



energy

Department:
Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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ENERGY MINISTER REJECTS DR O'CONNOR'S ASSERTION THAT WIND IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF ENERGY

Pretoria, 21 August - Ms Dipuo Peters, MP, Minister of Energy, today (**Saturday, 21 August**) rejected outright the suggestion by Dr O'Connor, CEO of Mainstream Renewable Energy Power, that wind is the only source of energy. Minister Peters was responding to remarks made by Dr O'Connor at the business breakfast organised by the *Mail and Guardian* which are published in this week's edition of the same newspaper.

"I reject with the contempt Dr O'Connor's suggestions. We call on all South Africans and Dr O'Connor in particular; to realise that wind power technology is not the only available renewable energy technology. There are others as well. We cannot elevate wind power above or at the expense of, other energy sources. Wind belongs to the family of renewable energy sources such as, amongst others, solar and hydro. As a Department and the Ministry of Energy we are going to look at the potential that can be realised from the totality of these sources. We will be in a position to announce the energy mix once cabinet has approved the Integrated Resource Plan 2010 (IRP2 as it is commonly known). If through these attacks Dr O'Connor is lobbying cabinet, then he should explicitly say so. We are a department and a Ministry of Energy and not *only* of wind power," Minister Peters said.

Minister Peters continued, "Renewable energy is one of the issues I have taken up with greater vigour since I was appointed Minister responsible for energy in this country." Accordingly, my department has acted by promulgating the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP 1) (in December 2009) which indicated our intention to achieve the following targets:

- (i) 10 000 Gwh (approximately 4% of the energy mix) of renewable energy usage (as indicated in the 2003 Renewable Energy White Paper),

(ii) The implementation of Energy Efficiency and Demand Side Management through financial incentives scheme, and

(iii) Installation of one million solar water heaters.

We are confident that we will reach the target of 10 000 Gwh by 2013 and we may, in view of the rate at which are proceeding, surpass this target. The Minister also announced that through Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) the department has eThekweni's waste-to-energy project and that about 37 municipalities are ready to follow suit. This is a far cry from actions of a department where "renewable energy is waiting in the wings".

The department has also published 'New Generation Capacity Regulations' which define the institutional arrangements within which the procurement of power from Independent Power Producers (IPP's), including those using renewable energy sources will be done. Once finalised these regulations will expedite the procurement process for IPP's as well as ensure that all future electricity plans are streamlined to correspond with the country's position on the eventual primary energy mix as stipulated in ANC policy.

The Minister also responded vigorously to O'Connor's suggestion that the department does not take wind power seriously. She said, "My Department has been active in the areas of the development of wind farms, however, all grid connections in this area have to follow a stipulated procedure wherein project developers apply for licenses to generate power from the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA is not an electricity regulator, it is an energy regulator), after which they will apply to Eskom for grid connection. Eskom will look at existing capacity before taking a particular decision on the relevant application"

O'Connor wants to separate the regulator (NERSA) from the department. NERSA belongs to the gamut of entities that report to the Minister of Energy. In the meantime NERSA has allocated (which has been by possible government policy) 32 MW to the entity that Dr O'Connor is leading.

The Minister reiterated that the Department has an open door policy and that all its contacts are on the website. Dr O'Connor and other players are welcome to engage with us on these various areas of renewable energy. Minister Peters commended organisations affiliated to NBI (eg Pick 'n Pay) and UNDP (for supporting us with regard to the SA Wind Energy Programme) for the wonderful work that they are doing in the renewable energy space.

Minister Peters has also reminded South Africans that the Department has held numerous public consultation processes with regard to the revision of the Renewable Energy White Paper; the development of IRP 2010 (or IRP2) which will include renewable technology specific engagements such as the Solar Water Heating Conference which was held in November 2009; the Wind Seminar which was held in January 2009; as well as the Wind Atlas Workshop which was held in March 2010.

Finally, the Department will define its renewable energy targets in the revised White Paper on Renewable Energy which is currently under development. This will also be reflected in the Renewable Energy targets that will be released through the IRP2 process, Minister Peters concluded.

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