house those who have fallen ill. Among these initiatives is a "mega

		temporary structure" going up at Tanjong Pagar Terminal supposed to house 15,000 workers. Singapore's early success in managing the Covid-19 pandemic is under threat from a sharp rise in cases in foreign-worker dormitories, leading to six more such facilities being locked down (15 April). The Ministry of Health (MOH) first locked down two dormitories, housing 20,000 workers – many of whom work in construction (5 April).
ASEAN	**ADB has approved a US$1.5 billion loan to help the Philippine and Indonesian government fund its novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response program and strengthen the country's health care system (24 April).** According to the OECD, most Southeast Asian countries have room for active monetary and fiscal policies. Nearly all countries eased their monetary policy stances. Some authorities intervened multiple times within one month - by cutting their benchmark interest rates, lowering required reserve ratio, setting up funds to facilitate lending to affected firms, temporary suspensions of loan principal/interest repayments, exclusion of loans related to the Covid-19 from the calculation of the non-performing loan ratio or the lowering of bank charges. Many countries also unveiled fiscal stimulus packages aimed at supporting businesses and households. The composition of the packages varied by country, but included financial subsidies, tax deferral and exemption as well as increases in direct spending. According to MEDEF, economic safety packages do exist especially in Malaysia (16% of GDP), but generally speaking the ASEAN countries' capacity to intervene is expected to be rather limited. Growth forecasts are on the decline according to the ADB and the World Bank with max 2% growth for Indonesia and 3-5% growth for Thailand due to the decline in tourism. The growth perspectives depend on the activity in China. China is ASEAN's biggest external trade partner and investor. In 2018, it had a share of 17.1% to	Malaysian unions call on Government and employers to do more to protect workers. For many workers simple hygiene advice is not practicable, especially for migrant workers, who live in closed quarters and cannot afford to access safety materials or hygienic supplies. More must be done to ensure that COVID-19 does not spread amongst those communities. The unions have also been among those that have called for the Government to recognize COVID-19 as an occupational disease to better protect workers' safety (27 April). Philippine worker unions call for faster and better aid to workers amid lockdown extension. They called on the Government to augment and expedite aid to workers after an extended lockdown lasting until 15 May was imposed on key areas in Luzon. The unions said that most workers have not received the government's promised aid, with the Government admitting that only 49% of the target beneficiaries were provided with minimal aid. The unions also expressed their disappointment over the Covid Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP), a financial assistance program for workers, which was abruptly abandoned due to lack of funds (cf. BWI) (27 April).

	ASEAN's total trade and contributed 6.5% to ASEAN's total FDI inflows. ASEAN's supply chains are also heavily integrated with China's manufacturing sector. Other countries significantly affected by the outbreak, including the US and the EU, are also among ASEAN's largest trade and investment partners (cf. OECD). Malaysia and Indonesia each surpassed the bar of 4,800 confirmed cases, while the Philippines has counted over 5,200 (14 April). Lockdown measures have been implemented (Malaysia, Indonesia: 16-18 March).	
South Asia	**India** **The ADB approved a US$1.5 billion loan to the Government of India to help fund its response to the novel coronavirus disease (28 April).** The Indian Government is extending its COVID-19 lockdown by two weeks starting 4 May due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in the country. This has given rise to a number of challenges, especially for workers in the informal sector (3 May). In March, exports fell by 34.6% and imports by 28.7%. However, the fall in oil prices was beneficial as India is a net importer. The rupee has depreciated by around 8% since January (cf. Crédit Agricole) (30 April). **According to Mc Kinsey, in the past six weeks, India's economy has functioned at 49 to 57% of its full activity level (7 May).** **As of May 7, there were over 50,000 coronavirus cases in India and over 1,700 deaths, according to latest health ministry figures. The lockdown in India has been extended till May 17.** On 24 March, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a 21-day lockdown of the country. The Indian Ministry of Railways has announced that the suspension of passenger railway operations	**India** **Construction output in India will decline by 1.7% in 2020 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, according to data and analytics company GlobalData. It is estimated however, that the industry will recover and continue to be supported by investments in infrastructure projects. The weakness lies mainly in the real estate sector being compounded by rising unemployment, declining remittances and a liquidity crunch with thousands of SMEs facing closures. (7 May).** The Indian Ministry of Finance has recently issued a clarification to all central Government Ministries that any disruption caused in supply chains due to the spread of Coronavirus will be considered as a 'natural calamity' under extent Force Majeure clauses. This may also give a relief to various institutions and industries working in close partnership with the Government. This has been rated as proactive and forthcoming step from the Government (4 May). Construction work in India has become to a standstill with the nationwide lockdown. A relief package to deal with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been announced. Allegedly, state governments have been directed to use the welfare fund among others for building and construction labourers to help those who are facing economic disruption because of the lockdown. The concern for the sector is that most of it has already been facing financial stress, shrinking orders and tight working capital. Now with the disruption in work, movement of labour and breakdown of the supply chain, recovery might be a

	will be extended until 14 April. Lockdown in India will face the following problems: • a huge informal economy, which makes it difficult to control lockdown; • the economy is already slowing down in 2019 (the Central Bank has already lowered its rates five times), the banking sector is very weak. **Pakistan and Sri Lanka** Pakistan and Sri Lanka received emergency aid from the China Development Bank and will probably require even more international aid. The IMF approved the disbursement of US$1.386 billion under the Rapid Financing Instrument to address the economic impact of the Covid-19 shock in Pakistan (16 April).	major challenge (27 March). **Merely power projects are seen as essential service and are allowed to operate.** **Six states (including Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu, which account for 30% of construction activity) rely heavily on migrant construction workers from other states. Bottlenecks in the return of migrants would affect building activity in such states (7 May).**
NORTH AMERICA		
Canada	Federal economic measures for companies in effect for 12 weeks, until June 6: • Workers can access the "work-sharing" program (employees agree to reduce their working hours and receive Employment Insurance benefits as income support); • Introduction of a wage subsidy for firms in difficulty (of all sizes and in all sectors). Subsidy of 75%of the wage bill. Companies will have to justify a 30% loss of revenue; • Flexibility for the payment of taxes: until August 31 for the payment of corporate taxes and until June 30 for GST and customs import duties. More economic federal measures summarized by CCI France. The land border between the United States and Canada is closed for all non-essential journeys. **Québec** Premier Legault said that all businesses and shops will have to close their doors until April 13, with the exception of the "essential services" (25 March). The latter includes in particular all actors in	Toronto is to take advantage of reduced traffic volumes by accelerating as many key construction projects as possible. Maintenance to renew ageing infrastructure will also be continuing during the Covid-19 pandemic, as too will improvements to some facilities. The city will undertake construction on more than 550 streets across Toronto, including resurfacing 147 local roads, and upgrading sewers beneath more than 100 streets to protect basements from flooding (5 May). Ontario, Canada is extending hours for essential construction projects, such as those in the health care sector, to 24 hours a day due to the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic. To date, work has been ongoing at Canadian construction sites that are in compliance with government safety guidelines. Canadian Construction Association says work should continue, provided set protocol is followed (1 April). According to European contractors, while Québec is imposing a general quarantine, works continue in the rest of the country.

