

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Gabon Summary 14 March 2022

President Ali Bongo Ondimba (2009-present) reshuffles his cabinet, appointing five new ministers and removing six in his 38-member cabinet. Bongo provides strong indication that he will stand for re-election as candidate for the ruling Parti Démocratique Gabonais (PDG) in the 2023 presidential election. United States-based credit rating agency Fitch Ratings confirms Gabon's sovereign rating at "B-", with a stable economic outlook. Compagnie Minière de l'Ogooué (Comilog), subsidiary of France-based metallurgical firm Eramet, announces a new production record of 7 million tonnes of manganese in 2021, a 21% year-on-year increase, with turnover of 581 billion FCFA (\$971m) in 2021, compared to 551 billion FCFA (\$920.9m) generated in 2020. The Gabonese state has signed a framework agreement with France-based Solen to construct a 120 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar plant in Ayemé Plaine, 30km from Libreville. President Bongo announces the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictive measures.

President Bongo reshuffles cabinet amid hints at re-election bid

President **Ali Bongo Ondimba** (2009-present) announced a cabinet reshuffle by presidential decree on 8 March.¹ The composition of the new cabinet and several other recent appointments suggest that Bongo is already laying the foundation for the 2023 local, national assembly and presidential elections.² The new 38-member cabinet saw the appointment of five new ministers, upon the recommendation of prime minister **Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda**, while six members of the previous cabinet were removed from their positions.³

The most prominent new appointment is that of career diplomat **Felicité Ngoubili** as defence minister. Ngoubili was **Gabon's** ambassador to **France** at the time of her appointment and becomes the third woman to lead the defence portfolio.⁴ Ossouka Raponda held the position before being named prime minister in July 2020.⁵

Other noteworthy appointments include:

- Previous defence minister, **Michael Moussa Adamo**, becomes foreign affairs minister.⁶ Adamo, a longtime friend of Bongo, has also served as Gabon's ambassador to the **United States (US)**;⁷
- **Elvis Ossindji** is Gabon's new mines minister;
- Energy and water resources minister **Alain Claude Billie-By-Nze** was promoted to minister of state and made government spokesperson.⁸
- **Raphael Ngazouze**, vice president of Gabon's **Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly), was named vocational training minister.⁹ Ngazouze has previously held the portfolios of economy, foreign affairs and national education.¹⁰

¹ Direct Infos Gabon, 8 Mar 2022

² ARC Gabon analyst

³ Direct Infos Gabon, 8 Mar 2022

⁴ Gabon Review, 9 Mar 2022

⁵ ARC Gabon analyst

⁶ Jeune Afrique, 10 Mar 2022

⁷ Jeune Afrique, 10 Mar 2022

⁸ Direct Infos Gabon, 8 Mar 2022

⁹ Gabon Media Time, 8 Mar 2022

¹⁰ Gabon Media Time, 8 Mar 2022

Jean-Pierre Doukaga Kassa (digital economy) and **Jean-Norbert Diramba** (tourism) were surprise appointments, as both are members of opposition **Les Démocrates** political party.¹¹ Les Démocrates is led by **Guy Nzoumba Ndama**, national assembly president during the presidency of Bongo's father, **Omar Bongo Ondimba** (1968-2009). Ndama supported opposition **Parti Gabonais du Progrès (PGP)** presidential candidate **Jean Ping** during Gabon's August 2016 presidential election,¹² which Ali Bongo won with a very slim majority (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Sep 2016*).¹³ Both Kassa and Diramba tendered their resignations from Les Démocrates on 7 March.¹⁴ Another unexpected selection was the return of **Yves Fernand Manfoumbi**, who becomes the new minister of trade and small and medium sized enterprises.¹⁵ Manfoumbi served as agriculture minister until his withdrawal from politics in 2018, following his defeat in the 2018 legislative elections.¹⁶

The following ministers lost their portfolios:

- **Edgard Anicet Mboumbou Miyakou** - minister of state for communication and the digital economy;
- **Mathias Otounga Ossibadjouo** - decentralisation, cohesion and territorial development;
- **Biendi Maganga Moussavou** - agriculture, livestock, fisheries and food;
- **Sosthène Ossoungou Ndibangoye** - budget and public accounts;
- **Carmen Ndaot** - Investment promotion in charge of public-private partnerships.

