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In 2006 we held a global management meeting in South Africa to celebrate the group’s 50th anniversary of doing business in Africa. In today’s global economy it is an everyday occurrence for companies to open up branches in faraway countries. However it was an exceptional step a half a century ago for a small company to send their own delegate from Switzerland to Johannesburg and to establish their own representation in South Africa. Yet it was a decision that has proved its worth. Over the years and decades, Spedag has built up a high reputation as a well-known provider of transportation and logistics services to and from South Africa. And today it is one of the oldest international forwarding companies there.

This year we celebrated yet another anniversary in Africa. It has been 10 years since the founding of our East Africa organization. Then, of course, setting up overseas branches had for some time been considered standard business strategy. But venturing into East Africa was just as exceptional as our step to South Africa was 40 years earlier. It was a step that we might not have taken had it not been with Joseph Lenherr as a partner. He was no stranger to us, as he had worked for Spedag in Basel for many years prior to pursuing his career in Africa. When he approached us in 1998 with the proposal of setting up an organization across East Africa, we knew that with him and his associates Thomas Stroh and Lorenz Pimpfinger, we had a strong team of professionals bringing in several decades of combined experience of doing business in Africa, solid know-how and a strong network of connections throughout the region.

“Not everyone who chased the zebra caught it, but he who caught it chased it” - this proverb from South Africa illustrates the pride that we take in what we have achieved in East Africa over the last decade. Ten years of hard work and dedication have resulted in an organization spanning an entire region. Spedag East Africa is recognized as one of only a handful of companies that can truly provide comprehensive and reliable logistics services throughout East Africa. The company enjoys an excellent reputation for handling complex projects to even the remotest areas, and has a long and growing reference list featuring prominent names.

This special issue of our Panorama magazine is dedicated to our group activities in Africa. It will give you an inside look to some of the non-profit-making institutions to whom we have lent our support in the past. More important, though, we take pride in introducing the key people on which our success is built, and the core activities in which they specialize. In Africa, more than anywhere else in the world, it is the reliability of the staff that makes the difference. 

Daniel Richner
Mr. Lenherr, for the past 40 years you have dedicated your professional career to logistics in Africa. Where does your fascination for the African continent come from?

Africa has a special effect on many people, an attraction and a fascination that is difficult to put in words. The unknown, the wildness and the vast open spaces, the different cultures - a place where everything comes together and everything is possible. Having set your foot on African soil for the first time, a spell is cast on you. It is as if you have been caught in a magnetic field that will constantly draw you back.

Spedag East Africa is one of only a handful of companies that can provide comprehensive logistics services over the entire region of Eastern Africa, particularly in the field of project logistics. How did you arrive at this position?

In the beginning, it was simply a matter of learning on the job. Every project is a new challenge, as conditions and the environment can change suddenly. One must be flexible and innovative, ready to find solutions whenever the situation changes and new obstacles present themselves. Upon completion of a project, the satisfaction is very rewarding. This is especially true if your involvement has improved the living conditions of the people, such as is the case in many projects on the infrastructure sector, i.e. water treatment, electrification, etc.

What is the basis of the ongoing success of Spedag East Africa?

Our success is based on a combination of various factors. Most important of all is the team. I am proud to say that across the entire organization we have a very high level of teamwork amongst all our staff, whether here at the head offices in Basel or in our various branches in Africa. Good Teamwork is not possible without mutual trust amongst the members of the entire team, and motivated people show a high degree of dedication to their job. The job can be very demanding at times and requires a great deal of flexibility and innovation. Our staff generally take great pride in being part of Spedag East Africa.

Equally important is the experience and know-how of our managers and key staff, as well as maintaining good relationships with local authorities. We could not gain the trust of our clients if we did not demonstrate continuously a high level of expertise, providing solutions for the most complex tasks and rendering services of a high quality.

Spedag East Africa is part of the Swiss based M+R Spedag Group. To what degree do the Swiss roots of the organization contribute to its success, particularly in Africa?

Switzerland has a good reputation for quality and precision. However, various factors determine success in Africa, hence nationality isn't really a decisive point.

Spedag East Africa has a sizeable network with its own offices in 7 countries in Eastern Africa. What are your plans for the further expansion of the organization?

We are closely monitoring the developments taking place in Ethiopia, where we already have handled several projects. The opening of an office in a joint-venture with another company or companies could be realized in the near future. At present, we are busy developing our own network in Angola.

