



Panel on EU-MENA renewable energy cooperation

Time and place: Tuesday, 18th October 2016, 17:30 - 20:00h at the Representation of the State of Lower Saxony to the European Union, Rue Montoyer 61, 1000 Brussels, followed by a networking dinner from 20h till 21h.

1. Political context

Countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are blessed with huge and diversified renewable energy potential, in particular wind and solar energy. Given the ever increasing role of RES in the energy mix of EU Member States and the EU approach to endorse sustainability and climate protection in its external partnerships, renewable energy cooperation has been a major pillar of EU-MENA partnership, both in the general context of EU Neighborhood Policy, *the Union for the Mediterranean* (UfM), as well as the external dimension of the Energy Union. In addition, renewable energy cooperation has been promoted as a strong pillar in the bilateral energy relations between the EU and Mediterranean countries. In the run-up to COP22 and the announcement of new RES targets during COP21, this strategic partnership could serve as a major instrument for raising the climate ambition of the countries from these regions, sending strong signal to investors that the RE transition process is already happening and has a strong institutional backing. In a long-term perspective, this regional energy partnership could lead to an integrated sustainable energy market, improve energy security in the region, decrease vulnerability to external shocks and bring more benefits for the local population.

In the past decade, a number of bottom-up initiatives have emerged such as the MEDREG, the Med-TSO, the MED-EMIP and MED-ENE that aim at setting up a common institutional framework for regional cooperation, improving regulatory governance, harmonizing market access conditions, as well as developing pilot projects and removing barriers to investments. To democratize renewable energy generation and distribution in the region, it is essential to embed also the right participatory mechanisms and institutional safeguards in those transnational cooperation agreements to ensure that the concerns of civil society actors and marginalized groups are also taken into account in the design of future policy scenarios and energy provisions.

The basis for the discussion will be the study “*80 Gigawatts of Change: Egypt’s Future Electricity Pathways*”, commissioned by the Heinrich Böll Foundation and carried out by the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR), which is the first publicly accessible, modeled and civil society analyzed scenario for the Egyptian electrical sector ever. Through engaging with various private and public stakeholders in a participatory drafting process, the report outlines seven different options for how Egypt’s electricity sector could develop between



2015-2035, if technical, social and environmental constraints and community impacts are taken into account. Its novelty lies also in its open and broad participatory approach – the study has equipped civil society actors with hard data that to analyze and discuss the impact of different medium-term energy policies. The authors will present the political background, the results and the recommendations of the study, as well as its implications for the energy transition process and the development of future energy scenarios in the MENA region. The presentation will be followed by a discussion with EU policy makers, as well as representatives from European and North African NGOs, private industry, think tanks and energy regulators from the region. The discussion will raise important questions not only about the role of EU-MENA renewable energy partnership in delivering the Paris commitments and contributing to a better economic development in the region, but also how it could be used to promote the democratization of the energy governance in this region and ensure the consideration of human rights and social aspects in the energy planning and climate actions.

Agenda:

17:30h – 17:35h **Welcome remarks**

17: 35h – 18:00h **Presentation of the study “80 Gigawatts of Change: Egypt’s Future Electricity Pathways”**

Isabel Bottoms, University of Turku, Finland, Lead Author of the study/Mahmoud Al Refai, Siemens Egypt, Co-Author

Discussants:

18:00h - 20:00h **Dr. Malek Kabariti, Former Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) of Jordan/Former Chairman of the National Electric Power Co (NEPCO)/ energy policy advisor**

Hans Van Steen, Head of Unit, International Relations & Enlargement, DG Energy, European Commission

Dr. Amin BENNOUNA, Founder of ISTICHAR Consulting/ Former Vice president of the Moroccan Solar and Wind Industry Association (AMISOLE)

Claude Turmes, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, European Parliament

Dr. James Watson, Executive Director, SolarPower Europe

Dr. Alexandros Yannis, Senior Expert on Energy Diplomacy, European External Action Service



Dr. Stephan Singer, *Senior Advisor Global Energy Policies, Climate Action Network International*

20:00h – 21:00h **Networking dinner**

Moderation:

Hendrik Kafsack, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*