President Bongo has subtly indicated his intention to stand for re-election as the ruling **Parti Démocratique Gabonais (PDG)** candidate in the 2023 presidential election.¹⁷ In 2017, Gabon's constitution was modified and the two-term presidential term limit scrapped, potentially allowing Bongo to rule indefinitely, like his father, who served as head of state for 41 years.¹⁸ While 63-year-old Ali Bongo Ondimba has not formally announced his candidacy, there are no signs that he will not stand for re-election in the hope of pursuing a third presidential mandate.¹⁹ Bongo alluded to this possibility during the celebration of the PDG's 54th anniversary on 12 March:²⁰

*"Dear comrades, 2023 is fast approaching. I will be there with you. For you. The only way out will be victory. A frank, clear, indisputable victory."*²¹

In addition to reshuffling the cabinet, which is likely to constitute the bulk of his campaign team, Bongo has made several other appointments that indicate he may already be preparing for the 2023 elections.²² On 4 March, Bongo named members of the **Haute Commission pour la République (HCR)** (high commission for the republic), a body attached to the presidency, whose members monitor political action and interact with state institutions as well as public stakeholders.²³ Omar Bongo's former political adviser, **Michel Essongue**, will head the HCR, while former prime minister and Ping supporter **Jean Eyeghe Ndong** and former health, education public works minister **Léon Nzouba** will serve as commissioners.²⁴ Bongo appointed senator **Steeve Nzegho Pieko**, currently 4th vice president of the **Senate**, as new PDG secretary general on 9 March.²⁵ Bongo has also appointed his eldest son, **Noureddin Valentin Bongo**, former director of presidential affairs, as strategic adviser

¹¹ Gabon Review, 8 Mar 2022

¹² Jeune Afrique, 10 Mar 2022

¹³ Reuters, 31 Aug 2016.

¹⁴ Gabon Review, 10 Mar 2022

¹⁵ Gabon Media Time, 8 Mar 2022

¹⁶ Gabon Media Time, 8 Mar 2022

¹⁷ Le Nouveau Gabon, 13 Mar 2022

¹⁸ RFI, 12 Mar 2022

¹⁹ ARC Gabon analyst

²⁰ RFI, 12 Mar 2022

²¹ Gabon Review, 12 Mar 2022

²² ARC Gabon analyst

²³ Gabon Media Time, 8 Mar 2022

²⁴ Jeune Afrique, 10 Mar 2022

²⁵ La Libreville. 9 Mar 2022

to the PDG. Nouredin Bongo is likely to work very closely with the head of state with respect to the PDG's electoral strategy.²⁶

Fitch Ratings confirms Gabon's "B-" sovereign rating and stable economic outlook

US-based credit rating agency **Fitch Ratings** has confirmed Gabon's sovereign rating at "B-", with a stable economic outlook.²⁷ According to Fitch, which announced the decision on 7 March, the rating reflects an improvement in Gabon's short-term budgetary situation and an increase in oil prices.²⁸ Fitch projects that Gabon's budget deficit dropped from 2.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020, to 0.6% in 2021. This figure is expected to see a further decrease to 0.5% in 2021 and to 0.3% in 2023.²⁹ These reductions have been attributed to Gabon's adoption in July 2021 of an **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** economic reform agenda (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Aug 2021*), its current positive economic recovery trajectory, and an increase in oil prices.³⁰ Fitch also suggests that a reduction in tax exemptions granted to businesses, an increase in capital spending and IMF support will lead to structural improvements in the Gabonese economy.³¹

The rise in oil prices is due to the **Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** lifting the production quota imposed on member states, which Fitch believes will enable Gabon to generate more oil revenue and boost its fiscal balances.³² The conflict between **Russia** and **Ukraine** is also likely to boost Gabon's oil sales.³³ From 2016-2020, oil contributed 37% of Gabon's revenue.³⁴

However, Fitch also highlighted the government's failure to improve its public financial management capacity, which in turn has hampered its ability to secure funding from multilateral institutions.³⁵ The **African Development Bank (AfDB)** has failed to grant Gabon a previously promised \$72m in budgetary support, while the IMF has only disbursed \$108m, earmarked for budgetary support, which is half the amount agreed between the two parties.³⁶

