

**PRESS
RELEASE**



**COMMUNIQUE
DE PRESSE**

No.003 – 15th April 2016 – Accra, Ghana

ERERA's New Chairman Assumes Office in Accra

Newly appointed Chairman of the Regulatory Council of the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA), Mr. Honoré Bogler, assumed duty on Friday, 15th April 2016 at the ERERA Headquarters in Accra, Ghana.

At a ceremony which was attended by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Energy and Mines, Mr. Morlaye Bangoura and the ECOWAS Commissioner for Human Resources, Mr. João José Huco Monteiro, out-going ERERA Acting Chairperson, Mrs. Ifeyinwa Ikeonu and Regulatory Council Member, Mr. Alagi Gaye, as well as ERERA staff members, Professor Bogler was full of praise for the pioneer Regulatory Council.

He commended his predecessor and the two Regulatory Council Members for their ability to make ERERA functional, even without a model to copy from. He also especially lauded ERERA's transitional leadership for its many achievements within 10 months.

Professor Bogler appealed to the ECOWAS Commission to extend its support to ERERA. He also called on ERERA staff for their cooperation during his tenure.

In her remarks, Mrs. Ikeonu noted the challenges of getting ERERA operational, and the strides it has so far made, attributing it to the "human spirit" within ERERA.

She lauded ERERA's "very dedicated team", and urged the staff to "continue to do all you can", especially as the institution prepares to launch the first phase of the regional power market later in the year.

Mrs. Ikeonu urged ERERA staff to cooperate and work effectively with the new Chairman in order to achieve the institution's mandate and to build a healthy ERERA, which she described as "one of its kind in the world", considering the peculiarity of a regional electricity regulatory authority.

Published by: Department of Communication, ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority
Publié par: Le Département de la Communication, Autorité de Régulation Régionale du Secteur de
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While appealing to the ECOWAS Commission to increase its support to the institution, and “help spread the gospel of ERERA”, she prayed: “May the light of ERERA continue to shine and light the whole of West Africa”.

In his statement, the ECOWAS Commissioner for Human Resources Management, Mr. João José Huco Monteiro, expressed satisfaction over the team spirit and warm atmosphere at ERERA, which was evident in the hand-over exercise.

He urged ERERA staff to maintain the same spirit of cooperation in order to facilitate the mission of the new Chairman.

While congratulating the out-going Regulatory Council Members on their hard work and success, Commissioner Monteiro said that ECOWAS would lean on the expertise and integrity of the out-going Chairperson for future missions of the Community.

The Commissioner noted that ERERA's three main challenges are institutional, financial and human resources. He therefore pledged ECOWAS' continued support to the institution to enable it achieve its objectives.

In this regard, he pledged a fast-tracking of the recruitment of the remaining Regulatory Council Members, and other key staff.

In his own contribution, Commissioner Morlaye Bangoura re-echoed the friendly and warm atmosphere prevalent in ERERA.

He urged the ERERA team to continue working in collaboration with other ECOWAS' institutions dealing with energy matters, including the West African Power Pool (WAPP) and the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE).

Commissioner Bangoura recalled that ERERA was set up in response to the urgent need for ECOWAS to provide adequate electricity for its citizens, taking into account the abundant natural resources existing within West African countries.

He therefore expressed confidence that the launch of the Regional Electricity Market is feasible, though a lot would have to be done, considering the political implications relating to the sovereignty which Member States will have to lose for the benefit of the citizens of the whole region.

Until his appointment, Mr. Bogler was the Director of Legal Studies at ANARE, the electricity regulatory body of Cote d'Ivoire. He was also previously a professor of law at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Professor Bogler participated actively in the process leading to the establishment of the Cotonou-based West African Power Pool (WAPP).

Similarly, he was involved in the creation of ERERA, and contributed in the drafting of its legal texts.

He also worked closely with the founding members of the regulatory institution, which is the first regional electricity regulatory authority in Africa.