	the food chain, the transport, pharmacies, gas stations, as well as fire, police and ambulance services and the entire health network. Telecommunications and media will also be able to continue to operate, as well as companies that are already operating in teleworking.	**Québec** The construction and aluminum industries will have to stop the work on construction sites. However, CSD Construction has indicated that 'certain sites considered 'essential' could remain in operation" and that details are still expected from the Minister of Labour.
United States	**The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) today announced the launch of its "Strengthening American Competitiveness" initiative. The latter will focus on how EXIM can support "Made in the U.S.A." exports and U.S jobs. The Strengthening American Competitiveness initiative will help set the foundation for EXIM's new Program on China and Transformational Exports. Congress mandated that EXIM establish a "Program on China and Transformational Exports," and set a goal of reserving not less than 20% of EXIM's total financing authority, equal to US$27 billion, for U.S. exports that compete with China (6 May).** The Congressional Budget Office (a non-partisan body) published its forecasts for the US economy: The GDP would drop by 5.6% for the year 2020. The rate of unemployment would be 9.5% at the end of the year. The deficit would reach 18% of GDP by late 2020 and the debt would pass from 79% of GDP in 2019 to 101% by the end of 2020 (cf. MEDEF) (29 April). FED related policy actions: One significant coronavirus-induced change in global financial markets has been the stunning convergence of G10 rates. Countries already at or below zero kept rates on hold, while others – Australia, the UK and US in particular – dropped to meet them at the zero-lower bound. For the corporate bond market, the most significant implication of this trend is the collapse of dollar hedging costs, which have fallen off a cliff compared to where they were a year ago. In view of low government bond yields across the developed world, this should be positive for the US corporate bond market. Buoyed by the Fed, some	The road transport sector is entering the crisis. It is particularly vulnerable because mainly made up of SMEs (90% of hauliers have less than six trucks). Demand contracted by 68% in the first half of April (cf. MEDEF) (24 April). The new monthly job loss data foreshadows more layoffs amid project cancellations and state cutbacks in road projects, said the Associate General Contractors (AGC). The association is calling for more small-business relief and immediate aid for highway funding. The association released an analysis of new government data that showed construction employment decreased in 20 states and the District of Columbia (DC) from February to March, held steady in six states and increased in 24 states (21 April). Residential construction employment decreased in March, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). NAHB sent a letter (week of 13 April) to congressional leaders urging lawmakers to act immediately to ensure sufficient resources and funding are available in the US Small Business Association's Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL) to meet the needs of the nation's small businesses, including those in the residential construction sector (20 April). Congress has now approved a compromise measure to inject US$310 billion into the now-empty Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) - which aims to assist financially strapped small businesses, including those in construction, engineering and building materials - with forgivable loans to help them cope with economic blows struck by the coronavirus pandemic. The PPP and Health Care Enhancement Act will go to the White House for President Trump's expected signature (23 April). Total construction starts in the US declined by 5% from February to March to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of US$746.9 billion, with the full impact of Covid-19 still to emerge (cf. Dodge Data & Analytics). In March, non-residential

	sectors of the market represent an opportunity to pick up yield. However, this will probably enhance the growing bifurcations in the corporate bond market, with foreign investors likely to stay away from the high-yield segment for longer (cf. OMFIF) (28 April). According to MEDEF, activity fell by 6.7% in March, the largest drop in 60 years. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the U.S. budget deficit will explode this year from US$1 trillion to US$2.6 trillion, or 12% of GDP (21 April). The White House unveiled guidelines it said the nation can use to plot a course out of the coronavirus pandemic. Trump also spoke with the governors of the 50 states to outline his plan for the way they'll proceed with re-opening and normalization. Trump has said he believes many states could begin to re-open even before the federal guidelines for social distancing and mitigation expire on May 1 (16 April). According to information from MEDEF, the unemployment rate has risen from 3.5% to 4.4% in one month. The retail and construction sectors are massively dismissing workers. The sharp economic downturn caused by the pandemic has led to the loss of at least a quarter of the U.S. economy (29%) according to Moody's Analytics. As of April 17, almost 22 million unemployment claims were registered in four weeks. Estimates suggest an unemployment rate of 17.8% (cf. MEDEF) (17 April). Federal Reserve: New Loan Financing Program for SMEs and the United States municipalities by an additional US$2,300 billion (cf. MEDEF). The US authorized the IFC capital increase in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (27 March). The bill also included authorization of IDA-19. IFC is helping existing clients in sectors	building starts fell 9% from February, while residential building dropped 11%. Non-building construction jumped 14% in March due to the start of several large electric power facilities (14 April). According to an Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) analysis of data released by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, construction industry employment declined by 29,000 in March, the majority within the nonresidential sector with 24,600 jobless claims. The construction unemployment rate was 6.9% in March, up 1.7 percentage points from the same time one year ago (13 April). New guidance from the Trump administration clarifies that US construction firms with 500 or fewer employees and that meet small business size standards qualify for new Paycheck Protection Program loans that are part of the recently implemented CARES Act for coronavirus relief. PPP loans are intended to help companies avoid layoffs. The US government will forgive the loans if the employer maintains head count and salary levels. The AGC reported it raised concerns over the original guidance which appeared to exclude many firms from the program (8 April). Latest analysis by AGC has found that 40% of US construction firms have reported lay-offs amid widespread project cancellations (14 April). Emphasizing the critical need for contractors to fully implement the latest coronavirus-related safety measures at all jobsites, AGC staged a national safety stand down April 9. According to AGC, nearly 500 contractors and more than 31,000 workers participated in the stand down. Read the safety protocols by AGC. The American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) published its "Construction Industry Safety Coalition Recommendations: COVID-19 Exposure Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Plan for Construction" which describes for employees and employers how to prevent worker exposure to coronavirus, protective measures to be taken on the jobsite, personal protective equipment and work practice controls to be used, cleaning and disinfecting procedures, and what to do if a worker becomes sick (Spanish version available).

	directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to continue to pay their workers and suppliers and is providing financial institutions liquidity and credit coverage. The Senate reached an agreement on a plan to boost the economy in the face of the coronavirus epidemic amounting almost 2 trillion dollars (€1,850 billion). This plan represents nearly 10% of the GDP of the US and is entitled CARES ACT (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act). The White House has also decided to use the Defense Protection Act, a text dating from the Korean War, to requisition companies and their resources to support a national effort. The US now has more confirmed cases of coronavirus than any other country, with more than 85,500 positive tests. President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America: 15 days to slow the spread (Directions for individuals if COVID-19 symptoms appear). Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources • Small business owners in all U.S. states are currently eligible to apply for a low-interest loan due to Coronavirus; • Interim guidance may help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, in non-healthcare settings. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of COVID-19; • Export loans to help small businesses achieve sales through exports. The loans are available to U.S. small businesses that export directly overseas, or those that export indirectly by selling to a customer that then exports their products. As some States are closing businesses activities considered "non-essential", the industry still seeks a formal characterization as "essential," alongside healthcare providers and grocery stores.	The recently enacted CARES Act provides unemployment benefits to independent contractors (3 April). AGC said conditions for contractors had deteriorated rapidly since February and called on Congress to urgently pass measures to boost infrastructure, compensate firms for delayed federal work and provide pension relief. Also, US unemployment claims break records while construction slows. Tighter shelter-in-place orders bring construction to a halt in many areas, putting thousands out of work (2 April). The NAHB has welcomed the designation of housing as an essential business, allowing many firms to keep working during the coronavirus crisis. AGC has also welcomed the new Department of Homeland Security guidance expanding the list of construction work that can continue during coronavirus-related stoppages. The list identifies workers who conduct a range of operations and services that are typically essential to the continued viability of critical infrastructure. This includes staffing operations centers and maintaining and repairing critical infrastructure. It also includes workers who support crucial supply chains and enable functions for critical infrastructure in industries such as medical & healthcare, telecommunications, transportation & logistics, energy, water & wastewater and public works (30 March). Parts of the economic package announced on March 25 amounting 2 trillion of dollars could go for infrastructure or other construction, including hospitals, airports and transit systems. But there's a crucial caveat about the spending. In some cases, it would be up to states, localities and other recipients to determine how much of the broad-ranging grants or other types of aid would be devoted to operations and how much to construction. Some of the construction funding is contained in the US$339.9 billion appropriations section of the overall package. ENR calculates that infrastructure and construction could be eligible for at least US$43 billion of that total (27 March).

		U.S. Vice President Mike Pence asked construction companies to donate any extra N95 respirator masks to local hospitals and to stop ordering more for the time being (17 March). AGC joined a host of other business groups in calling on Congress to enact a number of tax-related measures to safeguard companies, regardless of size, during the COVID-19 outbreak (18 March). This includes policies such as immediately providing accessible, unsecured credit to businesses, suspending the filing of business returns and the payment of all business taxes, and amending the Tax Code to, among other items, restore the ability of businesses to carryback any net operating losses against previous year tax payments. For their part, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), Associated Equipment Distributors (AED), and the Equipment Dealers Association (EDA) urged governors to designate equipment manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers, and service technicians as “essential” to the economic continuity of the states as they continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. • State-by-State Coronavirus Construction Status Updates • New York Gov. has announced all nonessential businesses (those that rely on in-office personnel) must have no more than 25% of their employees working outside their homes, implying the exclusion of construction. Project teams in New York City may be fined up to US$10,000 if found working on non-essential or non-emergency construction - or if workers on projects that are allowed to continue don't practice social distancing; • In San Francisco, which issued a shelter-in-place order (16 March), housing construction was included among its essential businesses; • Construction continued in Las Vegas following an order by the Nevada governor for nonessential businesses to close for 30 days; • Work continues in Los Angeles as well; • Boston has become the first US city to shut down all municipal construction projects to prevent Covid-19’s spread. The ban would last for at least two weeks, after which a review would be held (16 March);

		• The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has suspended all its construction projects in the state as a result of the pandemic. Projects will be on hold until further notice (17 March). Pennsylvania has called for all construction sites to reopen from 1 May, providing workers wear face masks and stay six feet apart (27 April). Washington state is taking a similar approach. • As of this writing, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin have ordered various degrees of exemption so that construction work can continue.
MIDDLE EAST		
Egypt	The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) has cut interest rates by 3%. The rates are the lowest since early 2016. On March 17, the government has taken steps to support the industry by reducing the price of natural gas provided to industries. Electricity prices were also lowered for heavy industry. For exporters, Egypt is providing 1 billion Egyptian pounds (about US$63 million) in March and April to help cover some of the dues they pay into a government fund for their benefit. The Tax Authority is postponing the date for presenting personal tax filings and it is also postponing the payment of property taxes on factories and tourist facilities for three months (cf. Grimaldi Alliance).	According to European contractors, there have been suspensions of works now and then but in general works have now resumed. Additional barrier measures were implemented: transport and locker room cleaning, temperature measurement, masks, soap or gel, rotating shifts, drinking from disposable cups.
Israel	The closure of the borders was accompanied by "emergency legislation". In times of crisis, the Israeli government is allowed to take exceptional measures without being subject to the control of the Knesset. A decree has been issued authorizing the Internal Security Services (Shabak) to collect the mobile phone location data of infected persons. The data are then forwarded to the government, which then warns people who have been in contact with infected people to isolate themselves. The regulations increase limitations on movement, expressly forbidding Israelis from leaving their homes except for a short list of reasons, closing all but necessary stores, and reducing public	It has been announced that COVID-19 will not be declared as *force majeure*. The building sector is especially affected because of the lack in demand and freezing of mortgages. Currently the construction sector and housing market are still functioning. The sector was designated as essential industry thereby allowing the continuation of work in active construction sites: • It is estimated that 70% of sites are operational although there are sporadic returns of workers to Palestine as they are unsure about their medical coverage as well as other issues. There are 30,000 workers from the West Bank in Israel at this time as well as some 16,000 foreign workers half of which are from China;

