

**THE GENERAL MANAGER'S STATEMENT AT THE CEREMONY MARKING THE OFFICIAL SWITCHING ON OF THE CLSG ELECTRICITY IN LIBERIA ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2022**

The Speaker and Members of the National Legislature

Honorable Members of the Cabinet

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Our CLSG Financing Partners

The Board Chairman and Acting CEO of LEC

Invited Guests

The Press

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We have assembled here today to witness the switching on of affordable and reliable electricity supply from Cote d'Ivoire to Liberia that is delivered through the CLSG interconnection line. Indeed, this is a laudable achievement that befits a round of applause for all.

Distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen, please permit me to provide highlights of the historic journey of the CLSG Project that brought us here today:

In 1982, our illustrious Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) put in place a regional energy policy to promote a regional energy market in the subregion. Their vision subsequently became a reality in 1999, when the West African Power Pool (WAPP) was created. Thereafter, the WAPP developed an energy master plan, in which the CLSG project was created as a priority energy project. The objective was to provide electrical energy at competitive and affordable prices in the sub-region to ensure sustainable social and economic development.

To this end, the Heads of State of the CLSG countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea) in 2012 signed an international Treaty that established TRANSCO CLSG as a Special Purpose Company with the objective to finance, construct, operate, maintain, own, and develop the CLSG Interconnection line among the member states.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, following the achievements of the various conditions precedent to the effectiveness of the financing, the CLSG project became effective on February 15, 2015, amidst the Ebola pandemic that further delayed the project implementation.

The CLSG Project is financed by four donors, namely the World Bank, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the KfW (German Development Bank). The CLSG countries provided counterpart funding for the implementation of the Environmental Social Management Plan (ESMP), Resettlement Action Plans (RAP), and payment of Interest Accrued during Construction (IDC) as well as customs duty and tax exemptions.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, in 2017, the groundbreaking of the CLSG project was held right here in Liberia, on the sideline of the ECOWAS summit. This event was followed by the start of construction works on site in the four countries. However, the project encountered several challenges across the four countries, but with the timely support of our stakeholders including the TRANSCO CLSG Board of Directors, the national governments and utilities, local authorities, as well as our donor partners and WAPP Secretariat, we were able to weather the storms and advance the implementation of the project. This strong collaboration with key stakeholders has enabled TRANSCO CSG to achieve the fundamental objective of the CLSG Project which is to interconnect the power systems of the four CLSG countries and deliver unimpeded and affordable electricity to our people.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, the CLSG Project implementation has far advanced with an overall progress rate of 98%. For the specific case of Liberia, the CLSG project involves the construction of five 225 kV substations and approximately 530 km of 225 kV power line running across the country from Man in Cote d'Ivoire to Yekepa in Nimba, through Bong, Grand Bassa, Margibi, Montserrado, Bomi, and Cape Mount Counties, before crossing into neighboring Sierra Leone.

We have completed and energized four out of five substations in Liberia - the Yekepa, (Nimba County), Buchanan (Grand Bassa County), Mt. Coffee (Montserrado County), and Mano (Grand Cape Mount County) substations. The Botota substation in Bong County is undergoing pre-testing and will be ready for energization shortly.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, these substations will provide Liberia the opportunity to deliver reliable power supply to communities along the CLSG line and the nearby counties. The Yekepa substation has the capacity to transmit electricity to Nimba, and parts of Bong County, the Buchanan substation can transmit electricity to Grand Bassa, Rivercess, parts of Sinoe, and parts of Margibi counties while the Mount Coffee substation has got the capacity to transmit electricity that can light up the entire Montserrado county. The Mano substation can transmit electricity to feed Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, and Bomi counties and the Botota substation can transmit electricity to central, northern, and eastern parts of Liberia. The Botota substation also has the potential to connect with the future St. Paul River hydroelectricity expansion project that is being prepared by the government of Liberia with the support of the World Bank.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, on October 21, 2022, the Liberia Electricity Corporation, signed the Power Purchase Agreement with Cote d'Ivoire Energies, followed by the signing of the Transmission Service Agreement on October 26, 2022, with TRANSCO CLSG, thus marking a significant milestone that will allow the LEC to trade affordable and reliable electricity on the CLSG line, commencing today. With this achievement, Liberia now joins Sierra Leone and Guinea to enjoy 24-hour electricity as part of the larger efforts to foster regional integration and boost regional development and improve the economies of the four countries.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, by switching on this light today, the people of Liberia are offered hope for a better life, improved health, and quality education, alleviation of poverty, and fostering sustainable socio-economic development. This is a clear manifestation of the commitment of the CLSG governments and their people to ensure this legacy project is achieved for the benefit of all Liberians and the people of the ECOWAS region.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen, in closing, I would like to convey my sincere thanks and appreciation to His Excellency, President George Manneh Weah, the Government, and the people of Liberia, the Presidents, and Governments of Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Guinea for their continuous support and contribution toward the successful delivery of the CLSG interconnection Project.

I would like to also thank our donor partners, including the World Bank, the African Development Bank (AFDB), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the KFW (German Development Bank), for their significant roles in mobilizing the required financial and technical resources in making the CLSG Project a reality.

I would like to particularly recognize the remarkable leadership role played by Minister Gersly Murry, the Minister of Mines and Energy, and Minister Samuel Tweh, Minister of Finance and Development Planning throughout the successful implementation of the CLSG project especially, amidst their busy schedules, they were always available for our calls. Mr. Minister, I say a “Big Thank You!

In addition, I would like to recognize the laudable efforts and support provided by other Ministers and government officials of the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Mines and Energy, Labor, Gender, and Social Protection, the various superintendents, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency(EPA), Forestry Development Authority (FDA), Traditional Chiefs, and Elders in our areas of operations, the Project Affected Persons, contractors, and subcontractors.

Furthermore, I would like to reiterate my gratitude to the Chairman and Acting CEO of LEC, and TRANSCO CLSG Board of Directors for their strong support and unwavering commitment to delivering affordable and reliable electricity to the citizens of our region.

I extend my profound thanks to my invaluable team for their hard work, resilience, commitment, and passion that have made us reach where we are today. May the Almighty Allah bless the works of TRANSCO CLSG and continue to bless the Government and People of Liberia.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to ALL.

**THANK YOU!...**