

# Australia-Africa Mining & Energy News Brief

SUPPORTING AUSTRALIAN MINERALS AND ENERGY SUCCESS IN AFRICA



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## Africa – General ...

### **Saudi and Qatar: the Arab's battle for Africa**

Isolated on its peninsula, Doha is meticulously advancing on the African continent, but is facing strong opposition from its Saudi and Emirati neighbours. For two years now, the Qatari leadership has tried to made progress in Africa. In the wake of the embargo against them by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt in June 2017, several African countries have now also cut diplomatic relations with Qatar; Mauritania, Gabon, Djibouti, Comoros, Senegal, Chad and Niger calling back their ambassadors from Doha.

"There was some panic for a moment", recognises a Qatari official, but he felt that this diplomatic episode of ostracising Qatar by these particular countries marked the beginning of renewed consciousness of the situation in Doha: the African continent can no longer be neglected.

Report based on source: Jeune Afrique 10 May 2019, report by Jihâd Gillon

<https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/767701/politique/qatar-arabie-saoudite-la-bataille-pour-lafrique/>

## Benin

### **Once a beacon of African democracy, Benin slides backwards**

With only two parties on the ballot, both of them supporters of President Patrice Talon, Benin's general election on 28 April was an unhappy throwback to the country's post-independence Marxist era, when voters had no real choice. This was all the more dispiriting because Benin was in the vanguard of Africa's democratic revival in the early 1990s, when its long-serving leader, Mathieu Kérékou, became the first incumbent president on the continent to let his people peacefully vote him out of office.

Since then, the Beninois have managed freely to elect three more presidents, and prevented Mr Talon's predecessor from flouting the constitution's two-term limit. This time, however, new electoral laws made it cumbersome and expensive to field candidates. All opposition parties were barred for not following them to the letter. So Beninois voted with their backsides: only 27% of them bothered to go to the polls.

Mr Talon admitted before the poll that the exclusion of opposition parties "brings discredit on our democracy and on me". By staying at home in record numbers, voters in Benin rebuked him for holding the election anyway.

They hope that sooner or later the president cottons on. Maybe?

Report based on source: In « Middle East and Africa », The Economist, 11 May 2019

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## Ghana/Mozambique....

### **Total agrees with Occidental to contingent acquisition of Anadarko's assets in Africa**

Total announces that it has reached a binding agreement with Occidental to acquire Anadarko's assets in Africa (Algeria, Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa) for a consideration of USD8.8-billion in the event of a successful completion of Occidental's ongoing bid for Anadarko. The transaction is contingent upon Occidental entering into and completing its proposed acquisition of Anadarko and to approval by the relevant authorities and is expected to close in 2020. Overall, these assets represent around 1.2 billion boe of 2P reserves, of which 70% is gas, plus 2 billion boe of long term natural gas resources in Mozambique. 2018 equity production was 96 kboe/d and is expected to grow to around 160 kboe/d by 2025.

Source: *Africa Business Communities*

## Burkina Faso

### Major transport works to open up the country

End-March, President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré inaugurated the inter-State Road Koupéla-Bittou-Cinkansé to the border with Togo (National 16). The work, costing some 100 billion CFA (~150 million euros) includes the rehabilitation of more than 150 km of road and six bridges. The modernisation of this road allows for a considerable improvement for traffic between Burkina and Lomé, its main port of supply and capital of Togo, boosting intra-community and international trade. The road investment programme has funds of 250 billion CFA francs (~375 million euros) for the year 2019.

Report based on source: 'Transports : au Burkina Faso, des chantiers majeurs engagés pour désenclaver le pays', Jeune Afrique 9 May 2019 by Nadoun Coulibaly

<https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/767668/economie/transports-au-burkina-faso-des-chantiers-majeurs-engages-pour-desenclaver-le-pays/>

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## Cameroon

### 'No secession' but the government is ready to enter in negotiations

In the face of international pressure, President Paul Biya is organising a national dialogue to assist in resolving the separatist crisis in Cameroon. This opens up the stance displayed so far by the government in Yaoundé, which to now has excluded any discussion about the partition of the country, as demanded by the separatists. 'The president sends me to the people of the Northwest, and, with the exception of separation or secession, any political subject can be discussed', said Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute, presently touring the English-speaking regions of Cameroon, where he arrived with a branch of fekeng (local tree) in his hand, regarded as a sign of peace.