“Africa is a very rich continent, with a lot of potential. Also unique and not predictable.”

In what way does logistics in Africa differ from other regions of the world? What are the biggest challenges in providing reliable logistics services in Africa to an international clientele?

A very challenging aspect of doing business in Africa is that the environment often undergoes sudden and non-foreseeable changes. Such changes may be for political reasons, climate related or due to other factors beyond anybody’s control. The situation at the onset of a project might be completely different than what it was during the planning phase.

Where do you see the organization in 10 years from now?

I expect the organization to further expand and cement its position as a key-player in the market. From the onset we have adopted a strategy of long-term planning, and have continuously invested in our local facilities and equipment in Africa. We have implemented special training programs in various stations with the aim of enhancing the professional skills of our new employees. We have a lot of young people that display a great potential, who we are promoting and on whom we can build our future success. I believe that despite the great success achieved so far, there is still a great potential ahead and that we are extremely well positioned to take our company further.
What is the most memorable event in your long career as logistics specialist for Africa?

Several years ago, we were arranging an out-of-gauge delivery to Malawi. Prior to the transport, a road survey was conducted, measuring all bridges and narrow passages to ensure there was enough room for the oversized pieces to pass. When the shipment - 2 Demag cranes loaded on low-bed trailers - was effected, the convoy came to a halt when attempting to cross the Great Ruaha River in Southern Tanzania. As it turned out, the specifications provided earlier were incorrect; the final shipping width was slightly bigger, just so much so that the cranes could not be moved across the only crossing over the river, an over-deck truss bridge made of steel girders. The nearest possible passage over the river would have meant a detour of hundreds of kilometers. After careful examination of all possible alternatives, it was decided - with the consent of the client - that the cranes would be moved straight through the river on their own wheels. Taking all possible precautions and safety measures, including additional insurance coverage, the cranes were then indeed pulled across the riverbed.

To me, this adventurous undertaking is a typical example of how differently things work in Africa. Always be prepared for the unexpected, obstacles cannot always be foreseen and may present themselves anywhere at any time. On the other hand, there always is a solution for everything, even if unorthodox methods are called for.

A large part of the activities of Spedag East Africa focus on the project sector, providing the logistics for infrastructure projects such as power plants, road construction etc. Many of these projects cannot be realized without affecting the ecology the region, a fact that is repeatedly lamented by international organizations. What is your point of view on this issue?

A lot of these reactions are exaggerated. Nowadays no project can be executed without taking care of the ecological environment. The companies executing these projects work under strict guidelines given by the respective government or other bodies, who evaluate the abilities of each participant for working in accordance with these guidelines.

The media sometimes predicts a bleak future Sub-Saharan Africa, at other times individual countries in Africa are commended for progress achieved and for their great potential. What is your personal opinion on Africa’s future development?

Africa is a very rich continent, with a lot of potential. It is also unique and not predictable - we shall see what the future holds for Africa.

Joseph Lenherr

was born in Basel, Switzerland in 1948. On graduating from the College of Commerce and Trade, he joined Basel-based Spedag Speditions AG for a 2-year apprenticeship. In 1970, he moved to South Africa, working in the logistics department of a local supplier of automotive parts. Prior to returning to Switzerland in 1972, he traveled extensively through Africa.

Back in Switzerland, he re-joined Spedag and took on the position of Sales & Marketing Manager for overseas traffic, with special focus on Africa. In 1978 he left Spedag to join the newly founded Intraship as managing partner. Intraship was a Swiss-based company with subsidiaries in East Africa. He managed the company for 20 years, spending considerable time in Africa. It was during a trip to Uganda that he first met Thomas Stroh, who later on also joined Intraship and today is Spedag’s Regional Director in Africa. It was the time after former dictator Idi Amin was deposed and Uganda was torn by civil war for several years. The two met by chance, when forced to take cover under a table in a restaurant after gunfire erupted in the streets outside.

In 1998, Joseph Lenherr turned his back on Intraship, and formed the Spedag East Africa organization as part of the M+R Spedag Group.
Precisely this level of difficulty is paradoxically one of the main factors behind the success of Spedag East Africa. The organization was founded ten years ago around a small group of specialists in project logistics who boast many years of experience in Africa, a high level of expertise and an extensive network of contacts. Their impressive credentials helped them win the trust of potential customers, and over the span of ten years they built up a powerful organization covering all of the East African region and which became one of very few companies offering dependable services, no matter how complex and challenging the task.