	transportation. Unemployment rate now reaches 25%. It was 4% before the coronavirus crisis. The economic measures are: • The Central Bank purchased NIS 50 billion (US$13.4 billion) in government bonds on the open market to ease credit conditions and bolster the economy; • Corona state guaranteed loan fund - up to 500,000 NIS (US$141,313) for up to 5 years with a 6-month grace period; • Licenses to operate a business in all local authorities will be automatically extended, in order to assist businesses working with reduced staff and businesses that have been forced to close temporarily; • There is no need to renew permits for continued operations. Permits will be automatically extended for another 2 months and all import permits will be renewed automatically to allow the import of goods into the economy and prevent shortages and delays.	• No widespread house purchase contract cancellations and construction supplies shipments from China are resuming; • Payments by developers to the government for land purchased in tenders has been postponed; • Mortgage deferral for up to 4 months; • Payments and form-signing by new home buyers have been allowed via the internet; • Government payments for contractors in development contracts have been advanced and collateral requirements from contractors have been eased or cancelled altogether.
Saudi-Arabia	Among the Gulf countries, Saudi Arabia is the most affected country with 4,934 cases and 65 deaths (as of 13 April 2020). Despite its strong financial reserves, the Saudi kingdom's fiscal balance is heavily dependent on oil exports, which account for two-thirds of the country's revenues. In the context of drastically sinking oil prices, Saudi Arabia announced a ceasefire in Yemen. The "Saudi Arabia 2030" plan to diversify its economy in order to make it less dependent on oil exports has not been issued yet. The government announced US$32 billion fiscal stimulus to support the economy. National curfew from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m., and from 3 p.m. to 6 a.m. for Riyadh, Medina, Jeddah and Mecca. Total border closure.	**According to the World Bank, the outlook for 2020 remains very weak in the wake of COVID-19 and oil supply shocks. Medium-term fiscal balances are estimated to continue in deficit - risking the ability in realizing Vision 2030 fiscal targets and infrastructure delivery targets without severe delays.** **According to European contractors, some works were allowed to be continued. According to the Saudi Arabian Home Secretary, maintenance and operation works, plumbing, electricity and air conditioning services, water delivery services and sanitation tank services were not subject to the restrictions (April).**
UAE	The UAE's Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (Mohre) is considering the stoppage of labour exchange relationships with countries that are not responding to repatriation requests amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The ministry's decision came after	Dubai's Department of Finance had ordered a 50% cut in capital spending and asked to delay new government construction projects as the coronavirus pandemic affects state revenues. Existing contracts will be reviewed. The finance department order also requires that ongoing construction projects are value engineered and do not encounter cost overruns. While construction is one

	numerous countries did not respond to temporary repatriation requests by their UAE-residing citizens (15 April). The country's trade, tourism and transport industries have been affected by the global slowdown of these industries. With these critical UAE industries struggling, the country's central bank has introduced an AED100 billion (US$27 billion) Targeted Economic Support Scheme. The Central Bank of the UAE said the package includes: • AED50 billion (US$13.5 billion) of collateralized loans, which will be offered to all UAE banks at zero cost. It will also allow banks to boost their lending capacity by freeing up their regulatory capital buffers; • The package is intended to support banks and businesses during the Coronavirus crisis for up to six months.	of the sectors exempted from the emirate's 24-hour restrictions on outdoor movement, contractors are concerned that onsite works will slow down (14 April). Some slowdown in construction projects according to PIARC: • Delays to materials and components due to factory shutdown in China; • No night shifts because of the curfew; • Impacts on labor buses due to social distancing guidelines; • Specialist tasks deferred. The construction industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is continuing as 'usual' despite the impact of Coronavirus. It is expected that the economic package from the Central Bank of UAE will benefit the local construction sector, which includes small and medium-sized enterprises in the design, contracting and fit-out industries.
PACIFIC		
Australia	**According to the IMF, downward revisions of economic growth are substantial, estimated at 9 percentage points in the case of Australia and New Zealand (15 April).** The Victorian Government has announced a AU$1.7 billion (US$1.4 billion) assistance package to support jobs and businesses during the COVID-19 crisis. The economic survival package includes key tax measures including waiving payroll tax for the full 2019-20 year for eligible businesses. The Victorian Government has also announced the Working for Victoria Fund, a $500 million (US$305 million) fund established to help Victorians who have lost their jobs, helping them to find new work and opportunities.	New figures show Australian construction activity is at the lowest level since the survey began in 2005, with the fallout from Covid-19 hitting an already weak sector. Slow activity on building sites due to projects that have either been cancelled or put on hold resulted in activity, new orders and employment all falling at their sharpest rates on record. The worst-hit sectors were apartment building and commercial construction (5 May). The Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) is ramping up construction and maintenance work across its road and transport networks to keep people in jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic. The plan is intended to protect the livelihoods of more than 130,000 people directly and indirectly employed by Transport for NSW. According to the Transport and roads minister, transport infrastructure projects will be key in rebuilding the State's economy after the pandemic. The NSW Government is delivering US$57.5 billion that should be dedicated to transport infrastructure across the next four years (27 April).

		Infrastructure Partnerships Australia (IPA) has welcomed New South Wales government's commitment to continue infrastructure and construction sector in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic (27 March). In many cases (including in some government contracts), the 11 March 2020 WHO declaration that COVID-19 is a pandemic will qualify as a force majeure event. However, whether COVID-19 classifies as a force majeure event (and the consequences that flow) will be depend on the terms of a particular contract. According to the feedback of European contractors, containment measures are beginning to be put in place in Victoria and not yet in NSW. Works continue for the time being and staff is equipped with masks.
New Zealand	New Zealand moved its coronavirus response from the higher Alert Level 4 to Alert Level 3 on Monday April 27. It will stay in Alert Level 3 for two weeks before a review, with further decisions made on 11 May (28 April). New Zealand will move the alert level to 4 from 3 (25 March) for a period of four weeks. New Zealanders not working in essential services will have to stay at home and stop all interactions with others outside of their own household.	Over a thousand workers are returning to New Zealand's road and rail projects to help kick-start the post-lockdown economy. Work on New Zealand's largest infrastructure project, City Rail Link, is also resuming. The NZ Transport Agency has approved the start-up plans and construction works will restart this week on 25 of the 44 state highway projects around the country. All state highway and rail projects are expected to have works restart on May 4 (28 April). The New Zealand government has tasked a group of construction industry leaders with identifying 'shovel ready' projects that can start as soon as the sector returns to normal. New Zealand stops all but 'essential' construction (30 March). The New Zealand government has published guidance for the construction sector on what will count as essential work following the forthcoming implementation of a Covid-19 'level 4' alert. Current definition of an essential business for the building and construction sector is: • Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure; • Any entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or work;

