



ALGERIA BRITISH BUSINESS COUNCIL



CHAIRMAN: **Lady Olga Maitland** (olga.maitland@abbc.org.uk)
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: **Yassine Bouhara** PRESIDENT ALGERIA: **Arslan Chikhaoui**
CEO / COUNTRY MANAGER ALGERIA: **Maya Boumedine** (maya.boumedine@abbc.org.uk)

UK OFFICE: 73 Cornhill, London, EC3V 3QQ | Tel: +44 7778 917133 | Email: office@abbc.org.uk
ALGERIA OFFICE: ABBC, 3 Chemin Mohamed Drareni, Hydra 16405, Alger | Tel: +213 (0) 556604950



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Algeria simplifies visa procedures to boost desert tourism

In late December, the Ministry of the Interior announced that foreign tourists travelling directly to southern Algeria via approved Algerian travel agencies may now obtain a visa on their arrival at border posts, at airports and land crossings, without having to apply for an ordinary visa in advance. Under the new system, approved tourist agencies will enter the data relating to the itinerary and the tourists involved via a digital platform that they can access at the tourism and handicraft departments of the wilayas involved. Authorities in Algeria have made the move to soften the travel restrictions as part of efforts to boost desert tourism. Direct flights to southern Algeria from Europe are available, notably between Paris and Djanet.

One-stop shop continues to register new investment projects

In mid-January, the Director of Algeria's new One-stop shop for major projects and foreign investments run by the Algerian Agency for the Promotion of Investments (AAPI), stated that the organism has registered 29 investment projects worth 92bn DZD over the preceding two months. This included 22 projects led by overseas investors, or in partnership between Algerian and overseas investors. The projects are in a variety of sectors including construction materials, new and renewable energies, agriculture, manufacturing (plastics and chemicals for the industrial sector) and the automotive industry.

The One-stop shop includes representatives of all administrations involved in business creation and investments, including those of the tax administration, town planning services, social security funds and customs administration, among others. Until recently, investors were required to go to each of these administrations in person and submit separate applications to each. However, the One-stop shop is designed to simplify the procedure of creating a business by acting as a single, centralised point of contact with the aim of boosting investment in the country.

Sonatrach announces plans to invest 40bn USD over five years and plans for new upstream partnerships

In early January, the CEO of the State-owned oil and gas group Sonatrach, Toufik Hakkar, said that the group plans to invest more than 30bn USD in oil and gas exploration and production activities, with a particular focus on natural gas, within the framework of its five-year investment plan (2023- 2027). Sonatrach also plans to invest more than 7bn USD in refining, petrochemicals and gas liquefaction projects. Nearly 1bn USD will be set aside for projects focusing on the energy transition. These include flared gas recovery projects at production sites and LNG complexes, photovoltaic solar electricity projects to supply production sites, and pilot projects for the production and transport of green hydrogen.

The total amount of investments planned by Sonatrach over the next five years is similar to the amount planned for 2022 and 2021. The group hopes, however, to be able to conclude new upstream contracts in partnership with foreign companies under the new Hydrocarbons Law, for which the implementation texts were published in 2021.

Green Energy Cluster Algeria hopes for 'relaunch' of Solar 1,000 project as Sonelgaz announces new forthcoming solar tender

Also in early January, the President of the Green Energy Cluster Algeria, Boukhalfa Yaïci, spoke about the Solar 1,000 project, which was launched at the end of December 2021 and aimed to install the first 1,000 Megawatts (MW) of energy included in the national renewable energy program. According to Yaïci 'The only thing missing in order to relaunch the project is the political decision'. For Yaïci, the relaunch of the Solar 1,000 would make it possible to 'put the renewable energy program back on track, leading to significant gas savings'.



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While authorities have not commented on the status of the Solar 1,000 project, by the end of January the adviser to the CEO of the State-owned company Sonelgaz, Yacine Réda Rédouane, had confirmed that the group has been officially charged by public authorities to produce 15,000 megawatts of renewable energies and that a national and international invitation to tender would be launched before the end of the first quarter of 2023. The invitation will be designed to create 2,000 MW as an initial phase. According to Rédouane, the specifications for the invitation to tender are already ready and the 15,000 MW targeted should be reached by 2030.

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