Gabon's public debt is also a matter of concern. The **Direction Générale de l'Economie et de la Politique Fiscale (DGPEF)** (directorate-general for the economy and fiscal policy) reported on 24 February that Gabon's public debt stood at 6,688.8 billion FCFA (\$11.5 billion) at the end of September 2021.³⁷ According to the IMF, Gabon's current debt-to-GDP ratio stands at 77.4%.³⁸ However, **Direction Générale de la Dette (DGD)** director general **Fernand Ngoussi Mayangah** suggests Gabon's debt is equivalent to 65.9% of GDP, which is below the 70% threshold set by the **Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC)**.³⁹ Mayangah defended the government's current debt reduction strategy, which saw the creation in June 2020 of a task force that uncovered 750 billion FCFA (\$1.25 billion) in unverified domestic debt, out of an audited 1,100 billion FCFA (\$1.83 billion).⁴⁰ Mayangah said Gabon had settled 94 billion FCFA (\$157m) in domestic debt in 2021, which was above the initially stipulated figure of 77 billion FCFA (\$128.6m).⁴¹

The Fitch report nevertheless contains indications of positive developments in Gabon's economy. In December 2020, Fitch downgraded Gabon's sovereign rating to "CCC" in the wake of an economic recession caused by the dual effect of the **Covid-19** pandemic and a fall in oil prices (see *ARC Briefing*

²⁶ RFI, 11 Mar 2022

²⁷ Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

²⁸ Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

²⁹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

³⁰ Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

³¹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

³² Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

³³ ARC Gabon analyst

³⁴ Le Nouveau Gabon, 7 Mar 2022

³⁵ Direct Infos Gabon, 10 Mar 2022

³⁶ Direct Infos Gabon, 10 Mar 2022

³⁷ Gabon Review, 24 Feb 2022

³⁸ Gabon Review, 24 Feb 2022

³⁹ Gabon Review, 27 Feb 2022

⁴⁰ Gabon Media Time, 7 Mar 2022

⁴¹ Gabon Review, 27 Feb 2022

Gabon Dec 2020).⁴² As a result, Gabon registered a 1.8% contraction of its economy in 2020. However, an economic rebound in 2021 saw growth improve to 1.5%. The government also adopted a 2021-2023 economic development agenda, the **Plan d'Accélération de la Transformation (PAT)**, which, together with the IMF economic reform package adopted in July, will help Gabon pursue its objectives. Fitch raised Gabon's credit rating to "B-" in August (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Sep 2021*).⁴³ Economy and recovery minister **Nicole Jeanine Roboty Mbou** announced on 2 February that Gabon has set a GDP growth target of 3% for 2022 (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Feb 2022*).

Comilog manganese production hits record 7 million tonnes in 2021

Compagnie Minière de l'Ogooué (Comilog), a subsidiary of France-based metallurgical firm **Eramet**, reported in its 2021 financial year results that it registered a new production record of 7 million tonnes of manganese in 2021.⁴⁴ The figure was a 21% year-on-year (y/y) increase from the 5.8 million tonne output it recorded in 2020. Comilog reports that it sold 6.6 million tonnes of manganese in 2021, compared to 6 million tonnes in 2020, a 10% improvement. Turnover reached 581 billion FCFA (\$971m) in 2021, compared to 551 billion FCFA (\$920.9m) in 2020, while profits increased from 11.9 billion FCFA (\$19.8m) in 2020, to 89 billion FCFA (\$148.9m) in 2021, indicating a 77.1 billion FCFA (\$128.8m) improvement.

Comilog said several factors contributed to the achievement of these results. These include increased investment, the opening of the **Okouma** mine in 2020, improvement in logistics, modular investments and the commitment of over 2,000 employees.⁴⁵ Eramet CEO and chairperson **Christel Bories** said the results reflect the commitment and agility of the teams who were able to seize opportunities in a changing environment:

*"These very good performances demonstrate the relevance of our operational model, which strongly generates intrinsic improvements and cash flow over time."*⁴⁶

Comilog operates the **Franceville, Moanda, Ndjolé** and **Okondja** manganese deposits, and has declared its intention to position itself as a global industry leader.⁴⁷ In this regard, it aims to ensure a safe working environment and undertake activities in strict compliance with environmental and biodiversity standards.⁴⁸ This will entail reducing the company's CO2 footprint through the modernisation of its maritime logistics line.