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>Any entity that performs or is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.
It said that most building work required urgently for the purposes of maintaining human health and safety will not require a consent. The guidance also offers advice for tradespeople such as plumbers, electricians and carpenter: Under a level-4 alert, only tradespeople undertaking work related to essential business or infrastructure are expected to be working outside of the self-isolation protocol. The exception to this may be where tradespeople are required to undertake emergency work.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">AFRICA</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td><u>Possible economic impacts on sub-Saharan Africa (cf. IMF)</u>:
The slowdown in major economies will see global demand fall. Tighter global financial conditions will limit access to finance. Countries are likely to also see delays in getting investment or development projects off the ground. The sharp decline in commodity prices will hit oil exporters hard. Oil prices are already down by more than 50% since the start of the year. It is estimated that each 10% decline in oil prices will, on average, lower growth in oil exporters by 0.6% and increase overall fiscal deficits by 0.8% of GDP. <u>The tourism and travel sector in Africa</u> could lose at least US$50 billion and at least 2 million direct and indirect jobs.
According to AfDB, Covid-19 could cost Africa a GDP loss between US$22.1 billion, in the base case scenario, and US$88.3 billion in the worst-case scenario. This is equivalent to a projected GDP growth contraction of between 0.7 and 2.8 percentage points in 2020. Covid-19 could:
squeeze fiscal space, as deficits are estimated to widen by 3.5% to 4.9%, increasing Africa's financing gap by an additional $110 to $154 billion in 2020;
increase Africa’s total public debt, under the base case scenario, from $1.86 trillion at the end of 2019 to over $2 trillion in 2020 and these figures could reach $2.1 trillion in 2020 under the worst-case scenario.</td><td>Debt relief (cf. OMFIF): <u>While there are no official estimates for debt owed to China specifically, Africa’s total debt load is US$583bn</u>, with the Johns Hopkins’ China Africa Research Initiative estimating more than one-fifth of this to be to Chinese lenders. Much of the money was used to finance transport and energy infrastructure projects. African officials report that Beijing is demanding strategic assets as collateral for debt restructuring (24 April).

<u>Contractors across Africa look to China for construction materials</u>. But the Chinese government’s containment efforts and quarantines have slowed or shut down factories in the country’s cities and provinces, leading to a sharp fall in production of construction materials. For contractors that rely on Chinese-made goods or materials, this could mean higher material costs and potentially slower project completions.
The continent exposure to China in the current COVID-19 health crisis will have a negative impact on short-term growth particularly in Nigeria, Ghana, Angola, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Zambia, Gabon and South Africa, according to the rating agency Fitch. In the context of the BRI, a dip in BRI-related activity in Africa due to Covid-19 can be expected. This dip in activity could possibly be attributed to the Chinese government re-evaluating its planned investment in Africa. There is a risk that this could lead to China reducing or even cancelling planned investments in less critical markets, at least in the short term. The impact of Covid-19 will be detrimental to African construction and infrastructure sectors, but project delays are expected to be mostly short term</td></tr>
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GDP in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to contract by -1.6% this year, a downward revision of 5.2 percentage points compared to six months ago (15 April).

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Covid-19 should drop Africa's growth from 3.2% to 1.8%. The drop in Chinese growth could lead to recession in African countries where the economic relations with China are important. China is the first economic partner of the African continent. Asymmetrical exposure to Chinese demand makes Angola, Zambia, Ethiopia, Namibia, Rwanda, Kenya and Cameroon particularly vulnerable to a prolonged period of disruption in the supply chain.

On 25 March, the Bank of Central African States (BEAC) indicated that, in order to help sustain local financial markets, it would make available to banks operating in the CEMAC zone a liquidity package of FCFA 500 million (approx. US$ 829 million) to finance the needs of economic operators affected by COVID-19 (cf. Herbert Smith Freehills).

The BCEAO (the Central Bank for the WAEMU area) announced on 20 March 2020 the adoption of a series of incentives to maintain the attractiveness of the zone including:

- **increasing banks' resources in order to increase the financing of the economy;**
- **broadening the scope of the mechanisms available to banks to access Central Bank refinancing;**
- **implementing an adapted framework for loan repayments by companies encountering difficulties as a consequence of the pandemic;**
- **supplying local banks with a sufficient quantity and quality of banknotes to enable them to ensure the satisfactory operation of ATMs (cf. Herbert Smith Freehills).**

as the BRI is considered a long-term project with an anticipated completion date by 2049 (cf. Herbert Smith Freehills LLP).

Contractors may still be contractually responsible for delays or cost overruns on current projects, depending on the contractual terms. The French lawfirm Fidal has summarized which contractual provisions are available among the different African countries (e.g. force majeure is compatible with law enforcement in Morocco, Senegal and Ivory-Coast).

The picture is quite heterogenous when it comes to worksite closures. According to European contractors:

- Benin: Worksites remain open;
- Burkina Faso: Sites remain open despite the declared state of health emergency and quarantine of some contaminated towns (including Ouaga and Bobo), borders open only for freight;
- Burundi: Sites remain open, border to Tanzania only open to freight transport;
- Cameroun: Sites remain open, the CEMAC corridor theoretically open for the transfer of goods;
- Congo/Gabon: Worksites remain open;
- Ghana: For worksites to stay open and work to be carried out, contractors need an official authorization;
- Guinea: Worksites remain open, isolation of Conakry from the rest of the country;
- Ivory-Coast: Some operations are gradually coming to a halt and companies are sending their expats back home, but some worksites also stay open;
- Kenya: Worksites remain open but 50% of the worksites operate in reduced mode. No issues (yet) with supplies. Specialists from foreign sub-contractors unable to fly in due to non-availability of flights and closure of borders. All public and private businesses are asked to work from home as much as possible;

