

AFRICAN ENERGY CHAMBER · LNG

Congo's Hydrocarbons Minister Pushes FLNG Expansion and Transaction Acceleration

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The Republic of Congo is signalling a renewed investment offensive in its hydrocarbons sector, with Minister of Hydrocarbons Stev Simplicie Onanga outlining an ambitious agenda during high-level discussions with the African Energy Chamber. The minister's priorities centre on three pillars: accelerating the pace of commercial transactions, strengthening the capacity of state oil company SNPC, and expanding the country's floating liquefied natural gas (FLNG) infrastructure to position Congo as a regional gas hub.

Congo already hosts Africa's first operational FLNG unit — the Tango FLNG, operated by New Fortress Energy in partnership with SNPC and Eni — and the minister's push suggests Brazzaville intends to replicate and scale that model. The government appears keen to move beyond early-stage project development and convert the country's significant offshore gas resources into sustained export revenues. Onanga's focus on accelerating transactions signals frustration with the pace at which licensing, contracting, and financing processes have moved, and a desire to reduce bureaucratic friction for incoming investors.

Strengthening SNPC is a parallel objective. The national company has historically played a more passive role compared to peers such as Nigeria's NNPC or Angola's Sonangol, and Brazzaville is evidently seeking to change that dynamic. Greater SNPC capacity would mean more meaningful local participation in project development, procurement, and revenue management — a prerequisite that international partners

and service providers will need to plan around when structuring bids or joint-venture arrangements.

Congo's ambition to become a regional gas hub is geopolitically credible. The country sits within the Central African gas belt, neighbours Cameroon and Gabon — both with active LNG or gas monetisation programmes — and has existing maritime export infrastructure. FLNG technology is particularly suited to Congo's offshore stranded gas fields, which may be too small or remote to justify pipeline or onshore liquefaction investment. Expanding the FLNG fleet would require additional marine units, subsea tiebacks, mooring systems, and associated well services — all areas where Norwegian contractors have demonstrated global competitiveness.

For the broader investment community, the minister's statements represent a policy signal rather than a concluded tender process, but the direction of travel is clear. Congo is actively courting capital and technology partners willing to work within a framework that prioritises speed of execution and local content. Norwegian service companies tracking the Central African market should treat this as an early-warning indicator of upcoming procurement activity, particularly on the FLNG and deepwater fronts.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian companies with FLNG mooring, subsea tieback, and floating unit expertise — such as those in the Aker, Subsea 7, or Kongsberg ecosystems — should monitor Congo's FLNG expansion pipeline closely, as new units will require full-scope marine and subsea packages. The minister's transaction-acceleration agenda also suggests shortened procurement cycles, favouring contractors who can mobilise quickly with pre-qualified local content strategies. Engaging SNPC now, as its capacity-building programme matures, is a practical first step toward positioning for future tenders.



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- **FPSO/FLNG:** Additional FLNG units will require mooring systems, offloading infrastructure, and marine engineering support — a direct fit for Norwegian floating production specialists.
- **Subsea:** Expanding FLNG capacity in Congo's offshore fields will likely require new subsea tiebacks and umbilicals connecting stranded gas accumulations to floating units.
- **Drilling:** Accelerated transaction flow should translate into new well campaigns targeting gas-prone offshore blocks; early dialogue with SNPC and incoming operators is advisable.
- **LNG:** Norwegian LNG process and cryogenic technology providers can position for equipment supply and technical services contracts as Congo scales its floating liquefaction fleet.
- **Service:** SNPC's capacity-building agenda opens a lane for Norwegian firms to offer training, digital well management, and HSE consultancy as part of local content compliance packages.

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