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VOLTA POWER INAUGURATION CEREMONY  
SPEECH BY DR. GIUSEPPE LODIGIANI,  
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF IMPREGILO –  
22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY, 1966.

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Osagyefo the President, Honourable Ministers and Ambassadors, Nananom, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed a privilege to be able to address a few words to you, on behalf also of my colleagues and our staff, on this occasion, which is so significant for our Company.

Today's date marks a historic moment for Ghana, and it is a source of great satisfaction to us that we have taken part in a venture which is officially accomplished today and is being so fittingly celebrated.

It is not for me to illustrate the tremendous importance of the Volta River Project for the future and development of Ghana, nor to emphasize the significance that its achievement has had and will have in the history of relationship between western technology and economics and the industrial development of the new African nations.

I feel however, that I might be allowed to express my, and indeed our, admiration for the ingeniousness of the original idea, for the foresight and practical realism with which the concept of the Volta River Project was launched, its details developed and finally brought to fruition.

I have always considered this project and example from which many other initiatives on this continent could and should draw inspiration. It blends together in perfect harmony two fundamental trends of modern economics. These are often considered to clash, but when they pull together they can lead to amazing results: I am referring to Government and public enterprise, as opposed to private enterprise.

Without his political vision, his desire of progress for his people and his country, and his capacity to direct these aspirations towards a well-defined and economically sound purpose – in short without the decisiveness and strength of will of President Nkrumah, this project would not have been accomplished.

But it was fortunate that this inspired idea aroused the interest, or I had better call it the enthusiastic support of a great industrialist as Mr. Edgar Kaiser.

This cooperation put into relentless motion a series of consequences, encouraged further cooperation and attracted further assistance – particularly of a fi-

nancial nature – which were absolutely essential for the final success. All those who have given their support deserve our genuine admiration and gratitude, not only because they made possible our work as Contractors, but because we too are conscious of being involved in a historical process. This process demands the closest collaboration and cooperation between those people and countries who have more, and those who have less, between those who have fully developed their resources and those who are endeavouring to do so. We are therefore grateful to all those who strived towards this goal.

Our effort as Contractors was to comply to the best of our capabilities with the interests of the organizations who had called upon us for this job: The Volta River Authority and Kaiser Engineers & Contractors, Inc.

I believe we can say that we have worked hard and that we have spared nothing in the way of personnel and equipment, in order to achieve, and if possible better, the scope of our contract. This is proved by certain figures which I would like to quote:

At Akosombo during the peak period, over 5,000 men were working (including our sub-contractors, the principal ones being Sadelmi and Rodio) of whom almost 4,500 were Ghanaians and the remainder Expatriates.

The total value of equipment and plant used reached nearly \$4,000,000. the number of man-hours worked exceeded 35 million.

At certain moments, particularly during the execution of the foundations and the lower part of the Dam, difficulties of a quite extraordinary nature were encountered, and we went through some critical days. However, our entire personnel, at all levels, led by Mr. Baldassarrini, met these difficulties with unwavering confidence, while the Management did not hesitate to resort to exceptional measures in order to ensure success.

I am happy to say that the support and collaboration of the Volta River Authority and Kaiser Engineers & Constructors Inc. never failed us.

I wish to express our Company's most sincere thanks to them and above all to their top men, Mr. Frank Dobson and Mr. Ray Ware.

These joint efforts enable us even to gain some time on a very tight contractual schedule, as evidenced by the fact that the Main Dam was completed one month ahead of schedule (in spite of the greatest recorded flood in the history of the Volta), the first Generator produced power on schedule, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Units were each one month ahead of schedule and finally the last Unit and the overall completion of the job should be some three months ahead of schedule.

But a fundamental factor of this success – and I have preferred to keep this appreciation till the end because it is particularly heartfelt – has been the Ghanaian people at all levels, and the spirit of collaboration that grew up between our local

and expatriate personnel. If I might be allowed to express my personal feelings, I recall that when I first came to Ghana in 1960, I took an immediate and spontaneous liking to this country and its people because of their friendly spirit and the cheerfulness of their disposition. Later on I came to know and appreciate other qualities – their quick-wittedness and their willingness to learn and to work. These impressions which not only I, but all of us have gained, leave us with the memory of an amazingly warm and happy human relationship throughout our work in Ghana.

It is to this nation and its President, that we therefore address our most heartfelt wish that the Volta River Project may mark only the first step of its progress towards the prosperous future, which it so rightly deserves.