How does project logistics differ from normal transportation services? A logistics project usually encompasses the shipping and logistics services needed by a customer for a specific project, involving multiple cargoes over a certain period of time, from multiple suppliers at different locations, to one or a number of destinations. Examples of large-scale projects implemented by Spedag East Africa include logistics for power station construction along the Nile river, or developing a mine deep in the heart of Africa.

The first step in the project is its planning. This involves determining suitable routes and means of transportation to match customer requirements regarding suppliers and cargo volume, dimensions and weight, and then to compile price quotations. Particularly difficult projects additionally require a feasibility study to be carried out. This is vital for oversized or heavy-lift cargoes, or for transport in regions with a very weak transport infrastructure. So-called “out-of-gauge” shipments require careful evaluation about whether any obstacles could impede or obstruct their route. For some obstacles there are simple solutions. A low branch can be sawed off, roadside telephone poles can be moved where necessary. Other obstacles, such as a bridge that is too low, can force an alternative route to be chosen or another means of transport, or even changes to the product to reduce shipping height.

Whilst it is relatively simple to calculate passage for oversized shipments, for heavy-lift transports things are a lot more difficult. In Western Europe, it is possible to obtain information about maximal admissible weights per vehicle or axle for any stretch of road or any bridge from the relevant authorities. But in Africa this information is often not readily available. Hazardous stretches have to be driven over, and possible critical spots painstakingly examined. Roads and bridges may need shoring up and reinforcing to make transport possible. In the case of heavy loads, terrain is a particularly important factor: steep inclines can require use of additional traction. How will unloading or reloading of such cargoes work at ports or destinations? Is vital infrastructure such as forklifts, cranes, etc. available? Or does the project have to include providing such equipment as well? What about climactic conditions? Do transport routes use roads that are impaired during the rainy season? Following completion of the feasibility study, when all critical factors have been identified, further fine-tuning of the implementation plan takes place.

Drawing up time-schedules is an important part of planning. Most shipments have deadlines set for their delivery and tardy arrival at the destination can hold up the entire project and cause additional costs. Of course, it is also vital to handle individual shipments as efficiently as possible. Is it possible to consolidate individual shipments, perhaps from different points of origin, at a specific hub for onward shipping?
Freight space has to be booked in time. Regular transport services may not have the relevant volume or weight capacity available. Remote destinations may require chartering an airplane or ship. Preparatory work includes customs clearance as well as compiling and checking all relevant documents. Information has to flow smoothly between all parties involved. The project logistics service provider is in constant contact with customers, suppliers, recipients, subcontractors and other parties involved. Depending on its dimensions, the documentation of a logistics project, throughout its entire duration, can grow to an impressive volume and easily fill up an entire filing cabinet.

Effective handling of individual shipments is no less complex. Large-scale bookings, difficult tasks such as transshipment of heavy-lift or out-of-gauge cargoes or their shipping via precarious routes, often require specialists of the Spedag East Africa organization to be present on-site to supervise the handling and to respond immediately to problems. In most cases, consignees arrange for the physical unloading of cargoes at destination. But sometimes the service provider is also contracted to unload and even assemble the goods at the point of destination.

In general, project logistics is one of the most demanding and at the same time also most interesting areas in the transportation and logistics industry. It demands from project specialists a high degree of flexibility, the ability to cope with unforeseen situations and the readiness to perform services far beyond normal working requirements. On the other hand, project specialists enjoy a field of work where each shipment presents a new challenge. No two projects are the same, and the project specialist can look back on each concluded project with pride.
Spedag East Africa enjoys an excellent reputation as reliable and experienced provider of project related transportation and logistics services all over the eastern and southern African region. The client portfolio includes many leading companies, particularly in the construction, mining and electrical power industry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Height (FT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Bujagali Dam, Jinja</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>120'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Brewery Construction, Juba</td>
<td>Southern Sudan</td>
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<td>Bujagali Falls</td>
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<td>Power Station Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Extention of Nile Brewery</td>
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<td>Kasese Cement Plant</td>
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<td>Northern By-Pass, Kampala</td>
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<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Owen Falls Dam Extention</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>30'000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPEDAG EAST AFRICA LTD. (Switzerland)
Founded: 1999
Offices: Basel
Employees: 8
Remarks: Headquarters of the Spedag East Africa Organization

Joseph Lenherr
Managing Director

Thomas Stroh
Regional Manager

Dennis Keiser
Financial Controller

SPEDAG SOUTH AFRICA LTD.
Founded: 1955
Offices: Johannesburg, Durban
Employees: 48
Remarks: Own operated warehouses and delivery vehicles

Anand Reddy
Managing Director

Lorenz Pimpfinger
Regional Projects Mgr.