Comilog's operations represent 70% of Gabon's manganese output, playing a central role in one of the country's most strategic economic sectors.⁴⁹ Gabon, **Africa's** second largest manganese producer and the fourth largest globally, has experienced consistent improvement in output over the last five years.⁵⁰ Comilog's activities have played a significant role in spearheading the growth of Gabon's manganese sector.

The economy and recovery ministry projects that manganese production in Gabon will reach 10.6 million tonnes in 2022, with the figure expected to rise to 11.11 million tonnes by 2024.⁵¹ The rise in output will be consolidated by the activity of **Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale des Mines de Huazhou (CICHMZ)**, which exploits a manganese deposit at **Ndjolé**.⁵² **Nouvelle Gabon Mining**, a joint venture between **India-based Coalsale Group** and state-owned mining firm **Société**

⁴² Gabon Review, 3 Feb 2022

⁴³ Fitch Ratings, 24 Aug 2021

⁴⁴ Gabon Media Time, 25 Feb 2022

⁴⁵ Gabon Media Time, 28 Feb 2022

⁴⁶ Gabon Media Time, 28 Feb 2022

⁴⁷ Le Nouveau Gabon, 9 Nov 2021

⁴⁸ Direct Infos Gabon, 28 Feb 2022

⁴⁹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 11 Jun 2021

⁵⁰ Direct Infos Gabon, 6 Jun 2021

⁵¹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 1 Mar 2022

⁵² Le Nouveau Gabon, 9 Nov 2021

Equatoriale des Mines (SEM), carries out activities at the **Binomi** and **Lebaye** deposits.⁵³ The Lebaye mine reportedly has the potential to produce 1 million tonnes of manganese. The continued growth of Gabon's manages sector will help the government attain its goal of economic diversification and reduce its reliance on the hydrocarbons industry.

France-based Solen to build 120 MW solar power plant

The Gabonese government has signed a framework agreement with France-based **Solen** to construct a 120 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar plant in **Ayemé Plaine**, 30km from **Libreville**.⁵⁴ Solen, a firm specialised in building solar plants across **Africa**, signed the agreement with Gabon on 3 March. The agreement was signed by energy and water resources minister **Alain Claude Billie-By-Nze**, who represented the Gabonese state, and Solen's director of operations, **Praveen Pai**.⁵⁵ Economy and recovery minister Nicole Roboty Mbou and now former budget and accounts minister **Sosthène Ossoungou Ndibagoye** were also present.

Billie-By-Nze said the solar plant will be developed in two phases, with 60 MW installed at each stage. The solar plant underlines Gabon's goal of increasing the renewable energy component of its energy supply for **Estuaire** province.⁵⁶ Billie-By-Nze said the project will resolve the issue of recurrent load shedding in Libreville, making the country less dependent on fossil fuels and ensuring greater efficiency in the activities of state-owned utilities firm **Société d'Energie et d'Eau du Gabon (SEEG)**.⁵⁷

Over the last year, Gabon has attracted significant foreign investor interest for the financing and execution of large-scale energy projects. Gabon has become an attractive destination for foreign investors seeking to invest in energy infrastructure. Since July, the following deals have been confirmed:

- 35-MW **Kinguéle Aval** hydroelectric power station (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Jul 2021*);
- 50-MW photovoltaic (solar) plant in **Grand Libreville** (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Jul 2021*);
- 20-MW photovoltaic (solar plant) at **Douba** (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Sep 2021*);
- 120-MW natural gas thermal plant at **Owendo** (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Oct 2021*);
- 82-MW **Ngoulmendjim** hydroelectric power station (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Dec 2021*);
- 50 MW Oyem solar plant (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Feb 2022*).

