

Mr. Ferid Belhaj
MENA Region Vice President
Washington D.C.
(fbelhaj@worldbank.org)

Ref. no : 1723
Date: 20/7/2020

Dear Mr. Belhaj,

**Subject: Water Supply Augmentation Project (Bisri Dam Project)
Request to extend the deadline for suspension of disbursement**

Reference is made to the World Bank (WB) letter dated June 26, 2020, and to the abovementioned subject,

Whereas the Bisri Dam Project Loan had been ratified via the laws no. 24 and no. 25 dated 24/11/2015 and decrees no. 2298 and 2299 dated 24/11/2015,

Whereas the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) had appointed the Contactor Nurol – Ozaltin JV for the execution of the Project Works,

Whereas the law no. 160 issued on 14/5/2020, had suspended all legal and contractual periods from October 18, 2019 till July 30, 2020, in view of the circumstances in the country that had put all the project on a slower pace of implementation,

Whereas the Government had issued the decision no. 1 dated 15/3/2020, declaring the state of emergency in the country due to COVID19 disease, the thing that had impacted as well timely implementation of the projects,

Pursuant to the Council of Minister decision no. 1 dated 2/4/2020, namely bullet no 1 stating that the Government will to pursue the implementation of the Bisri Dam Project,


In reference to the PM letter dated 16/4/2020 notifying the abovementioned Government's Decision,

Whereas the WB office had notified the Ministry of Finance of their intention to suspend the disbursement from the project loan, under the condition that the Lebanese Government:

- Finalize the Ecological Offset Plan (ECP) by no later than July 10, 2020;
- Finalize the Operation & Maintenance (O&M) arrangements for the Project by no later than July 22, 2020; and
- The Contractor is mobilized at the worksite by no later than July 22, 2020,

Noting that the WB had requested as well that the government undertakes Public Dialogue sessions on the Project and inform them accordingly before July 22, 2020,

Whereas the CDR had submitted the final ECP report on 9/7/2020,

Hadi Ahmad
20-7-2020


Whereas the Ministry of Energy and Water (MOEW) had notified the WB on their arrangements concerning the O&M plans on 17/7/2020 via letter no. 1691/m,

Whereas the requested Public Dialogue sessions had taken place on 8 and 10 of July 2020 at the Grand Serail, and the MOEW had reported accordingly on its recommendations via letter no. 1692/m dated 17/7/2020,

Whereas the Contactor of Bisri Dam Project stated his will to resume the Works as of July 22, 2020 provided that security forces are ensured on site,

Whereas the CDR had conveyed the Contractor's request to the Ministry of Interior Affairs asking for permanent security forces presence on site,

Whereas newly encountered site conditions may slow down the re-mobilization of the Contractor to worksite, especially in such a short notice, and in particular with the impact of COVID 19 spread and the stipulations of the mentioned law to suspend contractual periods,

And Following the communication between the MOEW and the WB office in Washington concerning a possible time extension of the date for suspension of the Project loan,

Therefore,

The Government of Lebanon hereby requests a three (3) months extension of time for the date set by the World Bank to suspend disbursement for the Bisri Dam Project, during which a plan will be set by the MOEW and CDR to ensure remobilization and resume of the Works on site, noting that your remaining listed requirements are fulfilled.

Best Regards


Hassan Djab

President of the Council of Ministers