
PRESS RELEASE

NIGER: new production record with 3,000 tonnes of uranium in 2012 on a site operated by AREVA

Paris, December 21, 2012

The teams of the SOMAÏR* mining site recently packaged 3,000th tonne of uranium into drums.

SOMAÏR thereby sets a new annual production record for a second year in a row as 2,700 tonnes of uranium have been produced on the site last year.

This success, which is part of the group performance plan to increase production capacity at the mining site, has been made possible thanks to the "SOMAÏR LIXI" project started in 2009, which enables low-content ore from the deposit to be processed (< 1 kg uranium per tonne of extracted ore), thanks to a technology known as "heap leaching"**.

All SOMAÏR employees met close to the mining site to celebrate this operational success, in presence of the Prefect of the Department of Arlit, the local mayor, representatives of the Niger Ministry for Mining and mining companies, the main partners and stakeholders of AREVA in Niger, and local people.

"This new performance, which contributes to the growth of our mining activities and secures the uranium supply, rewards the work accomplished by the SOMAÏR's team and the employees of the mining BG" said Olivier Wantz, Senior Executive Vice President, Mining Business Group.

*SOMAÏR: the *Société des Mines de l'Air* was founded in 1968. AREVA holds a 63.6% stake in the company, while SOPAMIN (*Société du Patrimoine des Mines du Niger* – the Nigerien agency that manages the State's mining interests) holds a 36.4% stake. Since 1971 it has operated several uranium deposits in the department of Arlit (region of Agadez), Niger.

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** heap leaching: crushed and sintered ore is laid out in regular heaps in leaktight areas. Sulfuric acid-based solutions are then dripped onto the heaps and percolate through the ore for several months to leach the uranium. The enriched leach liquor is then processed in the site's processing plant to produce "Yellow Cake".

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