Report based on source: Jeune Afrique 10 May 2019, by Jeune Afrique avec AFP

<https://www.jeuneafrique.com/773402/politique/cameroun-hormis-la-separation-et-la-secession-yaounde-se-dit-pret-a-dialoguer/>

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## Chad / DRC

### **Le Drian, the pathfinder**

On 20 May, Jean-Yves Le Drian will visit N'Djamena, capital of Chad. The French Foreign Minister intends to discuss various regional crises with President Idriss Déby Itno: Libya, Sudan and Central African Republic. He will then fly to Kinshasa and join the French Prime Minister in an official visit to the DRC, their first since the appointment of Félix Tshisekedi as President. The details of this trip were sketched out on 13 March in Nairobi, at a dinner hosted by Uhuru Kenyatta, the Kenyan President, for his French and DRC counterparts, Emmanuel Macron and Félix Tshisekedi, and at which Jean-Yves Le Drian was also present.

According to a senior official in Paris, this visit to the DRC is aimed at "reviving" bilateral cooperation between France and the DRC, particularly in the areas of security, health and education. There is no doubt that the head of French diplomacy will try to cover up a past statement of his, questioning the legitimacy of the election results placing Tshisekedi in the presidency.

Report based on source: 'Le Drian, en éclaireur' 12 May 2019, in Jeune Afrique, no. 3044 p 9

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## DRC

### **Félix Tshisekedi and Joseph Kabila, a marriage of convenience**

Up to now, they seemed opposed, but today Felix Tshisekedi and Joseph Kabila are walking in step together. It's however difficult to tell who is the real 'boss', the President or his predecessor.

Whatever... Between the two men, the arrangement seems to be working, at least for now!

Report based on source: Jeune Afrique 13 may 2019, report by Pierre Boisselet  
[https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/773221/politique/rdc-felix-tshisekedi-et-joseph-kabila-un-mariage-de-raison/?utm\\_source=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes-14-05-19](https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/773221/politique/rdc-felix-tshisekedi-et-joseph-kabila-un-mariage-de-raison/?utm_source=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes-14-05-19)

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## Ghana

### Eni makes gas discovery in Akoma prospect offshore Ghana

Eni announces a gas and condensate discovery in CTP-Block 4, offshore Ghana. The well, drilled on the Akoma exploration prospect, proved an estimated volume between 550 and 650 bcf of gas and 18-20 mmbbl of condensate. The discovery has further additional upside for gas and oil that will require further drilling to be confirmed. The exploration well Akoma – 1X is located approximately 50 kilometres off the coast and about 12 km north-west from Sankofa hub, where the John Agyekum Kufuor FPSO is located. The well was drilled by the Maersk Voyager drilling ship in a water depth of 350 meters and reached a total depth of 3790 meters. Akoma – 1X proved a single gas and condensate column in a 20 m thick sandstone reservoir interval of Cenomanian age with good

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## Kenya

### Kwale-based Titanium firm to extend mine life

Australian mining firm Base Resources is seeking to expand its Kwale mine to a new site with an estimated resource estimate of 171 million metric tonnes. The move could extend the company's local operations beyond 2024, benefiting employees and the government, which earns royalties at a rate of 2.5% of the value of export sales. Base Resources has nearly exhausted titanium minerals at the Central Dune where it started mining and is currently shifting its operations to the South Dune. The multinational says it is also planning ahead to mine in the North Dune, which has 171 million tonnes of raw titanium reserves. The firm will continue drilling on the North Dune this year with an aim of increasing and further understanding the mineral reserves.

