

Reuters

Burkina Faso zinc miner readies supply pacts

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SYDNEY, Jan 16 (Reuters) - African miner Aim Resources Ltd (AIM.AX: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#)) said on Wednesday it expects to sign binding supply agreements with Xstrata Plc (XTA.L: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#)) in Spain and Boliden <BOL.ST in Sweden to ship 70,000 tonnes of zinc concentrate a year from a mine in Burkina Faso.

AIM, which is developing West Africa's first zinc mine in Burkina Faso, already has an agreement to ship 45,000 tonnes of concentrate a year to Brazilian metals group Votorantim, Aim Managing Director Marc Flory said.

"We expect to sign the agreements with Xstrata and Boliden within the next two months," Sydney-based Flory told reporters.

The concentrate, or ground ore, containing 53 percent zinc metal, would be shipped by rail from Burkina Faso to the Ivory Coast port city of Abidjan, where it would be transported by ship to Xstrata's Asturiana de Zinc SA smelting business in Spain and Boliden facilities in Sweden, Flory said.

Any remaining material will be sold on the open market, he said.

Flory said the company expects to start shipping ore from its Perkoa mine now under development in 2009. Once in operation mine will be the single largest contributor to Burkina Faso's GDP, yielding 70,000 tonnes of zinc metal a year from the concentrate, Flory said.

Burkina Faso is one of the world's poorest countries.

Aim, whose stock is listed on London's AIM and the Australian bourse, is also seeking a listing on Toronto's exchange, Flory said.

(Reporting by James Regan)