



Carol Wambugu, World Bank Liberia Operations Officer – Photo by Sidiki Trawally, TRANSCO CLSG

Remarks by World Bank Liberia Country Manager Khwima Nthara At the Commencement of the CLSG Power Supply to Liberia (Delivered by Carol Wambugu, World Bank Liberia Operations Officer) Mount Coffee, Rural Montserrado County

December 1, 2022

Introduction

It's a pleasure to be here with you all today officials of government, distinguished guests, representatives of the governments and electricity utilities of the four CLSG Countries, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, the Secretary-General, and representatives of the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP), and other distinguished guests.

We are delighted to be here today to see the beginning of the realization of the vision for the CLSG Regional Power Interconnector, which has the power to be truly transformational for the people of Liberia. This is a historic moment when the CLSG Interconnector is initiating the delivery of electricity to Liberia, after beginning to supply Sierra Leone and Guinea at the end of 2021 and early 2022.

This is an important step toward realizing the vision of the WAPP-CLSG Regional Power Interconnection Project, a complex and visionary project initiated by the four countries, with the support of the WAPP and the international financing community including the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, and German Development Bank. The WAPP- CLSG Interconnector is truly a Regional Project, one of the first of several WAPP strategic interconnection projects that together are creating an integrated West African energy market that will increase the supply of affordable and reliable electricity to the people of the region.

The WAPP CLSG Interconnector was conceived with a regional vision, to be implemented by TRANSCO CLSG, a Regional Transmission Company, and tasked with the ambitious endeavor of creating and managing such a strategic asset, on behalf of its owners of the four CLSG countries. If fully successful, the WAPP-CLSG Regional interconnector would efficiently transport electricity to, between, and within these four countries, providing them with abundant and affordable electricity, and TRANSCO CLSG would be a vibrant, and healthy regional utility, deriving its revenues from the services provided of transporting this electricity.

Today is the beginning of a big adventure for Liberia

The CLSG line opens a wide range of potential benefits to Liberia. The first benefit we are seeing today; it is expanding the supply of affordable and reliable energy from nearby countries such as Cote d'Ivoire. Furthermore, it can enable a route to market for the export of surplus electricity to other WAPP countries from future Liberian hydropower plants such as those under investigation on the St. Paul River. And, finally, the CLSG line also constitutes the backbone of the national transmission network in Liberia. As such, it provides the means for a major leapfrog in the electrification of the country, as it makes it possible to bring grid supplied electricity to remote populations and businesses that would otherwise need to wait 10 to 15 years for grid electricity.

While the potential benefits of the CLSG Interconnector in Liberia are clear, we need also to remember that its success cannot be taken for granted. As the Interconnector starts today to deliver on its promises for Liberia, more work will be needed to reap all of the expected benefits and for this Regional Interconnector to continue to transport efficiently this electricity in a sustainable manner for many years to come. The first challenge is to ensure the financial viability of TRANSCO CLSG and make this regional utility self-financing in the medium term to be a valued asset for the CLSG Countries, rather than becoming a fiscal burden on their governments' shoulders. The second challenge is for the CLSG countries to accelerate electrification programs to communities along the CLSG line so that they can reap the myriad benefits of grid electricity while at the same time increasing the flow of electricity through the line and revenues to TRANSCO CLSG.

Conclusion- we all have a role to play

Let me conclude by acknowledging all the hard work that has brought us to this point of initiating the first deliveries of electricity to Liberia, and also recognizing that great efforts will be needed by all of us to realize the full potential benefits to the people of this country, including efforts by the Government of Liberia, Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC), the WAPP Secretariat, the other Governments and Utilities of the CLSG countries, TRANSCO CLSG, and the international technical and financial partners that have supported the project. We are confident that with the same commitment, discipline, and cooperation that has brought us this far, the remaining challenges will be conquered to secure the sustainability of this transformational project for the current and future generations in Liberia and in the other CLSG Countries. The World Bank shares these objectives and remains ready to support the countries' efforts to make them a reality.

Thank you.

Best regards.