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Uganda signs deal to export power to Congo

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KAMPALA. Uganda has signed a deal to start supplying power to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) in the next three years.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed last week by Energy minister Irene Muloni.

Ms Muloni revealed this while speaking at the launch of the ISO certification of Uganda Electricity Generation Company Limited (UEGCL) in Kampala last Friday.

She said Uganda will supply electricity to eastern DR Congo.

The supply will be connected from Kasese District in Uganda to Beni city in northeastern DR Congo, Butembo in North Kivu and finally to Bunia town in Ituri Province.

When contacted yesterday, Ms Muloni said once Karuma, Isimba and other small power dams are completed, Uganda will have excess power, which would be exported.

She also said efforts to connect power to 80 per cent of Ugandan households are underway. She said the government is trying to reduce the cost of power as a first step towards easing access by all.

Karuma and Isimba dams combined will generate 783MW. Uganda

currently generates 825mw.

"The financing of the project will be about \$150m. Of that amount, Uganda will contribute about \$22m and the rest will be the responsibility of DR Congo government. Once that funding is secured, it will take two years to complete the project, which could be by end of 2019 or there about," Ms Muloni said.

The money will be borrowed from the African Development Bank.

It emerged from the interview with Ms Muloni that this is part of regional countries' efforts to interlink their infrastructure, which initiative will also be extended to South Sudan.

Muloni applauded UEGCL, saying it's the country's first government agency to have its processes internationally certified.

According to UEGCL chief executive officer, Mr Harrison Mutikanga, the ISO 9001: 2015 certification means implementation, monitoring, procurement and human resource management of the power generation corporation will be streamlined to international standards.

He said this will put UEGCL under tighter scrutiny in the way it does business, a tough but desirable challenge.

THE PROJECT

Coverage area.

The distance from Kasese in Uganda to eastern DR Congo is not more than 75km. However, the entire project will span about 350km inside DR Congo.

Upgrade of 400 kV from the 220 kV will be done in Kasese, thereby allowing the power transfer to DR Congo.