Source: *Business Daily*

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## Libya

### **TOTAL's activities suspended by the government in Tripoli (in a tiff with France)**

Some forty international companies have seen their activities halted in Libya, following the issuance of a decree of the government of national unity residing in Tripoli. The activities of Total in Libya, which account for almost one third of national oil production of some 1.2 million BOPD, were suspended by Fayed al – Sarraj's government on his return from meeting France's President Macron.

A few 'bad words' in French may have been exchanged?

Report based on source: Jeune Afrique, 10 mai 2019 by JA

<https://www.jeuneafrique.com/773186/economie/libye-les-activites-de-total-suspendues-par-tripoli/>

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## Morocco

### **Moroccan Sahara**

Morocco has welcomed the adoption, by the UN Security Council on Tuesday of Resolution 2468 on the Moroccan Sahara, which largely meets the expectations of the Kingdom. The Security Council reaffirmed in its 3rd consecutive resolution on the Western Sahara issue that the purpose of the exclusively UN process is to reach a realistic, pragmatic, durable political solution which is based on compromise. The UN had welcomed the positive momentum given by the two round-table meetings held in December and March and is now calling on all parties, including the neighbouring countries, to engage seriously in the political process to identify elements of agreement.

According to the Moroccans, it is the first time since 1975, that the UN Council has mentioned Algeria in this resolution of the situation. The executive body of the United Nations seemingly acknowledging the pre-eminence of the autonomy initiative, presented by Morocco on April 11, 2007, and commending the serious and credible efforts made by Morocco to move forward in the process aimed at settling the Western Sahara conflict.

Report based on source: 'Morocco' Editorial by Karim Medrek Ambassador of His Majesty the King, 13 May 2019, in 'Weekly' from the Morocco Embassy in Canberra,

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## Mozambique

### **Mozambique to invest USD200-million to rebuild a railway link to Zimbabwe**

Mozambique wants to invest USD200-million to rebuild a railway link to Zimbabwe, Macauhub announced quoting official sources. The new investment is to be made by the Caminhos de Ferro de Moçambique (CFM). It will help rebuild Machipanda railway linking Beira port (Mozambique) to Zimbabwe, after the havoc wrecked by Cyclone Idai in March 2019. This will improve services provided and ensure the transport of goods to other countries such as Zimbabwe that has no seafloor. No detail has been provided as far as the funding sources are concerned.

Source: *Ecofin Agency*

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## South Africa

### **South Africa Elections:**

A quarter-century after the African National Congress first took control of South Africa's government, the political party managed to come out on top in general elections last week, securing its hold on power — at least for now

But the narrow margin of the historic party's win also reflected a long-brewing discontent with South Africa's political sphere.

The ANC took home only 57.5 percent of the vote — a sign of growing distrust in its leadership, which has suffered scandal after scandal in recent years. This was the first time that the ANC won less than 60 percent of the vote in a general election, making the results both a win and a loss for the party, which has struggled to excite voters in the wake of widespread corruption allegations.

Source: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/05/13/can-south-africas-ramaphosa-turn-country-around/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.de69338de51c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/05/13/can-south-africas-ramaphosa-turn-country-around/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.de69338de51c)

## **ANC wins elections, but with a reduced majority**

South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) has been returned to office after winning the parliamentary election, but with a much reduced majority. The ANC secured 58% of the vote, ahead of the Democratic Alliance (DA) on 21%. The radical Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), came third with 11%.

A struggling economy and corruption have eroded the ANC's popularity, but ANC's leader, President Cyril Ramaphosa, called on the people to build a united South Africa.

Report based on source: BBC African News online 12 May 2019  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48211598>

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## **Sudan**

### **Agreement between the military and civil society on a three year political transition**

General Yasser Atta of the Sudanese army and member of the present Military Council announced on Wednesday 15 May, that the military had reached agreement with representatives of protesters on a three-year political transition period.