The completion of these projects will help to address growing demand for electricity in households and businesses. The power stations also create the potential for Gabon to export surplus electricity to its neighbours in the CEMAC and the **Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)**.⁵⁸

Bongo lifts all Covid restrictions

President Bongo announced on 9 March the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictive measures, saying the consistently low infection rate no longer justified the implementation of the regulations.⁵⁹ As a result, the nighttime curfew, partial confinement of **Greater Libreville** and compulsory wearing of masks in public venues will no longer apply.⁶⁰ The removal of restrictive measures, in place since March 2020, will be a welcome relief to various segments of Gabonese society. Civic action groups, including **Copil**

⁵³ Le Nouveau Gabon, 9 Nov 2021

⁵⁴ Le Nouveau Gabon, 3 Mar 2022

⁵⁵ Gabon Review, 3 Mar 2022

⁵⁶ Le Nouveau Gabon, 3 Mar 2022

⁵⁷ Gabon Review, 3 Mar 2022

⁵⁸ ARC Gabon Analyst

⁵⁹ Direct Infos Gabon, 10 Mar 2022

⁶⁰ Le Nouveau Gabon, 10 Mar 2022

Citoyen, have launched protests and taken the government to court in opposition to the continued application of these measures (see *ARC Briefing Gabon Dec 2021 and Jan-Feb 2022*).

Health minister **Dr. Guy Patrick Obiang Ndong**, presenting the results of a **World Health Organisation (WHO)**-funded survey on 26 January, reported that 90% of Gabonese respondents had been infected with Covid-19.⁶¹ This may have influenced the government's decision to lift all restrictions. As of 12 March, Gabon had recorded 47,564 Covid-19 cases in its population of 2.2 million, as well as 47,224 recoveries and 303 deaths attributed to Covid-19.

Cabinet has nevertheless encouraged Gabonese to continue to seek vaccination against Covid-19.⁶² As of 5 March, the health ministry had administered 554,548 Covid-19 vaccine doses and reports that 24.69% of the population has been vaccinated.⁶³ On 9 March, **South Korea** donated 547,200 doses of the US-manufactured **Johnson & Johnson (J&J)** vaccine, in a bid to support Gabon's vaccination roll-out.⁶⁴

Planner

2023 **(Gabon)** Local, national assembly and presidential elections

Chronology

13 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Media Time*. Former vice president and leader of the opposition **Parti Social Démocrate (PSD)** party **Pierre Claver Maganga Moussavou** declares his candidature for the 2023 presidential election;

13 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. The economy and recovery ministry will allocate 36.5 billion FCFA (\$61m) in 2022 towards the restructuring of public enterprises;

13 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. The agriculture ministry reports that Gabon imports 60% of its agricultural produce, equivalent to 450 billion FCFA (\$752.6m) annually, mainly from countries such as **Brazil, France, South Africa, Cameroon** and **Congo-Brazzaville**;

12 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *RFI*. President **Ali Bongo Ondimba** hints at his desire to run for a third presidential term during celebrations to commemorate the 54th anniversary of the ruling **Parti Démocratique Gabonais (PDG)**;

9 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *La Libreville*. The ruling **Parti Démocratique Gabonais (PDG)** appoints **Steeve Nzegho Dieko** as its secretary general;

9 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. President **Ali Bongo Ondimba** lifts all **Covid-19** measures in Gabon;

8 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Media Time*. President **Ali Bongo Ondimba** announces a cabinet reshuffle by presidential decree, relieving six ministers from their duties and appointing five new ministers to the 38-person cabinet;

7 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. The economy and recovery ministry expects Gabon to attain 3% economic growth in 2022, compared to 1.5% in 2021, following its **Covid-19**-induced economic recession;

7 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. **United States**-based credit rating agency **Fitch Ratings** has assigned Gabon a "B-" sovereign rating, with a stable outlook;

⁶¹ *Le Nouveau Gabon*, 2 Feb 2022

⁶² *Direct Infos Gabon*, 10 Mar 2022

⁶³ *Le Nouveau Gabon*, 9 Mar 2022

⁶⁴ *Le Nouveau Gabon*, 9 Mar 2022

7 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Media Time*. Prime minister **Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda** confirms that the Gabonese state paid 95 billion FCFA (\$157.2m) owed to local companies out of a total of 430 billion FCFA (\$771.9m) in domestic debt;

3 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. The **World Bank** has committed to financing the third phase of the **Programme d'aménagement et de développement des infrastructures du Gabon (Padig)** (infrastructure planning and development programme);