Jo-Anne Verburg
Sales & Marketing Mgr.

Lionel Ramnarain
Operations Manager

SPEDAG RWANDA SARL
Founded: 1999
Offices: Kigali, Kigali Int. Airport
Employees: 19
Remarks: Representatives at various border posts to Burundi, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Tanzania, Uganda

Bastian Schmitz
General Manager

SPEDAG SOUTHERN SUDAN
Founded: 2008
Offices: Juba
Employees: 6
Remarks: Representatives at various border posts to Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Dem. Rep. of Congo

Emily Tumwine
Key Acct. Manager

SPEDAG SPEDITION KENYA LTD.
Founded: 1999
Offices: Mombasa, Nairobi, Malaba, Kasese
Employees: 82
Remarks: Main gateway for sea-freight shiments to Uganda

Joseph Ngugi
General Manager

Florence Namayanja
Projects Manager

Salmah Buwule
Sales & Marketing Mgr.

Michael Bubendorf
Sales & Marketing Mgr.

SPEDAG INTERNATIONAL TANZANIA LTD.
Founded: 2000
Offices: Dar es Salaam
Employees: 36

Corinne Hafner
General Manager

SPEDAG UGANDA LTD.
Founded: 1999
Offices: Kampala, Entebbe, Jinja, Malaba, Kasese
Employees: 98
Remarks: Own operated ICD, Warehouse (2100m²) ISO 9001:2001 certified

Joram Nyanzi
General Manager

Florence Namayanja
Projects Manager

Salmah Buwule
Sales & Marketing Mgr.

Said Mugerwa
Sales & Marketing Mgr.

SPEDAG SOUTHERN SUDAN
Founded: 2008
Offices: Lubumbashi
Employees: 2
Remarks: Project support office

Lorenz Pimpfinger
Regional Projects Mgr.

SPEDAG BURUNDI
Founded: 2007
Offices: Bujumbura
Employees: 4
Remarks: Project support office

Thierry Singoye
General Manager
FOR A BETTER WORLD

Several years ago, M+R Spedag Group stopped presenting clients with individual gifts at the end of the year, and instead made it a tradition to select and support each year a non-profit cause. Rather than supporting any of the big and global institutions, the company has made it a policy to pick smaller and lesser known organizations in various regions of the world. Several times over the past years we have picked charitable work focussing on Africa.

Since its initiation in the 1960s, the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI) in Tanzania has continuously developed. The main focus of the institute is orthopedic treatment, neurosurgery as well as the treatment of trauma, tumors, osteomyelitis and other degenerative diseases. Besides medical treatment of physical disabilities it opened up a primary school for limb-amputated children in order to improve their prospects in life.

The project has grown into an established medical institution in recent years and earned recognition beyond the region predominantly due to the great personal dedication of the Swiss physician, Dr. Uma Grob. Even though the ultimate goal is self-financing, MOI is still dependent on the goodwill of developed countries.

When the cantonal Hospital of Liestal, Switzerland, Zurich based Schulthess-Clinic and the Stratec Medical corporation donated medical equipment to MOI, M+R Spedag offered to handle the entire logistics from Switzerland all the way to Tanzania. The shipments included surgical instruments and X-Ray equipment that were to be collected from the donors, packed, and sent to Tanzania by airfreight. In Dar-es-Salaam, the local staff of Spedag East Africa handled the customs clearance and ensured for safe delivery to MOI, where it was received by a team of Swiss surgeons led by Prof. Ochsner doing voluntary work.

Winds of Hope Foundation (2004)
After the first non-stop circumnavigation of the earth, balloonists Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones decided to use their prize money to set up a foundation dedicated to the children of the world and to fight almost forgotten infirmities and diseases. The first campaign of the newly founded “Winds of Hope” Foundation was the fight against Noma, a sickness which is a symbol of extreme poverty and especially affects children in an appalling way.

