



ALGERIA BRITISH BUSINESS COUNCIL



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ABBC Monthly Business Environment Round-Up

February 2023

President Tebboune signals possible change in import policy...

In February 2023, Algeria's State-owned press agency, the APS, published excerpts of a speech made by President Abdelmadjid Tebboune's during a meeting of the Council of Ministers. According to the APS, President Tebboune is 'not at all happy with the government's handling of certain issues' and has been misunderstood, particularly with regard to imports and local manufacturing. It suggests that the President's insistence on 'protecting domestic manufacturing' has been misunderstood as 'protectionism' and asserted that he 'has never banned imports' but rather 'demanded an end to the anarchy' that had enabled overbilling and illegal currency transfers in the past. The President added that 'no country in the world is self-sufficient and imports are necessary', in a sign that Algeria may be looking to ease some of the restrictions that have been introduced in recent years.

...as new investment drive continues...

Algeria's new investment promotion agency, the AAPI, continued to register new investment projects throughout February. By the middle of the month, the number of investment projects registered since the agency was created in November 2022 reached 1,175. The projects represent an overall investment value estimated at more than 389bn DZD (2.8mn USD) and have enabled the creation of more than 30,000 jobs. They include 29 foreign investment projects, including 11 Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and 18 projects that are partnerships between Algerian and foreign companies. The AAPI was created under Algeria's new investment law, which is designed to simplify the procedures for company creation and boost investment in the country. The agency brings together representatives of all administrations involved in investing, so that project holders can deal with a single point of contact and resolve any issues that might arise more easily.

...and a major solar project gets off the ground

In late February, the State-owned group Sonelgaz launched a national and international invitation to tender to build 15 solar power plants with a total capacity of 2,000 MW. The solar power plants, each with a capacity of between 80 and 220 MWp, will be located across 11 wilayas, namely Batna, Biskra (3), Bordj Bou Arreridj, Béchar (2), El Oued (2), Ghardaïa, Laghouat, M 'Ghaier, M'sila, Tيارت and Touggourt. The invitation to tender is aimed at companies operating in the energy sector that can provide proof of their ability to perform all of the services mentioned and that have proven and authenticated references in similar projects. Tenders must be submitted no later than 29th May 2023 at 10 am.

The invitation to tender is intended as the first stage of Algeria's renewable development plan, which should see the creation of 15,000 MW of renewable energy capacity by 2035. The plan is designed to enable the country to 'gradually free itself from its dependence on conventional resources, to preserve fossil resources, to change the energy production and consumption model and to ensure sustainable development and environmental protection'.

Start-ups step in to boost e-payment solutions

Also in February, a representative of the Ministry of the Knowledge Economy, Start-ups and Micro-enterprises Nourredine Ouadah, announced that 'the private sector will start to become involved this year' in the introduction of e-payment solutions in Algeria. Indeed, Ouadah explained that 'in order to boost electronic payment, which is lagging behind in Algeria, start-ups will be allowed to operate as Payment Service Providers (PSP)'.

Ouadah underlined the fact that an increasing number of start-ups have begun to make a name for themselves in the Algerian economic landscape and noted that a third of these young companies are



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active in the ICT sector. He suggested that there is a growing ecosystem of start-ups that have begun to gravitate around Algérie Télécom, notably working as subcontractors.

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