

Executive Council Meeting & General Assembly of the ECOWAS Federation of Chambers of Mines,

Brief Report

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso 26th-27th September, 2017

Introduction

The President of the ECOWAS Federation of Chambers of Mines (EFEDCOM), Mr. Kwame Addo-Kufuor chaired the 2nd General Assembly meeting of the Federation at the Palace Hotel, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on Wednesday 27th September, 2017.

Opening Ceremony

Dignitaries present at the opening ceremony included:

- ✓ Minister of Mines & Quarries of Burkina Faso, Hon. Oumarou Idani
- ✓ Deputy First Mayor of the City of Ouagadougou, Hon. Kibsa Charles Niodogo
- ✓ President of Chambre de Mines de Burkina Faso, Mr. Barry Tidiane
- ✓ Members of the Executive Council of EFEDCOM, made up of representatives from Ghana, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

Speeches delivered

Welcoming the distinguished guests, *Mr. Barry Tidiane, President of the Burkina Faso Chamber of Mines* thanked the Ghana Chamber of Mines for running the affairs of EFEDCOM for the initial six (6) months, as well as the ECOWAS Commission for the support. He reiterated the determination of the Burkina Faso Chamber to work with the Federation to realise the objectives of the later. He further thanked the EFEDCOM for agreeing to host it's meetings to coincide with the 2nd SAMAO Conference & Exhibition in Ouagadougou.

The President of EFEDCOM Mr. Kwame Addo-Kufuor expressed his appreciation, on behalf of his visiting colleagues for the warm reception accorded them. He said the Federation has monitored the progress of mining in Burkina Faso over the last few years and applauds the efforts of the Government and people of that country in that regard.

He advocated continued collaboration and the deepening of mutual trust among members of the Federation. He emphasized the need to optimally harness the resources of the sub-region for the benefit of stakeholders. In his view, EFEDCOM has been established to provide thought leadership for sustainable development and guaranteed prosperity on the back of the mining industry.

The Minister of Mines & Quarries, Hon. Oumarou Idani who was the Special Guest of Honour at the opening ceremony thanked the ECOWAS Commission and EFEDCOM for hosting its meeting in Burkina Faso. He stated his country's strong desire to exploit its minerals to develop Burkina Faso. The country is therefore willing to develop strong partnerships to achieve this objective. According to the Burkinabe Minister, the extractive industry in his country has always been recognized as the engine and catalyst for growth and it would remain so for a very long time.

He stated that his government is aware that investors need security and serenity in a competitive environment.

Courtesy Call on President of Burkina Faso

A delegation of the EFEDCOM led by its Executive Director, Mr. Sulemanu Koney and President of the Burkina Faso Chamber of Mines, Mr. Barry Tidiane had earlier paid a courtesy call on the President of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Roch Marc Christian Kabore at his Presidency. The President assured the Federation of his country's determination to develop its economy on the back of its mining industry. He encouraged the Federation to work hard to bring on board, all the Chambers in the sub-region to ensure cohesion in the administration of mining within the sub-region. The delegation subsequently interacted with the media.

Opening Ceremony & Panel Discussions – SAMAO Conference

A panel discussion coordinated by the Moroccan Minister of Energy, Mining & Sustainable Development, which form part of the opening session of SAMAO Conference & Exhibition, featured Ghana's Deputy Minister for Lands & Natural Resources, Hon. Mrs. Barbara Oteng Gyasi and Mr. Kwame Addo-Kufuor, President of the ECOWAS Federation of Chambers of Mines. Other panel members included the Ministers responsible for mining from Senegal, Niger, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire.

The overriding concern among the panelists was the challenges and development of Artisanal & Small Scale Mining within the sub-region. Ghana's Deputy Minister acknowledged the role of ASM in development but stated that the sub-sector has not been regulated well enough and this has led to the growth of illegal mining. The Hon. Minister, who is also a Member of Parliament from a mining district, confirmed a temporary ban on activities of small-scale mining in Ghana to enable the Government re-assess the challenges and put in place remedial measures.

The Minister mentioned the launch of a project: Multilateral Mining Integrated Project (MMIP) by the Ghana Government, aimed at addressing the challenges of illegal mining. A key component of the Project is the development of Alternative Livelihood Projects which will ensure that people displaced by the ban on illegal mining are guaranteed livelihoods.

The President of EFEDCOM stated that the mining industry is ready to work with Governments in the sub-region to develop the Small Scale mining sub-sector and regularize the activities of the illegal miners. He admitted that the sub-sector which employs about 1 million for example in Ghana plays a significant role. The Federation is therefore willing to work at creating a platform for small scale miners within the various Chambers to ensure that, the needed support in terms of transfer of technology, provision of training and logistics are offered in a regulated manner to the members.