

Niamey, Niger, September 17 (Infosplusgabon) – An agreement for the building and exploitation of the Niger-Benin oil pipeline was signed on Sunday in Niamey between the Nigerien minister of Oil, Foumakoye Gado, and the chairman of the board of directors of the China National Oil and Gas exploration and development corporation (CNODC), Wang Zhong Cai.

The convention, signed under the supervision of the Nigerien Prime Minister, Brigi Rafini, provides for the building, with immediate effect, of a 2,000-kilometer-long pipeline its destination as the maritime Atlantic coast for the transport of Nigerien crude oil to the international market.

Once achieved, the pipeline will enable Niger to multiply by 5 its daily oil production, to rise from 20,000 barrels/day to 100,000 barrels/day as soon as the end of works in 2021. The construction works will be launched on Tuesday by Nigerien president Issoufou Mahamadou from the locality of Boulélé (region of Zinder, 900 km east of Niamey).

In his preliminary speech, the Nigerien minister of Oil, Foumakoye Gado insisted on the will for the two countries to get this process completed to provide Niger with pipeline.

"To get to this unforgettable date in the Nigerien oil history, time was spent and tough negotiations undertaken. The process was relatively long and took five years," he said.

"It was also deeply negotiated, largely discussed between Nigerien and Chinese parties before ending finally with the signing of this very important convention that paves Niger the way for true revolution in the oil domain, that of new oil producer and exporting country," he said.

The chairman of the board of directors of the China National Oil and Gas exploration and development corporation (CNODC), Mr Wang Zhong Cai, underlined the will of his group to help Niger ensure significantly its oil productivity and export.

He said he was confident that the pipeline project will have positive impacts for Niger within the framework of its efforts for development and youth employment.

"CNODC insists in win-win deals concerned with the development of regions or zones concerned by the project," Mr. Cai.

Mr Cai reaffirmed before the Prime Minister the commitment of the Chinese party to respect the terms of the convention for the production and exploitation of the Phase II of the Agadem bloc and the Niger-Benin pipeline before the end of the year 2021.

"The pipeline project is a big structuring project, a project that bears much hope for the Nigeriens. Its materialization will enable Niger to exercise fully its status as oil producing country," said the Prime Minister while showing confidence that with this second phase, Niger is moving towards very interesting perspectives.

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