



**REMARKS BY CLLR. MINNIE PAEGAR-KALLON
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PUBLIC AFFAIRS AT THE TOTOTA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (TEC)
PERMIT ISSUANCE CEREMONY**

The Liberian Electricity Sector was over the years characterized by monopoly and concentration of roles, enabling the Government to combine policy-making, regulatory and operator functions. To address the situation, the National Energy Policy (NEP) of Liberia was approved by Cabinet in 2009 to provide for, among other things, the liberalization of the sector as well as the separation of roles of policy-making, regulation and operation within the sector.

In 2015, the Electricity Law of Liberia (Electricity Law) was passed by the Legislature, providing the legal basis for the establishment of the Liberia Electricity Regulatory Commission (LERC) as the National Regulator, an independent agency with respect to its budget, management, staffing and in the exercise of its duties and authorities. The main functions of LERC are licensing operators in the sector, approval of tariffs, establishment and monitoring of technical standards and codes as well as resolution of service or license related disputes.

The Electricity sector of Liberia is undergoing reforms which aim to increase access to affordable electricity to all parts of the country. This is being done through a transformational process that will attract private investment and encourage partnerships to boost the rapid development of the electricity sector. Contextually, Liberia has one of the lowest electricity access rates and not surprisingly one of the highest tariffs in the world.

The electricity sector reform has achieved major milestones beginning with the enactment of the 2015 Electricity Law of Liberia, the publication of three Electricity Licensing Instruments which consists of the Electricity Licensing Regulations- for licensing operators in the Liberia interconnected grid systems , Micro Utility Licensing Regulations- for licensing mini grid and off grid systems under a simplified regime and the Electricity Licensing Hand book- a guide for assisting applicants in the application process, the approval of the Tariff Regulations and Multi Year Tariff Methodology- the framework for approving tariffs and other terms of supply, and the development of a Customer Service and Quality of Supply Regulations for which stakeholders' comments are being solicited.

In furtherance of LERC's mandate and to ably perform its regulatory functions, six licenses were issued to LEC in March this year, that allows LEC to engage in the activity for which each license was issued and comply with the terms and conditions therein. The Commission is also reviewing application submitted by Jungle Energy Power which operates in Nimba County, for a Micro Utility Distribution License.

LERC in March received an application from Totota Electric Cooperative (TEC) for a small composite Micro Utility Permit. After a thorough review of TEC's application and supporting documentations, the Board of Commissioners and the Technical team of LERC are here today to issue TEC the Small Composite Micro Utility Permit for which they applied. The Permit will allow TEC to generate and distribute electricity without discrimination to customers within Totota city, lower Bong County in accordance with the Permit terms and conditions.

Today, we are reaching another milestone by issuing our first Permit under the Micro Utility Licensing Regulations. We extend thanks and appreciation to the BOC for the support, our technical team for working tirelessly to ensure all requirements were met and that we worked within the statutory time frame and finally to TEC for the high level of cooperation during the permit application and review process.