OIL FIELD AFRICA REVIEW · ZIMBABWE · DRILLING

Invictus moves rig to Musuma-1 as Zimbabwe drilling nears

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Invictus Energy has completed the rig move of Exalo Rig 202 to the Musuma-1 exploration wellsite on its Cabora Bassa Project in Zimbabwe, marking a concrete operational milestone ahead of spudding. The Australian-listed junior holds an 80% operated interest in the project and has been advancing surface preparations in parallel with the rig relocation.

The rig move follows completion of the Musuma-1 wellpad construction, associated civil works, and access road upgrades — ground-level logistics that in frontier onshore environments like Zimbabwe often determine whether drilling timelines hold. With Exalo Rig 202 now positioned at the wellsite, contractor Exalo will undertake rig-up activities before drilling operations formally commence. The article does not specify the planned total depth, target formation, or expected duration of the well.

The Cabora Bassa Project sits in a basin that Invictus has long argued is underexplored relative to its geological potential. Musuma-1 is an exploration well, meaning the primary objective is to test a prospective structure rather than appraise a known discovery. Results will be closely watched by the junior E&P community tracking frontier African onshore plays, where success rates are historically lower but acreage costs and competitive pressure are also far reduced compared with established offshore basins.

For the broader service sector, the progression from civil works to rig-up is the clearest signal yet that drilling is genuinely imminent rather than aspirational. The

Exalo drilling contract is already in place, but ancillary services — mud engineering, wireline logging, well testing, and waste management — typically follow rig positioning with short lead times. Zimbabwe's landlocked geography and developing oilfield supply chain mean that international service providers capable of mobilising equipment overland through the region hold a structural advantage over those dependent on port logistics.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

This is a pre-spud rig-up phase on a frontier onshore well with a contracted drilling crew already in place; Norwegian service companies should monitor progress and initiate relationship-building with Invictus Energy and Exalo rather than approaching procurement at this stage. If the well encounters hydrocarbons and moves toward appraisal or development, opportunities in well services, testing, and field infrastructure will open, warranting closer engagement at that point.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Exalo holds the drilling contract; monitor whether specialist Norwegian drilling-fluids or directional-drilling firms could position for a follow-on appraisal well if Musuma-1 yields a discovery.
- **Service:** Wireline logging, well testing, and mud-engineering services will be required imminently as rig-up completes; companies with overland mobilisation capability into southern Africa are best placed to compete.
- **Pipeline:** A commercial discovery in Cabora Bassa would require early-phase flow-assurance and gathering-system scoping; Norwegian pipeline engineering firms could offer pre-FEED advisory services to Invictus now.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** Not applicable for this onshore frontier well at current stage; monitor for any future offshore or mid-stream development that may arise from basin success.

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Saga Advisory

General: info@saga-advisory.com · saga-advisory.com

STAVANGER · CAPE TOWN