

**ADDRESS BY CHAIRMAN OF LERC, DR. LAWRENCE D. SEKAJIPO –
TUESDAY MARCH 9, 2021**

- Hon. Gesler Murray, Minister for Mines and Energy;
- Hon. J. Aloysius Tarlue, Jr. Executive Governor of the Central Bank of Liberia and former LERC Chairman
- Hon. Vicent Willie, Chairman of House Committee on Lands, Mines, Energy, Natural Resources & Environment;
- The National Authorizing office (NAO);
- The Millennium Challenge Corporation and Millennium Challenge Account Liberia; The World Bank; African Development Bank, and other development partners;
- The CEO and Executives of the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC);
- Government officials
- Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

I am pleased to welcome you to our offices and to this ceremony marking the formal granting of licenses to Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC).

The LERC was established under the 2015 Electricity Law of Liberia to, among others –

- License operators in the electricity supply industry
- Approve tariffs for services provided by the licensees
- Establish and monitor technical standards and codes
- Resolve disputes between licensees as well as their respective customers

In September, 2020, the LERC completed and published the Electricity Licensing Instruments which consist of the Electricity Licensing Regulations, Micro Utility Licensing Regulations, and the Licensing Handbook, issued under its rule making powers consistent with the 2015 Electricity Law of Liberia. These instruments provide the framework for licensing operators within the interconnected national grid network and operators of mini-grid and off-grid systems, and standalone systems respectively. The Licensing Handbook is a guide on the Regulations for applicants.

The 2015 Electricity Law of Liberia and the Regulations allow that an entity may engage in more than one Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) activity. However, such an entity must obtain a license for each of the distinct activities for which a license is required. The terms and conditions of each type of license are further defined in the license package. LEC is required by law to obtain a license for all aspects of its operations, and has duly complied by completing the license application processes. Today's ceremony therefore is to present the following licenses to LEC:

- Generation – for existing hydro and thermal plants
- Transmission – for operating the high voltage networks
- Distribution – for operating the low voltage networks
- System Operation – for the independent coordination and control of flow of power & energy on Liberia's Interconnected Transmission System (LITS);
- Import – for importing electricity through existing cross border lines

While the attention of the world is riveted on these developments in Liberia's electricity supply industry, the expectations of Liberians with respect to accessing reliable, affordable, and stable electricity is high. The LERC would like to send a clear and distinct message that Liberia is open for the critical investment required to

cover the infrastructural deficit within the electricity sector. The Commission is currently developing the Tariff Regulations and the technical codes which will further define the rules for ensuring smooth operation and the sustainability of sector.

What the Commission and consumers require of LEC is – ***adequacy in generation; grid resilience; distribution equipment reliability and enhanced customer service***, which are prerequisites for instilling investor and consumer confidence in the electricity supply industry. It is the Commission’s expectation that LEC will transit quickly towards achieving these goals within the established targets and benchmarks.

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners and Staff of the LERC, I would like to express our sincere thanks appreciation to the following –

- The past Chairman and members of the previous Board of Commissioners for their leadership and vision
- The Managing Director and staff of LERC for their diligence and hard work
- The Millennium Challenge Corporation and Millennium Challenge Account Liberia for their continued support
- The European Union Delegation to Liberia for their long-term technical assistance (LTTA) through the National Authorizing Office; and
- The EU LTTA technical team for their continued guidance

As we go forward post compact, we are mindful of the risks to LERC’s sustainability. LERC needs uninterrupted funding to implement its operations. It would be difficult to function independently in keeping with the 2015 Electricity Law without sustainable funding. Funding challenges could create difficulty in retaining trained, qualified, experienced, and reliable staff. Investments in LERC

are unlikely to achieve the intended objectives of transforming the electricity sector without continued stakeholders' participation and involvement.

Consequently, we make this appeal to the Government of Liberia and our development partners for their continued support to the LERC in order to achieve the stated objectives as outlined in the 2015 Electricity Law of Liberia.

Thank you. And May God Bless and save Liberia!