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## MINISTERS OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS FROM ECOWAS MEMBER STATES ON THE ABIDJAN-LAGOS CORRIDOR AGREE TO EXPEDITE ACTION ON THE COMPLETION OF TECHNICAL STUDIES AND MOBILIZATION OF FINANCING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE 6-LANE SUPRA-NATIONAL CORRIDOR HIGHWAY

**Accra, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023** – The Ministerial Steering Committee of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project, held its 19<sup>th</sup> in Accra on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 to take decisions on expediting the completion of technical studies, securing of lands for the right of way, financing the construction of the highway project and the operationalization of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Management Authority (ALCoMA).

Welcoming participants on behalf of the ECOWAS Commission, the Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalization, **Mr. Sediko DOUKA** lauded the commitment of the Corridor Member Countries and highlighted the fact that the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway remains a flagship project for the Commission, and is one of the interventions that could change the narrative of ECOWAS by highlighting the contribution to the total economic growth of community citizens with projects in transport, health, agriculture, customs, migration, education and more. **“It will enable citizens of the community to better appreciate and be informed about tangible achievements of ECOWAS. Indeed, it is our duty to accentuate the visibility of ECOWAS achievement on physical infrastructure projects in the area of transport, energy, telecom, water resource and agriculture just as this project has been presented at various African Investment Forums by the African Development Bank.”** He echoed.

Commissioner DOUKA charged the participants to take interest in ensuring that the project becomes a reality. **“We keep calling on both public and private investors to accompany the Corridor countries and ECOWAS in the realization of this visionary venture.”** The feasibility and preliminary designs studies have been completed, while the final phases should be completed before the end of this year. **“On resource mobilization, it should be noted that ECOWAS has just adopted a new regulatory framework on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) that is an incentive for the entry of Private Sector in large Investments like the nature of this project.”**

The African Development Bank (AfDB) on behalf of the Development Partners also assured their unwavering commitment to the realization of the highway. Mr. Mike Salawou, Director for Infrastructure and Urban Development, revealed that the AfDB are in discussions with the ECOWAS Commission to commence engagements with Development Finance Institutions at various roundtable sessions to attract the needed financing interests for the Construction of the highway. **“We are going to make sure that this strategic economic corridor project with a great potential to boost industrialization, promote trade and improve lives and conditions of ECOWAS citizenry, is financed. So we are fully committed to make this a reality”**



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Ministers of Roads and Works of Corridor Countries took turns to express their continued commitment to support the completion of the technical studies and accompany ECOWAS and Development Partners to raise the needed investment to fund the project.

Chairman of the Ministerial Steering Committee and Minister of Public Works and Housing of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **Hon Babatunde Raji Fashola** expressed his pride at the achievements so far attained from the outset. He highlighted that projects of such magnitude usually encounter several challenges at the preparatory stages, but through the hard work of Project Engineers and Member States, most challenges have been overcome. **“We are building a road over one thousand kilometers, across five (5) countries, across diversity of languages and political structures, in a modern era of climate change, people’s rights and sustainability on our horizon. We have heard issues about compensation; environment, social impact assessment, resettlement and action plan etc. because at the end of the day this is all about people. So, we must build in a way that takes care not only of people’s interest but also climate and other diversities.”** He urged partners and stakeholders to be optimistic and exercise some patience as we complete the necessary reports to address all these.

**“If we get this right, then constructing the project will be very easy, so please do not despair. It may look difficult, but with my little experience, this is the hardest part, and we are almost there.”** He intimated that the operationalization of the Management Authority that will manage the corridor highway development project has commenced with the formation of the Board of Directors.

The Vice President of the Republic of Ghana delivered a Keynote Address for the meeting, through **Hon. Ing. Yaw Osafo Mafo**, Senior Advisor to the President of the Republic of Ghana. The Vice President commended the Honourable Ministers and ECOWAS for their sustained effort and strong collaboration in preparing the Corridor Highway Project. He hinted that in preparation for the construction Ghana’s section of the Multinational Highway, Ghana has embarked on massive sensitization drives along the host communities.

He expressed excitement over the assurance of AfDB to raise the required funds for the highway construction describing the project as top on the agenda of Ghana’s government. **“The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Project is on the priority list of the Government of Ghana, and we keenly look forward to the day that the sword will be raised for the commencement of this construction. We believe that this project will give a new dimension to ECOWAS, and we believe it will change the economies of the five (5) countries and the region, and therefore whatever we can do to support it, we will do it.”**