Noma is a devastating sickness which begins in the mouth and from there spreads out over the entire face. Poor hygiene and malnutrition are causes. Extreme poverty is the ideal breeding ground for the spread of Noma. Without treatment, 80% of all cases lead to death. Survivors of the disease are stricken with abominable mutilations. After they had helped to begin the national campaign in Niger in 2000, Winds of Hope decided to finance comparable projects in Burkina Faso, Mali and Benin. In each case 5-year programs were planned which were initiated with the cooperation of national health ministries and the WHO in Africa. The goal is to train the native representatives at a village level in prevention and early diagnosis of the sickness.

Swiss AIDS Care International (2006)
Founded in Spring 2003, Swiss AIDS Care International is an NGO dedicated to providing direct help for people with HIV in the poorest countries of the world. Sufferers are offered comprehensive medical care and support, specifically tailored to local needs. Professor Ruedi Luethy, the organization’s founder and a renowned expert in the field of HIV and AIDS, has been living in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, since August 2003. There he has been overseeing the building of the first clinic, which includes a dedicated laboratory and its own training facility for local medical staff.

Unfortunately, access to treatment for AIDS in the Third World is mainly confined to adults, though of course a large number of children are also affected. In the industrialized
world, fewer than 500 children a year contract AIDS from their mother at birth, whereas in the Third World that figure is more than 1,000 a day. Taking effective action to tackle this tragedy is one of the main objectives of Swiss AIDS Care International. Children need specific forms of treatment that are easy to administer and can be continually adjusted to their body weight.

With the help of a team of pediatric doctors and nurses from Switzerland, Ruedi Luethy has come up with a solution that ensures the proper, effective treatment of children, even in the developing world. At his clinic in Harare, original tablets – each containing a single substance – are crushed and then used to fill capsules, providing the correct dosage based on the weight of the child being treated. The capsules can be swallowed whole or their contents can be mixed in with the child’s food. This method is extremely laborious and therefore far more expensive than a comparable treatment for adults. However, there is no effective alternative for treating children in the Third World right now.

Editions Bakame (2008)
In 1995 Agnes Gyr, originally of Rwanda, living in Switzerland since 1979, founded the publishing house “Editions Bakame”. Modeled after the Swiss “SJW” foundation, the aim was to make available decent literature to Rwandan children and youths, in the Rwandan national language.

“Bakame” is the name of the clever hare, a popular character in Rwandan fairytales. While Rwanda has a culture of storytelling, literature does not have much of a tradition. With a population of 8 million, the country has only 3 commercial bookshops and few libraries. Writers are not found in large numbers either. To cope with this challenge, Editions Bakame started to train writers and illustrators themselves.

Since its founding, Editions Bakame has released 27 titles with a total volume of 450’000 copies. This includes fiction and non-fiction, youth and illustrated novels. The organization has 6 full time employees, and has been recognized in Rwanda as a non-profit organization since 2002. The books and booklets are inexpensive, but are purposely not being given away for free. “Otherwise they would be regarded as objects without value and would not be treasured by the children and youths”, says Agnes Gyr.

Reach Out (2009)
Reach Out - Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative was founded in Uganda in May 2001 by Dr Margrethe Juncker and Fr Joseph Archetti Guiseppe. From its humble beginnings with only 14 clients, Reach Out has grown to serve over 2,700 (December 2007) people living with HIV/AIDS in the Mbuya Parish. More than 1,500 of the clients are on free anti-retroviral medicines. The micro-finance and income-generating programs have been expanded to serve over 1,000 clients and their families.

As part of the celebrations to mark their 10th Anniversary celebrations, Spedag Uganda Ltd. is supporting Reach Out. “As we continue to grow in both the local and regional market, we undertake to contribute positively to the wellbeing of the community in which we live”, says Joram Nyanzi, General Manager of Spedag Uganda. The donations of Spedag are being used to build additional shelters for the patients.

