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## PRESS RELEASE

### Energy challenges and opportunities facing Europe and Africa in the 21st Century

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** – Many challenges still stand in the way of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP). One of the AEEP's Second High Level Meeting's central conclusion is that this does not suffice for sitting down and doing nothing.

"Without energy, there will be no health care. No energy, no education. No energy, no jobs. No energy, no clean water. And without these, no development", H.E. Andris Piebals, the European Union's Commissioner for Development Cooperation, remarked during the High Level Day of the Meeting held at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission.

"We must, therefore, do everything we can to provide sustainable energy to our people. This is why we at the European Commission reaffirmed our commitment to achieving the targets laid out in Vienna in 2010", he added. Andris said the Commission would increase financial support for technical assistance by at least 5 million Euros in order to fast track the achievement of the AEEP's 2020 targets.

H.E. Alemayehu Tegenu, Minister of Water, Irrigation, and Energy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, said the country would double its investments in the energy sector to connect at least 71 percent of the population to sustainable and renewable energy by 2015.

The participants of the sessions acknowledged the high costs required for investing in energy and concluded that this obstacle had to be overcome by immediately setting up relevant energy-investment frameworks to help African countries mobilise finances, also through partnerships with the private sector.

"The AEEP will continue to review achievements and recompose political commitments to achieve the 2020 targets. In Africa, more than anywhere else, energy is required to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals", H.E. Elham Ibrahim, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission, pointed out.

She said the AU endorsed the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa in 2012 to promote regional integration in power pools. This, she mentioned, would facilitate the achievement of the AEEP's targets by 2020. She brought up Germany's 50 million Euro grant to the African Union, which was meant to develop geothermal potentials in East Africa. Besides this and further grants, agreements for financial commitments are to be signed next month.

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