

Media Release

Voith GmbH
Center of Competence Corporate and
Market Communication EMEA
St. Poeltener Strasse 43
89522 Heidenheim, Germany
Tel. +49 7321 37-2060
Fax +49 7321 37-7107

www.voith.com

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Milestone for Liberia's energy infrastructure: Mount Coffee hydropower plant restarts after extensive modernization

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- **Opening ceremony with more than 300 international guests**
- **Voith components make significant contribution to Liberia's economic development - electricity for more than 1 million people**
- **Power plant operators trained by Voith**

Liberia. Following extensive upgrades, the Mount Coffee hydropower plant in Liberia has gone into operation. On 15 December, in the presence of 300 international guests, Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf celebrated the startup of the first turbine-generator unit at the run-of-river hydropower plant.

German technology group Voith played a major role in this project, supplying new Francis turbines, generators, the control technology and the electrical and mechanical power plant equipment. Once commissioning has been completed, the 88 MW capacity plant will supply more than a million people in Liberia with clean electricity. As a result, Mount Coffee will make a crucial contribution to Liberia's economic transformation and deliver sustainable progress for the population of the West African country.

"For Liberia and many other countries in Africa, energy supply is a major component of their national growth strategy. The reliable, stable supply of energy to households and industry is a major prerequisite for improving living conditions," explained Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during her visit to Voith headquarters last year.

Not even unpredictable events such as the spread of the Ebola virus in 2014, and a high incidence of malaria in the team later on affected the rehabilitation works. Together with the customer Liberia Electricity Cooperation (LEC) a cohesive approach was developed in order to meet the time schedule. "I am delighted that Voith and LEC have found a secure



and pragmatic way for the further development of the project, despite the recently overcome Ebola epidemic. With this, Voith is supporting Liberia with an important step in the fight for the development of the Liberian economy and combating national poverty: with the repair of the Mount Coffee power plant, one of the key facilities in the Liberian energy supply networks is being reconstructed", Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said.

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Concurrently with the refurbishment works, Voith trained 20 employees of future plant operator Liberia Electricity Cooperation in the operation of the hydropower plant. The staff, ranging from technicians through to managers, were prepared for their specific roles in the Mount Coffee hydropower plant. "Voith is committed to carrying out technology upgrades and training concurrently, to support the economic and social development of Africa and adhere to global obligations for reducing emissions worldwide. The collaboration with the Liberia Electricity Cooperation on the Mount Coffee hydropower plant project is a fantastic example of this synergy at work," says Heike Bergmann, Senior Vice President Sales Africa at Voith Hydro.

The run-of-river hydropower plant on the Saint Paul River, which was built in the 1960s as Liberia's second and largest hydropower plant, was destroyed during the Liberian Civil War. Due to plundering of the electrical and mechanical components only parts of the dam and the steel penstock were left intact. Since then, Liberia's capital has been reliant on expensive, non-renewable diesel generators to produce electricity.

All in all, Voith can look back on many years of involvement on the African continent. Although there is considerable hydropower potential in Africa, estimated at around 435 GW, only around 26 GW are actually being used at present. Technology Group Voith is currently implementing various projects in Africa, including the supply of equipment for the Cambambe II hydropower plant in Angola and upgrading the Inga I hydropower plant in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Importance of Hydropower

Hydropower is the biggest, oldest and most reliable form of renewable energy generation. Worldwide it makes an indispensable contribution to a stable power supply and thus to economic and social development – in industrialized countries and also in regions seeing strong growth. In addition, hydropower contributes significantly to climate-friendly energy produc-



tion. Since the early days of hydropower exploitation Voith has been a leading supplier of this technology and is constantly developing it further.

About the company

For 150 years, Voith's technologies have been inspiring customers, business partners and employees worldwide. Founded in 1867, Voith today has around 19,000 employees, sales of € 4.3 billion and locations in more than 60 countries worldwide and is thus one of the largest family-owned companies in Europe. Being a technology leader, Voith sets standards in the markets of energy, oil & gas, paper, raw materials and transport & automotive.

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Caption 1: Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf celebrated the startup of the first turbine-generator unit of the Mount Coffee hydropower plant.



Caption 2: The Mount Coffee hydropower plant during modernization works.

Contact:

Marian Möbius

Manager Product & Corporate Communication EMEA, Key Account VH

Tel. +49 7321 37-6157

Marian.Moebius@Voith.com

www.voith.com

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Center of Competence Corporate and
Market Communication EMEA
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