For more information please visit the respective websites of the individual institutions:
www.moi.ac.tz  (Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute)
www.windsofhope.org  (Winds of Hope Foundation)
www.swissaidscare.ch  (Swiss Aids Care International)
www.bakame.ch  (Editions Bakame)
www.reachoutmbuya.org  (Reach Out - Mbuya Parish)
A logistics company, M+R Spedag, is responsible for delivering the necessary equipment to the park from Europe to Africa. This is important because many of the rangers cannot afford the right clothing such as raincoats, good shoes, and backpacks. B&RD is also active in ensuring that rangers get this equipment, much of which is bought abroad and then shipped to Africa. To accomplish this, the organization requires the support of a logistics company such as the M+R Spedag Group. Thanks to its strong presence in Africa, M+R Spedag is able to deliver goods even in remote and high-risk areas. B&RD and the park rangers are happy to be able to work with such a reliable partner.

The Organization

Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe (B&RD) has dedicated itself to protecting mountain gorillas and their habitats since 1984 through targeted project promotion, research, and information. Together with other organizations, it supports research projects, which are conducted primarily by local scientists.

The first count of the mountain gorillas in the Virunga Mountains since 1989 took place in 2003. Counts help scientists determine which protective measures are effective and where to use their limited funding.

The entire B&RD board of directors works on a volunteer basis, and all donations are used for projects. Bureaucracy is kept to a minimum.

www.berggorilla.org
The gradual economic upturn following World War II also saw continuous growth of the activities of Spedag, founded 1928 in Basel, Switzerland. Before the war, the Rhine was Spedag’s main transport artery. But post war, the company started to extend its activities overseas. Besides Latin America, Spedag began to specialize in shipping and transportation to South Africa.

1952 marked an important milestone: Spedag – officially still known as Speditions AG – acquired the Swiss agency for the German East Africa Line and also the South Africa Line, with headquarters in Cape Town. In subsequent years, the company gained a strong reputation as a reliable specialist for shipping from Switzerland and neighboring countries in Europe to South Africa. Building on this success, Speditions AG dispatched its own delegate to South Africa, thus becoming one of the first European transportation companies to have a representative there.

This agency represented the interests of Spedag in South Africa for over a quarter of a century. The Johannesburg-based office did not just supervise incoming freight from Europe, but of course also focused on promoting the Spedag brand in South Africa and winning shipping contracts from local importers.

In 1979, M+R Metzger+Richner Transport AG acquired Spedag Speditions AG, by then one of the internationally best-known transportation companies for South Africa-bound cargoes. Cargoes from Switzerland and Europe were routed via Spedag’s warehouses in Rotterdam and Antwerp. The newly formed M+R Spedag Group formulated a new strategy of expanding their overseas services, and in 1981 the agency in South Africa was transformed into a fully operational company with offices in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.

The abolition of the apartheid system at the start of the 1990s ushered in a new chapter in the history of South Africa. While the world applauded the abolition of racial segregation and the hand-over of power, the economy responded less positively. Large-scale changes create the potential for major problems and increase uncertainty about the future. As a result, the investment climate in South Africa deteriorated.
But the country’s role as Africa’s economic and financial hub remained unchanged.

The founding of the Spedag East Africa Organization at the end of the 1990s constituted a new strategic direction for Spedag South Africa. The focus shifted from the general cargo business to project logistics. As a result, the company started regularly to implement large-scale projects not only in South Africa, but also in neighboring southern African countries such as Mozambique and Namibia.

South Africa’s overall economic dominant role in Africa is also reflected in trade flows. Spedag South Africa, in collaboration with Spedag Uganda, has launched a regular overland service from Johannesburg to Kampala and is the only company providing such a service. South Africa also plays an important role in project logistics. South Africa’s mining industry has huge expertise and South African companies are internationally active, above all throughout Africa, and in particular in deep mining.

Today, fifty years after establishing an agency in Africa and ten years after the group massively expanded its presence on the African continent by founding a range of subsidiaries in East Africa, Spedag South Africa and Spedag East Africa are working together in close concert. The central office for East Africa, located at the M+R Spedag Group HQ in Basel, directly oversees activities in both South and East Africa. A regional office located in Johannesburg manages the operational implementation of projects throughout Africa.

We can be proud of what we have achieved. The company has been active in South Africa for over half a century, becoming one of the country’s best-known transportation and logistics companies. Together with its affiliate in East Africa, M+R Spedag is now one of the foremost companies in the project sector in many parts of Africa today.
AN AFRICAN SUCCESS STORY

In Uganda, Spedag is one of the very few companies providing comprehensive and above all dependable transportation and logistics services. In the ten years since its founding, Spedag Uganda Limited has grown to become one of the most important players in the country’s transportation and logistics industry.