	Further information on the impact of COVID-19 on the African economy by the African Union. China is multiplying donations of medical equipment to African countries via companies such as Alibaba and Huawei. Cargo planes of Ethiopian Airlines, the only airline that continues to fly between Africa and China, brought 5.4 million masks, 1.08 million diagnostic test kits and 40,000 protective suits to Addis Ababa (22 March). The material was distributed to 55 countries across Africa. • Telecom giant Huawei signs cheques or supplies equipment (thermal controllers, videoconferencing systems) to countries such as Tunisia, South Africa, Zambia and Kenya. As of April 13, over 7,800 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed across 43 countries in the region. As of April 21, the five countries in Africa with the highest cumulative number of cases (proportion of reported cases in Africa) are Egypt (14%), South Africa (14%), Morocco (13%), Algeria (12%) and Cameroon (5%). When population is taken into consideration, Djibouti, Mauritius, Cabo Verde, Seychelles, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, and South Africa are reporting the most cases per 100,000 population within the continent. According to the African Union, there had been a 31% increase in cases reported between 14-21 April compared to a 46% increase in cases reported between 7-14 April (24 April). Most of the States face unique cases but are taking drastic measures to limit travel: • On 23 March, states of emergency were declared in Senegal and Ivory-Coast **(until 15 May 2020)**; • Algeria has established partial containment measures. As an oil producing country, it is now struggling with the severe drop in oil prices;	• Madagascar: Worksites remain open but 88% of worksites operate in reduced mode; • Mali: Worksites remain open; • Morocco: Works continue but a suspension cannot be excluded. Construction sites continue to progress, but in degraded mode. Work has generally slowed down due to supply and travel problems linked to the stopping of public transport but also to the need for a special authorization by the territorial authorities. Only few clients request to postpone the works. A state of health emergency has been declared, with national containment and border closures; • Niger: Worksites remain open, 33% of worksites operate in reduced mode; • Senegal: Despite the lockdown, worksites stay open and work is carried on; • Chad: Worksites remain open but 50% operate in reduced mode because of cement shortage (among others); • Tanzania: Reduced work on site, mainly work from home for office staff. No issues (yet) with supplies. Specialists from foreign sub-contractors unable to fly in due to non-availability of flights; • Togo: Worksites remain open but suffer supply issues because of the closure of main transport routes; • Uganda: Worksites are closed. Country on lockdown. No issues (yet) with supplies. Specialists from foreign sub-contractors are unable to fly in due to non-availability of flights and the closure of the airport. In general, contractors try to keep their worksites open and to continue with their works as long as this is compatible with local law. They also equip their workers with hydroalcoholic gel and masks to that effect. Besides, the authorities impose restrictions on transport which prevent the transport of workers and consequently lead to the gradual halt of construction sites.

	• Angola: **State of emergency extended until May 10**. Measures restricting the movement of persons and goods. Suspension since 18 March of all international flights from and to Angola; • Botswana will ban entry to non-citizens and non-residents travelling from 17 high risk countries; • Cameroon: The IMF approved a disbursement under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) of US$ 226 million to support the authorities in addressing the balance of payment needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and the terms of trade shocks from the sharp fall in oil prices (4 May). • Chad: **On 25 April, the President declared a national health emergency for 21 days. The declaration of a state of health emergency empowers the ministers concerned to take all measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic.** • Ethiopia: **On 8 April 2020 the parliament approved a 5-month state of emergency and stay-at-home order.** The IMF approved US$411 million emergency assistance for Ethiopia under the Rapid Financing Instrument. The country will also benefit from IMF debt service relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust (30 April). • Ghana will ban entry to anyone who has been to a country with more than 200 cases in the last 14 days. **Lockdown has been partially lifted on April 20. Ghana has also begun using drones, supplied by the USA, to make long distance deliveries between rural areas and laboratories in Accra and Kumasi, thereby enabling the country to carry out tests far beyond its major cities;** • Kenya is blocking entry to all non-citizens and non-residents travelling from countries with COVID-19 cases. Its economic growth has been divided by two. **Total lockdown has been ruled out for the time being for fear that this would leave people without food. 21-day extension of the curfew and cessation of movement that was due to end at midnight**	

	on 27 April. The IMF approved the disbursement of US$739 million to be drawn under the RCF in response to COVID-19 (6May); • Kinshasa (Congo) lockdown implying the temporary stop of most of the activities. The IMF approved the disbursement of US$363.27 million under the RCF to help meet urgent balance of payments stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic (22 April). • Madagascar: IMF approved a disbursement under the RCF equivalent to SDR 122.2 million (about US$165.99 million) to help meet the urgent balance of payment needs stemming from the outbreak of COVID-19 (3 April); • Morocco: On 24 March, Morocco declared a state of health emergency. EBRD provided an €145 million financing facility to the Bank of Africa - BMCE Group. This is the first investment to be delivered under the EBRD's coronavirus Resilience Framework (loan for on-lending to corporations and SMEs and facilitate export and import transactions) (22 April). • Mozambique: The IMF approved a disbursement under the RCF of US$309 million to help meet urgent balance of payment and fiscal needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic (24 April). • Nigeria: Lockdown of Lagos and Ogun (since 30 March), closure of all airports across the country and closure of land borders. Devaluation by 17% of the local currency (Naira). The IMF approved US$3.4 billion in emergency financial assistance under the Rapid Financing Instrument to support the economic impact of the COVID-19 and the sharp fall in oil prices (28 April). • The World Bank and IMF determined that Somalia has taken the necessary steps to begin receiving debt relief under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. Somalia bans entry all passengers originating from China,	

