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## **ECOWAS President Speaks on Merits of a Regional Electricity Market**

The President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, has described the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Market, under construction, as “fundamental” and “critical” to the development of West Africa.

Mr. Kassi Brou made the statement while addressing journalists during his visit to the Accra-based ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA) on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021. According to him, energy production is vital to the viability of the market, and ECOWAS is formulating policies that will be conducive to investments in the energy sector.

He said ECOWAS’ focus is on attracting investments in the production of electricity, ensuring transmission and distribution lines for cross-border power exchange and access to the local population, as well as having a good legal environment “so that private investors can know exactly, in a very predictable and transparent way, what the rules are and so can invest in the sector”.

The first phase of the Regional Electricity Market was launched in June 2018 in Cotonou, Benin Republic. The second phase will introduce a day-ahead, competitive market and help promote efficiency.

President Kassi Brou said the electricity market will ensure an increase in investment, considering the existence of a free trade area and the free circulation of persons, goods and services in the region. “We are trying to make energy available at a competitive cost to every country, and at the lowest cost possible” for Community citizens, he added.

Earlier while addressing staff of ERERA, President Kassi Brou said ECOWAS was preoccupied with achieving the objective that has been set for energy, including increasing the availability of energy to the people, ensure quality energy as well as cost-effectiveness and

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efficiency in energy production, “and gradually transform the whole mix to renewable energy”.

“They say water is life but energy is development. Without energy you cannot have quality of life, you cannot have growth, you cannot have development and you cannot have progress”, the President said.