Report based on source: 'Soudan : accord entre manifestants et militaires sur une transition politique de trois ans', Jeune Afrique 15 May 2019, by AFP  
[https://www.jeuneafrique.com/774859/politique/soudan-accord-entre-manifestants-et-militaires-sur-une-transition-politique-de-trois-ans/?utm\\_source=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes-15-05-19](https://www.jeuneafrique.com/774859/politique/soudan-accord-entre-manifestants-et-militaires-sur-une-transition-politique-de-trois-ans/?utm_source=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter-ja-actu-abonnes-15-05-19)

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## **Tanzania**

### **Tanzania government to spend Sh102.2-billion on airports construction and rehabilitation**

The Tanzania government plans to spend some Sh102.2-billion for construction, upgrading and rehabilitation of airports in the next financial year as part of the efforts to uplift the aviation industry. Development partners are expected to inject in some Sh62.2-billion of the budget with local sources contributing the rest. In parliament, Works, Transport and Communications minister Isack Kamwele presented the next financial year's budget proposal of Sh4.9-trillion for his docket, of which some Sh4.8-trillion was meant for development projects, with the rest set aside for recurrent and other expenditure. Some priorities to be implemented in the next financial year as construction of Msalato, Kigoma, Sumbawanga, Tabora and Shinyanga airports.

Source: *The Citizen*



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## Togo

### **New laws may let Gnassingbé rule till 2030**

Members of parliament in Togo have approved amendments to the constitution which will potentially allow President Faure Gnassingbé to rule until 2030. The laws now allow a five-year and six-year cap on the presidential and legislative mandates, without taking into account Gnassingbé's past three terms. They also grant immunity to past presidents and prevent them from being tried, arrested or detained for any crimes committed while in power.

The good: Not a lot of good in this for Togo, but there's finally a limit on presidential terms, which represents some progress.

The bad: The new amendments do not apply retrospectively and Togo may have to wait 10 more years to be free of Faure Gnassingbé. Also, Gnassingbé, who already faces several human rights violation allegations, may never be tried even after he leaves power.

Nevertheless, Gnassingbé underestimates his people if he thinks there won't be any form of pushback. Protestors have told me they will not relent till he leaves power. It means there will be more protests. Many have already been killed or injured and that's likely to happen again if protestors fill the streets once more.

The future: Expect more protests in the lead up to general elections in 2020. The opposition may come back stronger but will need to rethink its strategy by rallying behind a single candidate if it intends to successfully unseat Gnassingbé.

Report based on source: 'New laws may let Gnassingbé rule till 2030' In Africa Insiders' Newsletter by African Arguments, 14 May 2019

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## Uganda

### **Total receives approval for Tilenga development in Uganda**

Total E&P has secured the green light for its major oil project also known as Tilenga to proceed after 10 months of evaluations by Uganda's environmental body. Total E&P said the approval by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) is a major step in Uganda's journey to produce oil but conservationists are concerned that proper procedures were not followed, which could endanger the environment. The Tilenga project is the main centre-piece of the oil projects that are supposed to bring into Uganda investments of over USD20-billion but its location at the heart of Murchison Falls National Park, one of Uganda's leading tourist destinations and home to endangered species of animals, birds, insects and reptiles, has for long made conservationists nervous.

Source: *Energy Mix Report*

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## Zimbabwe

### **The Central Bank is to pay an 'Incentive price' to encourage gold production**

Fidelity Printers and Refiners, the Central Bank unit that redeems all gold produced in Zimbabwe, has announced that it will pay miners an "incentive" price in addition to the contract purchase price, the aim being to encourage gold production in the country.

According to the WTO, gold is Zimbabwe's second-largest export product after tobacco and under Zimbabwean law, producers are obliged to sell all gold to Fidelity Printers and Refiners. However, it is unclear how long the incentive price will continue, whether it can be adjusted in the future and whether it is subject to taxes on income and royalties in force in the country.

Report based on source » Ecofin Agency 13 may 2019 <https://www.agenceecofin.com/or/1305-66090-zimbabwe-la-banque-centrale-veut-payer-un-prix-de-soutien-pour-encourager-la-production-d-or>