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OIL, GAS & INFRASTRUCTURE



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Potential oil discoveries extending further into Lake Albert made

WHAT UGANDA-DR CONGO JOINT OIL EXPLORATIONS MEAN

JOINT VENTURE

While Uganda and the DR Congo share a 950km borderline, the two East African Community (EAC) member states are both seated on huge mineral resources, including oil in the Rift Valley basin. While Uganda has confirmed commercial oil resources, the DR Congo has yet to undertake exploration works to confirm the availability of these resources and has turned to its neighbour for assistance, writes **Martin Kitubi**.

Uganda and DR Congo are set to conduct joint oil and gas explorations along the borderline as part of the broader goal of utilising natural resources and spurring economic development for both countries.

Sources familiar with the development indicated that the two EAC member states aim to commence exploration works on Lake Albert, which has shown significant potential in the ongoing explorations under the Kingfisher project.

Under the Kingfisher project, the Government and its partners have identified potential oil discoveries extending further into Lake Albert.

The new potential resources are not only located on the Ugandan side, but stretch into the boundaries of DR Congo, presenting an opportunity for joint exploration.

Lake Albert has an estimated width of 40km, with both Uganda and the DR Congo controlling half of that distance.

Unlike DR Congo, Uganda is already developing at least 5km of its side of Lake Albert under the Kingfisher project, which is expected to produce about 40,000 barrels per day.

However, the new potential oil resources, sources said, stretch beyond the 5km of the Kingfisher project inside the lake.

"In the ongoing exploration, we have seen some potential structures that straddle the borders with the DR Congo. Our neighbours in the DR Congo have not licensed a large part of this area. This provides an opportunity for joint exploration," the source said.

The source, who requested anonymity, noted that geology does not respect borders and that the works will benefit both countries.

Once completed, it is expected that DR Congo could utilise the already established oil infrastructure in Uganda, especially under the Kingfisher project.

This, the source said, could provide more resources to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline and the planned oil refinery in Uganda.

The plan to conduct joint explorations between Uganda and DR Congo formed part of last week's high-level technical engagement held at the Petroleum House in Entebbe between the two countries, where they agreed to co-



The facility at the Kingfisher oil field in Buhuka Parish, Kikuube district, where Uganda is advancing oil development activities as discussions with DR Congo on joint cross-border exploration gain momentum



Kashala (left) receiving a copy of 'Uganda's Oil Journey' from Bateebe during last week's technical engagement at Petroleum House in Entebbe

operate in the petroleum sector. Discussions also addressed regional fuel supply challenges and

ongoing measures to strengthen supply security.

The engagement, which was led by

the energy ministry, was attended by officials from the Uganda National Oil Company and the Petroleum Authority of Uganda.

The meeting followed resolutions of the Uganda-DR Congo Joint Permanent Commission held from May 8-10, and brought together petroleum officials from both countries to discuss areas of mutual interest across the petroleum value chain.

The DR Congo delegation was led by Christian Kanku Kashala, the secretary general of the ministry of hydrocarbons.

Kashala expressed appreciation for Uganda's openness and technical insights, adding that the engagement provided valuable lessons and best practices for the advancement of their petroleum sector.

GOVERNMENT ON THE PLAN
Eng. Irene Bateebe, the energy ministry permanent secretary who led the technical discussions,

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