

PRESS RELEASE

Reforming Sectors Key to Spurring Renewable Energy Growth

Delegates at the second High Level Meeting (HLM) of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) underscored the need for African governments to drive reforms in different sectors of development by initiating the dialogue with the private sector, power utilities, nongovernmental organisations, and further relevant groups in order to spur the growth of renewable energy sources.

The high representatives stated that reforming development institutions and coordination among different players would hasten the implementation of projects. During the HLM's "tool box"-segment, the delegates observed that education would play a huge role in promoting renewable energies by creating knowledge and awareness.

"Renewable energy in Africa is about access and survival, it is everywhere and not in environment alone, energy issues should not be a secondary agenda, but a mainstream development agenda, the people who suffer the most from lack of energy, due to lack of awareness, are women. I have a picture of a pregnant woman carrying a baby and firewood on her head as she came back home from the farm," said Mr Kandeh Yumkella, UN Special Representative, Sustainable Energy for (SE4ALL).

During the discussion, it emerged that under some circumstances the availability of funds was not the problem but the implementation of projects. The speakers of the session stated that the energy needs of the people were the most important needs that governments should focus on. They noted that the governments should show more commitment, coordination, and facilitation for isolated grids serving the poor people.

The delegates stated that the fear factor affected the relationship between the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and the public sector. Mr Klaus Rudischhauser, Deputy Director General for Development and Cooperation at the European Commission (DG DEVCO), enumerated several initiatives triggered by the European Union aimed at creating incentives for private investors. These initiatives include a technical support facility, the Africa Trust Fund, and a project-preparation facility for civil societies, among others.

It was observed that of the biggest problems Africa was facing is the lack of financial commitment deals, leading to the conclusion that governments should conduct auctions to persuade investors to focus on Africa and particularly on renewable-energy projects.

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About the AEEP

The AEEP is a long-term framework for structured political dialogue and cooperation between Africa and the EU on energy issues of strategic importance, reflecting African and European needs. Through the partnership, Africa and Europe will work together to develop a shared vision and common policy answers, and to stimulate specific actions to expand access to energy, to achieve greater energy security and to maximise the contribution of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

AEEP stands for Africa European Union Energy Partnership.

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