	Iran, South Korea, and Italy or transiting through one of those countries in the last 14 days; • Rwanda: Containment measures across the country (since 22 March). Closure of Kigali International Airport for 30 days (since 20 March) and closure of land borders; • Sierra Leone: State of emergency for 12 months, airspace is closed until further notice for all passenger arrivals; • Togo: The cities of Lomé, Tsévié, Klapimé and Sokodé will be subject to surveillance by local authorities. Closure of land borders (since 20 March) for 2 weeks; • Tunisia: Containment with limitation of movements except for absolute necessity. Closure of borders. The IMF approved emergency financing of US$745 million (2% of GDP) under its Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) (10 April); • Zimbabwe: 21-day lockdown (since 30 March), suspension of international commercial flights.	
South Africa	The country has entered into a recession. **It has been downgraded by S&P Global, Moody's and Fitch and the country's credit rating is now at "junk status", while the currency continues to weaken (30 April).** The South African government is set to gradually ease the economy back into activity as announced on 23 April. The country has been subjected to one of the world's most restrictive lockdowns for five weeks. From 1 May 2020, the lockdown will now be eased (30 April). An amended Schedule of Regulations to contain the spread of COVID-19 was published (25 March). In this context, categories of essential goods are limited to food, cleaning, hygiene, medical, fuel and other basic products. Categories of essential services are limited to support activities for manufacturing and distribution of essential goods as well as critical social services.	In construction and related services, road and bridge projects, other public works civil engineering projects, and critical maintenance and repairs will commence as soon as the lockdown will be eased (from 1 May). However, all COVID-19 health and safety protocols will still have to be followed at all times. This includes the observance of guidelines for social distancing, sanitation and hygiene, and use of appropriate personal protective equipment, as determined by the National Department of Health (30 April). In view of the nationwide lockdown, construction sites might be closed. The Master Builders South-Africa point to the following measures for contractors: • Ensure that employees and subcontractors are formally notified and aware of the shutdown and re-opening dates; • Ensure that the employer/client is formally notified of the closure and where possible, agree on extension of contract period; • Make arrangements to have administrative staff to work remotely; • To the extent possible, remove all movable tools, equipment and materials from the site for safe storage at more secure premises;

	Government has established economic measures to support businesses affected by the closure: Temporary employer/employee relief scheme, debt relief and business growth facility, etc. A Solidarity Fund was established: contributions from citizens, communities, business and international donors can be pooled together to accelerate the country's response to COVID19. Government has made an initial R150 million (US$8 million) available as seed funding.	• Secure the site to protect tools, equipment and materials from risks such as theft, animal invasions, adverse weather etc.; • Engage their bank and business creditors about payment arrangement plans where necessary; • Review and update their insurance contracts to ensure adequate cover of the business, tools, equipment, materials and the site; • Where applicable, liaise with Community Project Committees and Community Liaison Officers for site protection during the lockdown period; • Ensure constant communication with their employees during the lockdown period. The maintenance operations of South Africa's national roads agency, Sanral, have been declared an essential service during the lockdown (31 March).
MDBs & other international institutions		
G20	The G-20 debt suspension will begin on May 1 and continue until the end of the year and applies to countries of the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) or countries that meet the United Nations definitions for least developed countries. The suspension of debt payments means that these countries will have access to an additional US$20 billion over the next six months that they can use to strengthen health services and adopt economic stimulus measures. However, repayments have not been cancelled completely and countries will only owe the money later and will continue to pay interests (cf. Overseas Development Institute). Some G20 leaders also consider issuing Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) which would provide countries with additional liquidity. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development called on the IMF to issue about US$1 trillion in special drawing rights. The G-20 discussed SDRs and how to create a mechanism that would allow high-income countries to transfer their shares to low-income countries, but it could not reach consensus, largely due to objections from the United States. Paris Club creditors support a coordinated time-bound suspension of debt service payments for the poorest countries that request forbearance. Under this initiative, Paris Club members and the G20 have agreed a common term sheet providing the key features for this initiative. Paris Club creditors underline that all bilateral official creditors will participate in this initiative. They call on private creditors to participate in the initiative on comparable terms. Paris Club creditors ask MDBs to further explore the options for the suspension of debt service payments over the suspension period, while maintaining their current rating and low cost of funding (15 April). If private creditors will be called upon publicly to participate in the initiative, this might have an impact on contractor's payments (what impacts on running projects, impacts on the contractors' treasury, ECAs coverage etc.). G20 Leaders have announced their determination to provide a robust and coordinated response to the global Covid-19 crisis. They would be ready to inject US$5000 billion in the economy and to cooperate with all multilateral financial institutions: World Health Organization (WHO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and multilateral and regional development banks (MDBs) (26 March).	
World Bank Group	The Bank Group's expanded economic program (including IFC, IDA etc.) could provide up to US$160 billion in support to client countries over the next 15 months. Additional US$80 billion will be provided by the other Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).	

	World Bank teams are finalizing COVID-19-related projects in 60 countries for up to US$2.8 billion under the US$14 billion Fast Track Facility. 25 projects were sent to the Board that will provide grants, credits and loans of US$2 billion (25 March). Board approval is expected next week, with implementation beginning immediately thereafter. Projects in another 35 countries are under preparation to be approved in April. A debt-related step for the International Development Association (IDA)-19 called the Sustainable Development Finance Policy (SDFP) was sent to the Board (27 March). The objective of the SDFP is to incentivize IDA-eligible countries to make debt more transparent and sustainable and promote coordination among creditors. This may help lead to fair and equitable reductions in the net present value (NPV) of debt owed by IDA countries. • Debt sustainability for many poor countries will require a moratorium for official bilateral debt payments; • This may also require NPV reductions & participation by commercial creditors; • Importance of the private sector to help achieve those efforts was stressed in this context. The 19th replenishment of IDA, the World Bank Group's fund for the world's poorest countries, has been officially adopted by governors (27 March). With immediate effect - and consistent with national laws of the creditor countries - the World Bank Group and the IMF call on all official bilateral creditors to suspend debt payments from IDA countries (25 March). The World Bank Group has announced an additional US$2 billion in funding to help with the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing its commitment to US$14 billion in funds that will support national health systems, disease containment, diagnosis, treatment, and the private sector (17 March). • US$2 billion in additional funds, which was added to what had been announced previously, will come from the International Finance Corporation (IFC); • IFC's US$8 billion in financing will go to financial institutions so they can lend to businesses, providing either trade financing, working capital, or medium-term financing; • IFC will help existing clients from sectors that are impacted and will assist sectors involved in the response, such as health care and related industries that face increased demand for services. US$2.7 billion come from IBRD, US$1.3 billion from IDA, US$8 billion from IFC (including US$2 billion from existing trade facilities) and US$6 billion for accelerated loan guarantees from the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).
PPIAF	The Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (PPIAF) in collaboration with the World Bank's Infrastructure Finance, PPP & Guarantees (IPG) Group, established a Rapid Response Program. Through this program, national PPP units, Ministries of Finance, sector ministries, and utilities can request short interventions of remote, targeted technical advice to undertake a fast assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on their PPP programs, including: • Stock-take of PPPs at all stages under different potential stress scenarios; • Review of PPP contractual provisions to assess potential responses to disruptions caused by COVID-19; • Identification and options assessment of associated fiscal impacts; • Presentation of options for initial review of government possible actions at the PPP project or Rapid mobilization of knowledge and resources for PPP policymakers.

