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Sixth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development Concept Note

Yerevan, Armenia, 29 September - 2 October 2015



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SIXTH INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The **Sixth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development** will be held in Yerevan, Armenia, on 29 September - 2 October 2015. The Forum is organized by the Government of Armenia, the United Nations Regional Commissions, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in Armenia, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency (C2E2), the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), and Habitat for Humanity International. The Forum is one of the important events of the UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) 2014-2024. Like the 2014 Forum in Hammamet, the Forum will emphasize attaining the three objectives of the SE4All Initiative of the UN Secretary-General by 2030: ensuring universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on business leaders to expand investment in low-carbon growth and opportunities to advance sustainable energy for all and tackle climate change, in a statement to The Future of Energy Summit 2015. Global investments in renewable energy and fuels increased by more than 15 per cent between 2013 and 2014. Despite the fact that investments in renewable energy increased by more than a third in developing countries over that year, renewable energy sources still contribute less than 10 per cent of global electricity, and more incentives can help further acceleration.

The new SE4ALL Global Energy Efficiency Accelerator Platform has the potential to contribute to doubling energy efficiency improvement by 2030, saving more than a gigaton of carbon emissions each year and save tens of billions of dollars. Partnerships with banks and investment institutions can mobilize another \$120 billion a year in sustainable energy investments.

At the Fifth Forum in Hammamet, the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions signed a joint statement (the Hammamet Declaration), which received a widespread acclaim at the Forum and beyond. In their joint statement, they affirmed that the objectives of energy sustainability are attainable, and need not contradict more short-term considerations, if the world embarks on a determined, collective effort. The joint statement is a call for action to their respective member States, highlighting in particular three key components: a) Energy efficiency in most countries needs to improve more quickly; b) Renewable energy policies need to be redesigned; and c) Equitable access to modern energy services requires mobilizing adequate resources.

The Forum's High-Level session and plenary sessions on the first day will look into ways to make the Hammamet Declaration operational, with a possible designing of a scorecard for countries to report on their achievements. Parallel events on the second and third day will include: Workshop on Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Cities; Training Course on Business Planning for Renewable Energy Investments Projects; Round Table on Power Trade and Inter-grid

Connectivity in Central Asia and the Caucasus; Workshop on Access to Energy in Remote Areas; Workshop on Industry Accelerator; Workshop on Energy Efficiency in Multi-unit Residential Buildings: Challenges and Solutions in Residential Energy Efficiency in Eastern Europe; Workshop on Status and Best Practices on Energy Efficiency; and Regional Forum for CTCN National Designated Entities.

The Forum is expected to contribute to building the capacity of government officials to adopt strategies and policies to accelerate deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures in the private and public sectors, including improved opportunities for banks and commercial companies to invest. The Forum will also be a platform for practitioners – national experts, project developers, representatives of national and international financial institutions and private and public companies – to exchange experiences and solutions for improving energy efficiency, increasing the share of renewable energy, and implementing cleaner energy technologies.

Background

The first four International Fora on Energy for Sustainable Development were organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) with participation of UNDP and other international organizations in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development was held in Hammamet, Tunisia in 2014 and was global in nature, with all five UN Regional Commissions jointly organizing and delivering a successful event. Participants of the Fifth Forum supported the Joint Statement of the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions (attached).

Energy efficiency. Energy is central to achieving sustainable development goals. In this respect energy efficiency allows reconciling the world-wide necessity and growing demand for energy with its impact on the natural resource base. Energy efficiency is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to combat climate change, improve air quality, reduce energy costs for both businesses and consumers and deliver many other multiple benefits.

Renewable energy. Renewable energy can help diminish the historic correlation between economic development based on heavy energy use and the respective growth of greenhouse gas emissions, thus contributing to sustainable development. Increased deployment of renewable energy will enhance energy security while reducing the environmental damage caused by fossil fuel use. Renewable energy contributes to diversification of primary energy sources and improves energy access for communities in remote regions.

Access to modern energy services. A critical pre-condition for sustainable development to take place is to improve the bottom-line of serving basic needs of societies. This implies access to modern clean energy services for cooking and heating, lighting and communications, health and hygiene. Institutional barriers combined with investment scarcity have restrained energy access by diverse groups. These are effective in all dimensions of the issue – providing accessibility, sustaining affordability, managing quality – and should be addressed via complex actions in all the sub-sectors, including but not limited to grid distribution, renewable energy utilization, and application of energy efficiency measures.