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Rose-painted plane on the other side of the world

Round Africa in a small plane

Private pilot Uwe Thomas Carstensen and his co-pilot Martin Grohganz have been away since 1 November. Their objective is to fly round the African continent in a single-engine plane. On Sunday, 28 November, they encountered a heavy sandstorm in Lüderitz, Namibia. Because they were concerned about the plane's engine, they immediately took off again for Windhoek. As a result, they reached their first leg's final destination two days earlier than planned. They have now covered around 16,400 kilometres from Hanover via Greece, Egypt, the Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa and Namibia. The pilots have written a journal of their trip at www.globeflight-rallye.com.

“Because I've seen it with my own eyes, I now have a completely different image of Africa. It's not the negative reports that dominate, but all the many positive ones from the countries I've visited so far”, explains Carstensen. Some of the contributory factors were the visits to DSW or German Foundation for World Population projects in Uganda, Ethiopia and Tanzania. In youth clubs, educational facilities and a women's refuge, the pilots talked to young people, above all women, who are managing their lives confidently. The MUT foundation, initiated by Carstensen and his wife Marie, supports DSW sex education and HIV prophylaxis projects.

In Addis Ababa, Carstensen and Grohganz were received by the Ethiopian Minister for Women, Youth and Children. They were also guests of the German ambassador in Ethiopia and in Kampala, Uganda. The local TV stations and newspapers reported in detail on the two pilots from Hanover, Germany and their visits to the DSW projects.

In their flight plan, Carstensen and Grohganz also had time for tourist trips to discover more about the countries and people. The Serengeti, the Victoria Falls and a safari in the Okavango Delta were just some of the highlights.

During the Christmas holidays, maintenance will be carried out on the rose-



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painted Cessna T206H in Windhoek. The second leg of the African flight will commence on 5 February with 13 stops in countries like Angola, Cameroon and Mali and across the Sahara. After covering roughly 12,400 kilometres in 60 hours of flying time, the pilots aim to touch down on 28 February in Hanover.

Captions

Photo 1: Zenebu Tadesse, Minister for Women, Youth and Children, receives Uwe Thomas Carstensen in Addis Ababa

Photo 2: in Livingstone Martin Grohganz (left) and Uwe Thomas Carstensen get right up close to a giraffe

Photo 3: the sand in the Okavango delta left its mark on the rose-painted plane

Photo 4: an elephant right next to the runway

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