

Vienna Energy Forum to contribute to successful implementation of SDGs and Paris Agreement

VIENNA, 11 May 2017 – The discussion at this year’s Vienna Energy Forum will serve as an important contribution to the debate and review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris climate agreement and their successful implementation, said participants at the event taking place in the capital of Austria this week.

The forum is being held for the fifth time, and this year has the theme “Sustainable energy for the implementation of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement”. Speakers highlighted the crucial linkages between energy, climate and development as well as the synergies among the SDGs, and the importance of joint and integrated approaches for a successful implementation.

Welcoming some 1500 participants from over 100 countries at the Hofburg Palace, **Michael Linhart**, Deputy Foreign Minister of Austria, said: “It gives me great pleasure that this Forum has been set up in Vienna, once more underlining the city’s and Austria’s position as an influential international hub, also for the discussion of wide-ranging energy and energy related issues.”

LI Yong, the Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), said: “Enhancing access to affordable, reliable and clean energy is key to stimulate economic growth and ensure energy security. At the same time it is critical to accelerate clean energy innovation as an indispensable part of an effective, long-term global response to our shared climate challenge. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement calls for a global transformation that clearly goes beyond the energy sector. Holistic technology solutions, entrepreneurship, innovation in policies, new financing instruments and partnerships are urgently needed to achieve the desired scale of global change and inclusive and sustainable development.”

Pavel Kabat, Director General and CEO International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), said: “The SDGs provide us with destination for where we would like the world to go by 2030. But in order to arrive at that point, we need a roadmap that shows the pathways and their potential pitfalls, the trade-offs and synergies between policies that could help achieve the different goals. At the Vienna Energy Forum, IIASA will present early results from three global research initiatives that look at different aspects of these questions, providing the science that policymakers will need to design policies that lead to a sustainable, equitable future for everyone on Earth.”

Martin Ledolter, Managing Director, Austrian Development Agency (ADA), said: “We have to act now to achieve access to affordable and sustainable energy for all by

2030. Cooperative and regional approaches that harness the synergies between SDG 7 and related SDGs and that build on each partner's strengths are our best chance to achieve a global sustainable energy transition and keep global temperature rise well below 2° Celsius. In this endeavor to transform the world's energy system, we need to mobilize all stakeholders and engage in new and innovative partnerships. Sustainable energy and innovative approaches are at the heart of a sustainable development pathway and are core strengths of the Austrian private sector. ADA has supported bilateral business partnerships, which have created almost 5,000 new jobs and direct benefits for more than 1.2 million people since 2012."

Rachel Kyte, CEO of Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All, said: "The global goals on energy agreed in 2015, together with our commitments under the Paris Agreement, must herald increased action to secure an energy transition that provides sustainable energy for all. We are not on track yet, and we urgently need to be. Better energy means a revolution in energy productivity, a focus on ending energy poverty and much more renewables. This will secure clean air, new jobs, warm schools, clean buses, pumped water and better yields of nutritious food. The price of technology is dropping, smart policy exists, finance exists, and we must now bring these together where they are needed most. Promises made should be kept. If we know we can build these energy systems not just for the few, but for *all*, why would we wait?"

Peter Traupmann, CEO Austrian Energy Agency, said: "The coming years will be decisive to set the course for a future using efficient, affordable, low-risk and above all fossil-free energy. Because energy will help to uphold prosperity and assist the positive development of economies only when it is stable and sustainable. To achieve this goal, concerted support has to come from academic, economic and political sectors. High-ranking dialogue forums such as the Vienna Energy Forum are of the greatest importance for this."

This year's forum, organized by UNIDO, the Government of Austria, IIASA, and SEforALL, brings together high-ranking government officials and experts in the field of energy and development.

High-level sessions at the Hofburg Palace on 11 and 12 May were preceded by some 20 side events at the Vienna International Centre.

<https://www.viennaenergyforum.org/side-events/2017>

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