

**PRESS
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ECOWAS Court of Justice Pledges Support for ERERA

ERERA's Regulatory Council has been assured of the readiness of the ECOWAS Court of Justice to help resolve the challenges facing the institution. The challenges include the swearing-in of the three-member Council and ERERA's independence as a regulatory authority.

The President of the ECOWAS Court, Honourable Justice Edward Amoako Asante, gave the assurance on 30th May 2019 when he received an ERERA delegation which paid him a courtesy visit in Abuja. The delegation was led by ERERA's Chairman, Professor Honoré Bogler.

Honourable Justice Amoako Asante proposed that the swearing-in of ERERA's Regulatory Council, which is a function of the ECOWAS Court of Justice, should take place during the June 2019 the mid-year Council of Ministers meeting in Abuja.

He also expressed confidence about ERERA's regulatory independence, especially its financial independence, when the regional electricity market comes full stream.

Earlier, Professor Honoré Bogler had told the President that the visit by was intended to brief members of the Court of the activities of ERERA, the role of the Court in the discharge of its mandate as well as discuss the possibility of the swearing-in of the Regulatory Council members.

Professor Bogler explained that there was the need to engage the Court in order to appreciate its role in the effective functioning of the cross-border electricity trading arrangement.

The Court will serve as the appellate court for ERERA's decisions in the regional electricity market.

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The Chairman told the President that the first phase of the electricity market was launched in Cotonou, Benin on 29th June 2018 while the launch of the second phase of the market will take place in 2020.

According to him, the second phase, which is the most important of the planned three phases of the market, will introduce market competitive among ECOWAS Member States.

Professor Bogler also explained that the second phase requires the regulator to assume office as arbitrator, hence the need for the regulator to take an oath of office. This activity, he further explained, should have taken place on the assumption of office of the members of the Regulatory Council.

He identified the challenges faced by ERERA to include the difficulty in exercising its independence from the ECOWAS Commission and electricity operators as envisaged under its statute, and therefore sought the Court's help in resolving these legal problems to avoid difficulties in the launch of the second phase.

In attendance from the Court of Justice were the Vice President, Honourable Justice Gberi-Bè Ouattara as well as Justices Dupe Atoki and Keikura Bangura.

Other members of the ERERA delegation were Regulatory Council Members, Dr. Haliru Dikko (Economist), Mr. Aly Mar Ndiaye (Engineer) and Communication Officer, Mr. Uwem Thompson.