

Milan Stakeholder Communiqué

Second Stakeholder Forum of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership: “Business and Science: Leading the way to sustainable energy”. Hosted by Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy, 16-17 May, 2016.

We, stakeholders in the sustainable energy sector in Europe and Africa, representing high-level policy makers, representatives from international organizations, private sector, civil society and academia agree upon the role sustainable energy plays in realizing a climate friendly global energy transition.

At a time where sustainable energy, particularly in Africa, has risen to the top of the international agenda, we welcomed this timely opportunity to discuss how business and science, private and public sector, national, regional, continental and international policy makers can work together to achieve the common goal of a sustainable energy future for Africa. Access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy is a precondition for social and equitable development at local level.

We acknowledge that the responsibility to ensure a sustainable energy future for the continent of Africa is not that of the public sector alone, nor can it be achieved solely through public investments. Private sector, civil society and academia have a critical and central role to play in fostering sustainable energy programs, projects, investments and policy frameworks.

Launch of the Review of the 2020 Targets

We commend stakeholders from Africa and the EU on significant progress on the 2020 AEEP Targets, as highlighted in the AEEP Intermediate Status Report. We acknowledge the concerted efforts made in recent years but also recognize that significant gaps remain and further progress is needed. We see the need for a revision of the Targets to address the significant progress already achieved, to reflect changes in the market, and to realize even more ambitious targets in the coming years.

We further urge representatives of the European and African Union Commissions and Member States to consider an alignment or complementarity of the Partnership’s Targets with ongoing processes such as the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) Initiative, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the Sustainable Development Goals and the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI). We welcome the role that initiatives such as ElectriFI play in boosting investments in the sector and fostering private sector interventions in Africa, therefore contributing to the Targets.

Commitment to Supporting Capacity Development

We acknowledge the need for further focus on capacity development in Africa and technology transfer to ensure that the continent benefits from the job opportunities and skills development that accompany the growing renewable and more efficient energy sector in both the electricity and cooking. We appreciate the launch of initiatives such as RES4Africa committed to this goal, and as stakeholders of the AEEP, encourage further collaboration in this regard.

We, as sustainable energy stakeholders, recognize that in order to speed up the progress and increase the benefits that energy can bring to a more inclusive socio-economic development, all actions must take in due consideration the relevance of human capital and the development of its capacity to maximize the contributions of technology, finance and policy.

Acknowledging Energy and its Role in Protecting the Climate

We appreciate the sustainable energy sector's ability to dramatically reduce CO₂ emissions and local pollution. We, as sustainable energy stakeholders, commit to ensuring that climate considerations are included in all our projects, commit to a prioritization of renewable energy generation in a cost effective manner, and encourage reporting of emission reductions for energy initiatives and programs.

We welcome the increased focus on sustainable energy in Africa as evidenced by the importance given to energy sector mitigation and adaptation measures in the African INDCs and by the launch of AREI at the COP 21 in Paris.

Committing to Coordination and Harmonization of Efforts

With increasing investments and initiatives in the sector, there is a growing need for coordination and collaboration among actors to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and that duplication of efforts is avoided. We therefore urge stakeholders and policy makers to utilize the Mapping of Energy Initiatives in Africa study that was elaborated and launched by the AEEP, to identify underserved markets, potential opportunities for collaboration and synergies with existing initiatives, institutions and partners in the sector.

We call upon the SE4ALL Africa Hub hosted by the African Development Bank in partnership with the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency and UNDP, in its capacity as an African coordination body, to continue this work initiated by the AEEP by regularly updating the data and analysis to keep pace with the sector dynamics as a key input into a possible future "Pan-African Coordination Platform" as proposed by the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the AEEP Secretariat.

Gender and Youth

We commit to ensuring that the needs of women in particular are considered in the development of the African energy sector: from ensuring that they can engage in the sector through trainings and job opportunities, to promoting modern energy access for households and awareness raising of renewable energies for women. It is our commitment to include gender considerations throughout the sector.

We commend the Africa-EU Energy Partnership for placing importance on the inclusion of youth into its processes and events. We encourage other stakeholders to equally engage youth in the renewable energy sector. This is critical for future development of the sector.

Call for a Multi-Stakeholder Approach

We call for a commitment to a multi-stakeholder approach in the energy sector in Africa given the importance of energy for most other sectors. We acknowledge the need for inclusion of private sector, academia and civil society and pledge to provide enabling frameworks for these stakeholders to participate in political processes related to energy sector development in Africa. We call for constant information exchange and collaboration between the stakeholder groups, as well as between the energy and climate communities.

Adopted in Milan, May 17th 2016