

Astron representatives, Mdm Kang Rong (Deputy Managing Director) and Tim Chase (General Manager Operations) visited Senegal accompanied by Astron’s local Project Consultant Mr Ibrahim Diaw.

The purpose of the visit included Government official introductions, Mining Licence Application, Environmental Permitting, Site visits and Community Engagement activities including the signing of the sponsorship agreement with the project regions football association Casa Sport.

**Grant of mining licence and steps to commencement**

As a result of the long application process, and following meetings with the Mining Minister, General Secretary, Legal and Technical advisors, the Senegal Mining Licence was officially granted for the Niafarang deposit in Casamance – Senegal. This is a great milestone for Astron as it now advances its efforts with procurement and mine establishment activities leading towards an operations commencement in Q4 2017.



Renewal of the existing Exploration Licence and consideration for alternate exploration opportunities were discussed and these discussions provide Astron with an insight to the future growth opportunities within the initial project commencement area of Casamance and other regions within Senegal.

Astron’s representatives conducted review meetings with the Environmental department and associated Technical Advisors to progress finalisation of the

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with the proposed mining methods and rehabilitation programs. As the Mining Licence has now been granted, the EIS and definitive processes are able to be finalised.

**Transport and infrastructure**

Opportunities for efficient transport and export routes were reviewed with several advancements for alternate programs identified. The project feasibility identified a process for export from the site through to a process chain in China, the recent site visit has identified alternate options for further definition and detail prior to settling firm export contracts.



The Ziguinchor region offers many opportunities for transport of goods both into the Casamance region and return to Dakar via a surveyed channel within the Fleuve River. There is a Port facility and transport connection link within the region via road and river



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logistic systems.

### Community engagement

Astron conducted a number of community engagement activities and a review of labour services providers as part of the Senegal visit. Astron aims to continue its support of the local community and culture, including that of recruitment of local labour sources, to maintain a satisfactory program of local employment within the project area. This is achievable through the engagement of reputable labour hire services with connections to the local region of Casamance.

Astron attended a site community visit to the communities of Kabigio and Niafarang via the city of Ziguinchor to greet and update the relevant senior figures of the project advancement regarding the award of the Mining Licence. Village Chief's and Chief Notables were engaged with whereby Astron representatives were invited to join in local prayer ceremonies. The prayer ceremonies were an indication of the local respect and acceptance of Astron in developing a small mine in the local region.



Astron was fortunate to engage with the Ziguinchor Regional Governor, Prefect and Deputy Prefects to provide a progress update of the project. As a result support for travel into the village regions was granted and overall support of the project commencement was positively received.

### Sponsorship of Casa Sport

Astron signed a three year sponsorship agreement with Casa Sport at a local ceremony in Ziguinchor. Casa Sport is the regional football association which extends over the Casamance region, not just the specific project area. The decision to sponsor such an organisation was made as football is a passionate past time of the region and the connection to people far and wide was identified as the most effective way to support a region without specific regional bias.





Mdm Kang Rong and Seydou Sane (President of Casa Sport) sign the Sponsorship contract which will see an annual contribution from Astron of CFA \$30M (circa AUD 67,000) for a three-year period. Total of CFA \$90M (circa AUD 200,000) will be provided as part of the agreement.

Astron believes in the growing of local communities with its operations globally and therefore the opportunity to enter into the

Casa Sport sponsorship program was implemented. The Casa Sport program promotes Fair Play and builds capacities with both Male and Female codes encouraging positive and respectful codes of conduct and ethics both on and off the field.

**Next steps for the project**

Astron continues to advance its projects towards implementation and production operations, the Senegal Mineral Sands – Niafarang project is the flagship project in Senegal for Astron and its success to date has been accomplished through many years of research and studies to compliment the Mining, Exploration and Environmental licencing conditions.



Senegal project area is bordered by beach zones and mangrove flats, a significant elevated sand dune contains the mineable resource in land from the ocean foreshore.

Native Baobab trees are a National Icon of Senegal and remain protected throughout the country. There are no identified significant flora / fauna species within the approved mine ore zone.



**CAUTIONARY STATEMENT**

Certain sections of this report contain forward-looking statements that are subject to risk factors associated with, among others, the economic and business circumstances occurring from time to

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time in the countries and sectors in which the Astron Group operates. It is believed that the expectations reflected in these statements are reasonable but they may be affected by a wide range of variables which could cause results to differ materially from those currently projected.

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