2 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. **France**-based **Solen** has won a contract for the construction of a 120 MW photovoltaic solar power plant in **Ayemé Plaine**, 30 km from Libreville;

2 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. **Assala Gabon**, a subsidiary of **United Kingdom (UK)**-based **Assala Energy**, says it will invest 165 billion FCFA (\$273.1m) in its assets in 2022;

1 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. The **Compagnie Minière de l'Ogooué (Comilog)**, a subsidiary of **France**-based metallurgical firm **Eramet**, reports profit of 89 billion FCFA (\$147.3m) in 2021, compared to 11.9 billion FCFA (\$19.7m) in 2020;

1 Mar 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. The economy ministry estimates that Gabon will produce 10.06 million tonnes of manganese in 2022, an increase of 6.9% compared to 2021, and average production of 11.11 million tonnes of manganese over the 2023-2024 timeframe;

1 Mar 2022 **New York (United States)** *Al Jazeera*. As a non-permanent member of the **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**, **Gabon** abstains from voting on a resolution to condemn **Russia's** invasion of **Ukraine**;

28 Feb 2022 **New York (United States)** *Gabon Review*. As a member of the **United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)**, **Gabon** abstains from vote to hold a debate on the human rights situation in **Ukraine**;

28 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. **Comilog**, subsidiary of **France**-based metallurgical firm **Eramet**, reports that it generated turnover of 581 billion FCFA (\$992.2m) in 2021, compared to 551 billion FCFA (\$940.9m) in 2020, an increase of 5.4%, while manganese production rose from 5.8 million tonnes in 2020 to 7 million tonnes in 2021;

28 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. **Gabon Power Company (GPC)** confirms it will need to mobilise 216.6 billion FCFA (\$369.9m) to construct the 83 MW **Ngoulmendjim** hydroelectric power station;

28 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. **Norway**-based **BW Energy** expects total production at the **Dussafu Marin** permit to vary between 4.2 and 5.2 million gross barrels in 2022;

25 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. **Trésor Public** (public treasury) aims to raise 700 billion FCFA (\$1.195 billion) through the issue of treasury bonds in 2022, to finance the government's 2021-2023 economic development agenda, the **Plan d'Accélération de la Transformation (PAT)**;

23 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. **Alpha Centauri Mining (ACM)**, a **United Kingdom (UK)** and **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** joint venture, announces the construction of a gold refining plant at the **Special Economic Zone (SEZ)** of **Nkok**;

23 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. **Alpha Centauri Mining (ACM)**, a **United Kingdom (UK)** and **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** joint venture, signs seven mining conventions for the exploitation of gold on a small scale in Gabon;

23 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. A delegation from **France**-based energy producer **GreenYellow** visits Gabon and announces plans to build a solar plant in **Port Gentil**;

22 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. The economy and recovery ministry says Gabon expects a trade balance surplus equivalent to 17% of gross domestic product (GDP) during the period from 2022-2024;

22 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. The **Banque de Développement des États de l'Afrique Centrale (BDEAC) (Central African Development Bank)** agrees to allocate 189.5 billion FCFA (\$323.7m) to finance eight projects across the **Central African** sub-region, including the construction of the new Libreville airport;

21 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. **TotalEnergies EP Gabon**, subsidiary of France-based **TotalEnergies**, reports turnover of \$655m in 2021 compared to \$435m in 2020, a 51% increase, despite producing 22,900 b/pd in 2021, an 11% y/y decrease;

21 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. Gabon-based financial group **Groupe BGFIBank**, has signed an agreement with state-owned utilities firm **Société d'Énergie et d'Eau du Gabon (SEEG)** to finance its investment programme over the next three years;

21 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. Gabon has contracted a 32 billion FCFA (\$55.1m) loan from the **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** (French development agency) to rehabilitate eight health centres located across four provinces

19 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. The 2022 finance law forecasts Gabon will generate 693.8 billion FCFA (\$1.195 billion) in oil revenue during this financial year compared to 482.5 billion FCFA (\$831.2m) projected in 2021

17 Feb 2022 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. Interior minister **Lambert Noel Mbatha** suggests the Gabonese government plans to lift the nighttime curfew in place since 22 March 2020, which was instituted to limit the spread of **Covid-19**;

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