

OFFSHORE ENERGY · EGYPT · DRILLING

Saipem, Egypt's MDC sign MENA offshore drilling MoU

Saga deep read · 22 October 2026 · Score 88

Saipem and Egypt's Modern Drilling Company (MDC) have signed a cooperation agreement to jointly pursue offshore drilling opportunities across Egypt and the broader MENA region. The instrument is a memorandum of understanding — a statement of intent to collaborate — not a contract award or confirmed work programme.

The partnership pairs Saipem, one of the world's largest offshore drilling and engineering contractors, with MDC, an Egyptian drilling company positioned to provide local market access and in-country relationships. Together, the two companies intend to target strategic offshore drilling opportunities across the region, though the MoU does not specify which licence areas, operators, or rigs are in scope.

Egypt remains one of North Africa's most active offshore drilling markets. The country hosts significant Mediterranean gas development activity and has attracted sustained interest from international operators seeking appraisal and development drilling capacity. A partnership between an internationally credentialed driller and a locally embedded Egyptian company reflects a broader trend of joint ventures structured to meet local content requirements and improve competitive positioning in national tender processes.

The MENA framing of the agreement suggests ambitions beyond Egypt's territorial waters, potentially covering Gulf of Suez activity or other regional markets where both parties see drilling demand growing. However, until specific contracts, rig deployments, or tender submissions materialise from this alliance, the MoU

represents early-stage commercial positioning rather than confirmed operational activity.

For Norwegian oil and gas service companies tracking North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean, the Saipem-MDC alliance is worth noting as a signal of how international contractors are structuring their market entry and competitive strategies in Egypt. Should the partnership convert to active drilling campaigns — whether appraisal, development, or workover programmes — it would generate demand for the full spectrum of well services, drilling equipment, and subsea support that Norwegian firms specialise in. The practical implication at this stage is to monitor how the MoU develops and to engage early with both parties to position for any procurement that follows.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

This MoU signals that Saipem and MDC are building a joint platform to compete for offshore drilling contracts in Egypt and MENA — but no procurement is open yet. Norwegian service companies should monitor the partnership's progress and consider establishing or deepening relationships with Saipem's supply chain teams and MDC's operations leadership now, ahead of any formal tender activity. When contracts are awarded under this alliance, demand for drilling fluids, well services, downhole tools, and rig equipment will follow.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Track the Saipem-MDC alliance for future rig campaigns in Egypt where Norwegian drilling equipment and well services suppliers could be invited to quote.
- **Well Services:** A formalised Saipem-MDC drilling programme in the Mediterranean or Gulf of Suez would open demand for cementing, completion, and wireline services — position now by engaging Saipem's supply chain.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** If offshore development drilling converts to production tie-backs, subsea umbilicals, risers, and flowlines suppliers should monitor this alliance for downstream infrastructure requirements.

- **Pipeline:** Successful appraisal drilling under this partnership could accelerate pipeline and export infrastructure needs in the Eastern Mediterranean — worth tracking for early engagement.

[Original source: Offshore Energy →](#)

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