

**PRESS
RELEASE**



**COMMUNIQUE
DE PRESSE**

No.006 – 9th September 2015 – Accra, Ghana

ERERA ADVOCATES LONG-TERM PLANNING AND STRENGTHENING OF REGULATORY GOVERNANCE TO ADDRESS ENERGY DEFICIENCY IN AFRICA

The Acting Chairperson of the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA), Mrs. Ifeyinwa Ikeonu, has called on key players in the energy sector in Africa to adopt long-term approach to power planning in order to address, in an efficient manner, the energy challenges on the continent.

A forward-looking planning together with a credible regulatory governance will help ensure sustainability of energy access and affordability to all citizens.

Mrs. Ikeonu was addressing a section of the media at the end of a one-day meeting with a three member delegation from the Electricity Market Regulatory Authority (EMRA) of Turkey on Tuesday, 8th September 2015 at the ERERA headquarters in Accra, Ghana.

At the briefing was ERERA's Regulatory Council Member (Economist), Mr. Alagi Gaye and EMRA's Group Head, Electricity Market Department, Dr. Mustafa Gozen, who led the delegation which included Messrs. Ibrahim Erten and Selahattin Murat Sirin.

According to Mrs. Ikeonu, African energy players would also need to seek means of bridging the gas supply chain as well as diversify energy resources especially renewable sources to attain energy sufficiency in African countries.

She explained that the visit of the Turkish delegation was part of efforts to finalize a report on the G20 energy access programme for sub-Saharan countries, including the regulatory aspects of energy access.

The report of the study, which will be finalized in two weeks, is expected to contribute to how best African countries can partner with G20 countries in developing an appropriate regulatory that will attract the much needed investment into the electricity sector and ensure the sustainability of a regional electricity market.

**Published by: Department of Communication, ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority
Publié par: Le Département de la Communication, Autorité de Régulation Régionale du Secteur de
l'Électricité de la CEDEAO**

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It is expected to be presented to the next meeting of the G-20 heads of state, of which Turkey presently occupies the presidency.

The working visit was also to strengthen relations between EMRA and ERERA. Both institutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 27th October 2014. Part of the engagement include strengthening of the institutional framework within the electricity sector of ECOWAS Member States.

Mrs. Ikeonu stated that discussions during the Turkish visit would enable ERERA and EMRA to better understand the peculiar nature of the needs and challenges being faced by West African states in order to provide tailor-made solutions to the respective countries on a case to case basis.

Along with ERERA officials, the Turkish delegation paid a courtesy call on the Ag. Executive Secretary of the Energy Commission, Mr. Michael Opam, with whom they exchanged experiences on electricity regulatory practices in Ghana and Turkey.

Mr. Opam disclosed that Ghana is virtually at the end of the implementation of the electricity market reforms.

“We see this as a beginning, and we will deepen the collaboration”, said Mr. Opam to equally enthusiastic Turkish visitors.