IMF	The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Fiscal Affairs Department staff published broad guidance on "greening the recovery" with 3 priorities: • Governments should prioritize investments in green technologies, clean transport, sustainable infrastructure and climate resilience. In the energy sector alone, the IMF estimates that a low-carbon transition would require US$2.3 trillion in investment every year for a decade; • Promote green finance by using green bonds. In light of the extended use of government guarantees, part of them can be deployed to mobilize private finance for green investment. And financial firms have to be mandated to better disclose climate risks in their lending and investment portfolios; • Higher carbon price is needed to encourage climate-smart investment and to accelerate the shift to cleaner fuels and more energy efficiency. The current global carbon price is only US$2 per ton, way below the levels needed to keep global warming under 2 degrees Celsius, which we estimate to be US$75 per ton (29 April). A new IMF liquidity backstop has been created in the week of April 13 called the Short-term Liquidity Line (SLL), the first addition to the IMF's financing toolkit in almost ten years. This new facility provides a reliable and renewable credit line, without ex post conditionality, to members with very strong fundamentals and policy frameworks - the same qualification criteria as another IMF facility called the Flexible Credit Line. The SLL is designed to address a special balance-of-payments need - potential, moderate, and short-term - reflected in capital account pressures following external shocks. The IMF approved immediate debt service relief to 25 of the IMF's member countries under the IMF's revamped Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust (CCRT). The countries that will receive debt service relief today are: Afghanistan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, D.R., The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Togo, and Yemen (13 April). The IMF published a set of policy recommendations that can help guide countries in the difficult days ahead (16 March).
ADB	**The Asian Development Bank tripled the size of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic to US$20 billion and approved measures to streamline its operations for quicker and more flexible delivery of assistance. The package expands ADB's US$6.5 billion initial response announced on 18 March, adding US$13.5 billion in resources for countercyclical expenditure financing. The US$20 billion package includes about US$2.5 billion in concessional and grant resources (13 April). Budget support for the COVID-19 Response has been enabled by expanding the scope of the Contingent Disaster Financing tool to include health-related emergencies.** The US$6.5 billion financial package (18 March) is for member countries responding to the impacts of the novel coronavirus pandemic: • Includes US$3.6 billion in loans, grants, and technical assistance to ADB developing member countries to address the health and economic consequences of COVID-19; • US$1.6 billion will be provided to micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises; domestic and regional trade; and firms directly impacted by the pandemic; • US$1 billion in concessional resources through reallocations from ongoing projects and assessing possible needs for contingencies; • US$40 million for technical assistance and quick-disbursing grants.

	ADB supports regional cooperation platforms such as the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) programs.
AfDB	The African Development Bank (AfDB) stated that MDBs, international financial institutions and commercial creditors should temporarily defer the debt owed to create fiscal space for African countries to deal with this crisis. The AfDB has raised US$3 billion on international financial markets through a social bond loan aiming to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on African economies. More than half of the AfDB bond was reported to have been allocated to central banks and official institutions. Many public asset owners including Japan's Government Pension Investment Fund, the world's largest pension fund, invested in the bond. The effort has been complemented with a US$2m grant for the World Health Organization and a US$10bn Covid-19 response facility to provide funds to governments and the private sector in regional member countries (24 April).
AIIB	The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is considering a US$250 million project to support the Indonesian government's COVID-19 response and a US$500 million project to support India's response and health system preparedness, both of which would be co-financed with other donors. The AIIB is doubling available funds under its COVID-19 Crisis Recovery Facility to provide US$5-10 billion due to high client demand. This follows AIIB's announcement to make US$5 billion available to help public and private sector clients manage through the COVID-19 pandemic (17 April). AIIB is aiming to bolster infrastructure investment in countries less able to cope with the Covid-19 outbreak, with funds targeted at areas that improve public health, healthcare and information and communications technology. Of the AIIB's 78 members, 20 have requested the bank's assistance to fight the virus, with India expected to be among the hardest hit by the pandemic. It is expected that the AIIB board will extend US$355m to China in what would be the institution's first loan in the healthcare sector (03 April).
EBRD	The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has launched a Vital Infrastructure Support Programme (23 April). The VISP initiative contains three financing tools: • The EBRD will deploy credit lines through local banks to support the continuity of infrastructure services and/or infrastructure investment programmes; • Stabilisation facilities for key infrastructure providers, meaning direct loans to key services providers to provide liquidity following temporary revenue losses due to Covid-19, with the aim of protecting the delivery of vital services and infrastructure; • The EBRD will provide finance to public sector clients to support vital capital expenditure that is otherwise threatened by the economic fallout of the COVID-19 crisis. The EBRD has set up a coronavirus Resilience Framework to meet the immediate short-term liquidity and working capital needs of existing clients. The Framework is a key element in the EBRD's Solidarity Package Covid-19 response and recovery programme. As a first step, the EBRD unveiled a €1 billion Resilience Framework for existing clients within its initial Solidarity Package, which was approved by its shareholders on 13 March. Responding to huge demand, the EBRD plans to increase the amount available under the emergency facility.
EIB	The European Investment Bank (EIB) will mobilize up to €40 billion of financing. The proposed financing package consists of: • Dedicated guarantee schemes to banks based on existing programmes for immediate deployment, mobilizing up to €20 billion of financing; • Dedicated liquidity lines to banks to ensure additional working capital support for SMEs and mid-caps of €10 billion; • Dedicated asset-backed securities purchasing programmes to allow banks to transfer risk on portfolios of SME loans, mobilizing another €10 billion of support.

IDB	IDB (Inter-American Development Bank) increased resources available to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to fight the coronavirus pandemic to US$12 billion. The sum will be programmed to countries requesting support for disease monitoring, testing and public health services.
IsDB	IsDB (Islamic Development Bank) released a response package worth up to US $2 billion which aims at: • Strengthening health systems to provide care to the infected; building capacity in testing kits and vaccines and Pandemic Preparedness capacity, in cooperation with G20 Global Initiative; • Financing trade and SMEs to sustain activity in core strategic value chains, and to ensure continuity of the necessary supplies mainly to essential commodities; Long-term action to build resilient economies and catalyze private investment by supporting economic recovery and countercyclical spending, with a targeted US$10 billion that aims to unlock US$1 trillion worth of investments.