Uganda, the landlocked East African country, is often referred to as a ‘Pearl of Africa’, thanks to its fertile soils. When, in 1962, Uganda achieved independence after 70 years of British protectorate, a period of political turmoil followed, which ushered in the repressive rule of the dictator Idi Amin. After Amin was overthrown twenty years ago, the new president launched a process of democratization. Thanks to its political stability and resulting economic growth, the country is often regarded as an example for other African countries to follow.

That’s why the Spedag East African Organization was also formed around Uganda. Spedag Uganda Ltd., founded in 1999 and M+R Spedag Group’s largest country subsidiary in Africa, does not only handle local Ugandan business, but also acts as the operational head office for the whole organization in East Africa. Spedag Uganda has made remarkable progress in the ten years since its establishment. The Uganda head office is strategically located in Luzira, only a few kilometers outside the capital city of Kampala. The 15,000m² premises contain office buildings, open and covered storage areas, a bonded customs zone, and a container yard including all necessary equipment such as forklifts, mobile cranes, stackers etc.

The company has a workforce of over 100 in Uganda. Besides the Kampala head office, the company has branches throughout the whole country. In Entebbe, at Kampala International Airport, the company operates a dedicated air freight office. There are support and sales offices in Jinja, Uganda’s second largest city, and in Kasese in Western Uganda, near the border to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The office in Malaba, at the border-crossing between Kenya and Uganda, also plays an important role.

Spedag Uganda’s activities are split into the two main sectors of General Cargo and Project Logistics. General Cargo focuses mainly on import services of industrial and consumer goods. Spedag is the only company providing direct consolidation services by sea freight from Europe to Kampala, in direct containers that are not unloaded in Mombasa. Also in overland transportation, Spedag offers customers regular groupage services from distant Johannesburg to Kampala. Spedag Uganda is the logistics partner of choice for some of the best-known companies in the country. For instance, Spedag ships all imports for the country’s largest brewery: machinery and spare parts for production facilities, and barley and malt for the brewing process. In the cement industry, Spedag is a reliable logistics partner supporting local producers, ensuring that spare parts for machines are speedily delivered, or that cement bags are continuously supplied to the factories.

In the field of project logistics, Spedag counts as one of the most expert companies in Uganda and indeed through-

ICO (Inland Container Depot) and staff of Spedag Uganda in Kampala
out East Africa. The company boasts an impressive list of references for large-scale projects implemented over the last 10 years. Hydroelectric power stations on the River Nile, road-building projects in remote areas, water treatment and supply works, aid shipping for UNCHR or building construction such as for the new US embassy in Kampala. All the project specialists of Spedag Uganda have many years of experience and expertise operating in this difficult environment, carrying out comprehensive feasibility studies and ensuring painstaking implementation of complex projects. To guarantee highest quality standards and service levels, processes are continually checked and optimized to comply with the company’s ISO 9001:2001 norms.

The close interaction between the individual Spedag East Africa Organization stations plays a key role. The branches in Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam possess great importance. Both these seaports are vital gateways for cargoes destined for the land-locked destinations in East Africa. To move the flow of cargo to the hinterland, Spedag has a fleet of some 40 trucks constantly shuttling between Mombasa and Kampala. If needed, they can mobilize up to 200 vehicles at short notice, e.g. on arrival of a charter ship in Mombasa, the cargo of which has to be transported swiftly to Uganda. Spedag Kenya and Spedag Uganda run a joint tracking system for these vehicles. On the Mombasa-Uganda route, the vehicles pass a number of checkpoints where they are registered and recorded electronically. The Spedag East Africa specialists and the customers can thus always locate and track the exact location of the goods.

Spedag is one of the very few companies in Ugandan logistics that can provide full-service solutions. The company is already a household name in Ugandan business. Traditionally, Spedag has also a strong social involvement in Uganda and supports a number of organizations such as “Reach Out”, a non-profit organization combating HIV/AIDS.
Our Network of M+R SPEDAG GROUP companies in Africa:

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<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Bujumbura</td>
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<td>+257 22 222 092</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bjm@bi.spedag.com">bjm@bi.spedag.com</a></td>
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<td>D.R. Congo</td>
<td>Kolwezi</td>
<td>Spedag DRC</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Mombasa</td>
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