

**KENYA ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION CO. LTD.**

**“Building a World Class National Grid”**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**KENYA LOSES MILLIONS FROM INFRASTRUCTURE VANDALISM**

**Nairobi, 21st August, 2014**

The dream of achieving cheaper and more reliable electricity for Kenya may be delayed because of recent underground electricity transmission cable vandalism at the Nairobi National Park. The cable is part of the 220kV section of the 482Km 400kV Nairobi- Mombasa line (Athi River to Embakasi section) and is rated 334 MVA (1600Amps). The loss of 123 metres of bond, coaxial and single core cables as well as link boxes Copper is equivalent to Ksh.10,086,000 and was destroyed on 7th August 2014 at about 7.00pm. The vandals’ interest in the cable are the copper strands which are of little value compared to the cost of the whole cable.

The 482km 400/220kV Mombasa-Nairobi transmission line is the largest project of its kind to be implemented in Kenya and also in the region. It was conceived out of the need to increase transmission capacity between Mombasa and Nairobi as the existing capacity could not transmit extra load. This project is a Vision 2030 Medium Term Flagship project.

The project’s civil works which are being undertaken by Voacom for Siemens Kenya is nearing completion, testing and commissioning but this has been slowed down by vandalism of the said section. Confirming the incident was the Voacom Supervisor, Mr. Joseph Wakhisi who went to check on previously vandalized cables at a terminal tower and reported the case to Mombasa Road Police post. So far, the project has experienced four underground cable thefts and vandalism between December 2013 and August 2014 but the first three cases have since been rectified at a high cost.

‘This a major blow for the Energy sector as it will greatly affect the evacuation of last 70MW of the planned 280 MW from Olkaria through the Olkaria- Suswa- Isinya transmission Line Project,’ noted Eng. Joel Kiilu, KETRACO’s MD. ‘It is a great loss to the country and in future, contracts may be expensive because the contractors will have to include the vandalism risk to their quote,’ he added.

The cable, the first 220kV is custom made for KETRACO by LS Cables of Korea. The portion that was damaged has to be further cut and re-joined by use of special machines. The delay from these repair works is expected to run until September and the total loss to the country per day is about Ksh.25 Million.

To prevent further occurrences, Siemens Kenya who are the main contractors have come up with mitigation measures that include increasing the number of guards and having armed Administration Police officers patrolling the area during the day and at night. ‘We have also agreed to backfill all open areas (snaking areas) in order to reduce the risk of further theft and/or damage’ added the Siemens Kenya Manager Mr. Tony Bikoko.

The cable which runs a total of 6.8Km out of the 100km 220kV ring was necessary because it falls within the National park as well as in the flight path area. It was also necessary to preserve the National Park’s aesthetics.

ENDS.

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