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World Bank Approves Additional Grant of US\$180 Million for the Southern African Power Market Project

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WASHINGTON, July 1, 2009—The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors yesterday approved an additional Grant in the amount of US\$180.62 million for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) component of the Southern African Power Market Project (SAPMP) approved in November 2003, and for a formal restructuring. This will bring the total World Bank contribution to the project to \$358.12 million, enable implementation to be completed by 2012. Other co-financiers are the European Investment Bank (\$47 million equivalent), and the national electric power utility, SNEL (\$6.86 million). The Copper Belt Energy Corporation of Zambia is contributing an additional \$18 million to construct the transmission link between DRC and Zambia

The Project's specific focus is to rehabilitate and reinforce an existing 2,300 kilometer high voltage power transmission line from the Inga hydropower stations to Kasumbalesa at the border with Zambia, which is the backbone of the DRC power transmission system as well as the main artery for conveying power to the industrial heartland of the country in the Katanga Province and further on to the Southern Africa Power Pool (SAPP) through Zambia.

"These investments in power and telecommunications infrastructure are critical, not only for serving the needs in these sectors in DRC to support economic growth, but also to promote orderly development of increased power trading and the ability of DRC to attract funding for the development of its large hydropower potential in the future." said **Samuel O' Brien, the World Bank's Task Team Leader for the project.**

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