

Saipem to restart Mozambique LNG project for Total in July

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Saipem has agreed to restart a liquefied natural gas (LNG) project in Mozambique for TotalEnergies in July, the chief executive of the Italian energy services group, Alessandro Puliti, said on Tuesday, 28 February.



Saipem 10000 deepwater drillship in Genoa's harbour, Italy. 2015. Source: Reuters/Alessandro Garofalo

The project, which would be the first onshore development of an LNG plant in the African country, was frozen in 2021 due to security issues. The contract has a value of €3.5bn (\$3.72bn) for the Italian group.

"We expect to gradually restart the (Mozambique) project, according to the information received by our clients, starting from July this year," Puliti said during a call on the group's results for 2022.

Puliti said that Saipem did not have direct information about the human rights and security situation of the Cabo Delgado province where the project will be located.



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Human rights expert to assess the humanitarian situation in the province

Earlier this month TotalEnergies mandated Jean-Christophe Rufin, an expert in humanitarian action and human rights, to carry out an independent mission to assess the humanitarian situation in the province before taking a decision on a restart of operations.

"We do not have direct visibility on the report on human rights, but we agreed with Total about restarting in July... this implies that our client is confident to solve potential pending issues by that date," Puliti said.

On Tuesday, Total told Reuters it would wait for a human rights assessment commissioned by Rufin before announcing any restart of the project.

The French company added it did not yet have a date for when it would receive the report, after an initial estimate of end-February.

Lorette Philippot, campaigner at Friends of the Earth France, said it was not possible that negative consequences of the project for the climate and people would be solved by the summer.

"The situation on the ground is critical: the gas industry has been central to the brutal conflict that has created one million internal refugees," Philippot said.

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