

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Road Infrastructure Experts meet in Cotonou, Benin to review progress of technical preparatory studies and related matters for the Construction of the 6-Lane Multinational Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway**

**Cotonou, Benin, June 5, 2018.** Road Infrastructure Experts from the Corridor Member States on the Abidjan – Lagos Corridor (ALC) namely Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo are meeting in Cotonou, the capital of the Republic of Benin, to review the progress on the implementation of the Technical Studies for the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Program. This Experts Meeting, which is in preparation of the Ministerial Steering Committee meeting of Honorable Ministers of Road Infrastructure and Works of the five (5) Corridor Countries, is expected to look at the status of project preparatory Activities including the ratification of the Treaty establishing the Abidjan – Lagos Corridor, signature and ratification of Financing Agreements with the African Development Bank (AfDB), co-financier of the Technical Studies with the European Union (EU). Together, the AfDB and EU are providing about US\$22.27 million for the technical studies as well as project management support. The ECOWAS Commission is also funding early-stage project coordination, facilitation and management activities with annual internal budget allocations totaling about US\$1.2 million since 2013. Procurement processes are at different stages of progress in areas such as Feasibility, Environmental and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and Detailed Engineering study, Corridor Economic and Spatial Development Initiative Scoping Study, Road Safety Audit Study and a Technical Assistance Consultancy Services as well as advancing the signature and establishment of the new Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Management Authority (ALCoMA), among others.

Mr. Pathe Gueye, the Commissioner for Infrastructure, ECOWAS Commission, in his opening remarks expressed the continued commitment of the ECOWAS Commission to play its mandated project coordination and facilitation role in ensuring that all project components are expedited. Mr. Gueye, informed the meeting that the Project Implementation Unit meant to provide dedicated hands to fast-track project implementation,

will be mobilized in early July, 2018 to enable the Experts support the technical studies. On behalf of H.E. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, President of the Commission, the Commissioner thanked the AfDB and EU for their continued support to the development of Infrastructure in the ECOWAS Region and urged the partners to play their role in supporting the project owners achieve their utmost objective in line with the Vision of the Heads of State of the Corridor States. He expressed his trust in the guidance of the Chairman and Members of the Ministerial Steering Committee in providing the required oversight to achieve the project objectives.

Commissioner Gueye added that, as provided in the Project Treaty signed by the Heads of State the establishment of the Supranational Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Management Authority (ALCoMA) is also far advanced and with the signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement for ALCoMA's establishment planned during the Ministerial Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.

The Honorable Minister of Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Benin, M. Cyr Koty, in his keynote address underscored the importance of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor in achieving the vision of the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS towards the development of the Region and improve the standard of living for the Community citizens. He said that the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor holds the key to cross-border trade and will enhance rapid integration and also improve socio-economic activities which will create more jobs for youths in the sub-region. He congratulated the Experts for their commitment and urged them to sustain the momentum to fast-track implementation.

The 3-Day meeting is holding ahead of the Ministerial Steering Committee meeting scheduled to hold on the 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.