

# French companies tapped to study Nile dam project

December 29 2015

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Egyptian FM Sameh Shoukri (L) shakes the hand of Ethiopian FM Tedros Adhanom (R) alongside Sudanese FM Ibrahim Ghandour after signing an agreement following talks on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project, in Khartoum on December 29, 2015

Two French engineering companies were chosen Tuesday to carry out environmental impact studies on Ethiopia's planned Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile River, at a meeting in the Sudanese capital.

Following a two-day meeting of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan's foreign and water ministers, Khartoum's chief diplomat, Ibrahim Ghandour, said firms BRL and Artelia had been tapped for the work.

Sudanese Water and Electricity Minister Moutaz Moussa Salim told AFP that "BRL will carry out 70 percent of the study, and Artelia the rest."

They will begin work in February and take six months to complete it, Salim said, adding that their conclusions would be accepted by the three countries.

Ethiopia began building the huge [dam](#) on the Blue Nile in 2012 and the three countries have failed since then to overcome their differences on sharing the water.

Egypt draws about 90 percent of its [water](#) from the Nile, which runs from Khartoum to the south, where the Blue and White Nile rivers converge. It is concerned the dam could negatively affect the supply.

Under treaties signed in 1929 and 1959, Egypt and Sudan together are entitled to use 87 percent of the Nile's waters.

At a meeting in Khartoum with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and his Sudanese counterpart Omar al-Bashir, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn assured them the project would "not harm our three countries, and in particular the Egyptian people".

The dam is designed to feed a hydroelectric project that will produce 6,000 megawatts.

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