



energy

Department:
Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media Statement

EMBARGO: IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFRICAN ENERGY MINISTERS CONFERENCE (AEMC) OUTCOMES

Pretoria 19 September 2011 – Following the first two (2) day conference of African Energy Ministers hosted by the Department of Energy and the African Union (AU), more than 30 African Ministers, as well as the incoming European Union Presidency represented by the Polish Deputy Minister of Economy and, representatives from Norway and Denmark attended. In addition, other organisations including the World Bank, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, United Nations – Energy, United Nations Foundation, the African Development Bank as well as, other local and international financial institutions also participated.

Convened to develop and reach consensus on the priorities for supporting Africa's energy development agenda in a sustainable manner in advance of the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and 7th Conference and Meeting of Parties (CMP7) to the Kyoto Protocol (KP) to be held in Durban from November 28 to December 9, 2011 the African Energy Ministers committed themselves to resolutions as outlined in the attached ***African Energy Ministers Conference Johannesburg Declaration of 16 September 2011.***

The African Energy ministers noted that as African Union member states they have contributed relatively less to green house gas emission. They committed to take decisive actions to contribute towards the reduction of the global carbon footprint. The Ministers also noted that the AU member states include some of the least developed countries, and are the most vulnerable and ill prepared to deal with the negative impacts of climate change.

The Ministers asserted that climate change if not mitigated threatens to reverse the developmental gains made in recent years by the AU member countries. The Ministers identified the following priority areas:

- expanding access to clean efficient energy carriers;
- scaling up regional power supply and transmission and improving sector utility performance;
- reducing climate change vulnerability and increasing resilience and;
- promoting development of integrated energy plans in individual countries which are linked to the regional power pools and ultimately the member states.

With regards to finance and capacity building, the Ministers further asserted that the energy sector is both capital and skills intensive. Thus, there is need to deal with the major constraint of lack of finance and ability to conduct project preparation and development – from concept to financial close and execution. Energy projects are complex and require significant project funds to assess their social and environmental impacts, to undertake upstream regulatory and institutional development, and ensure their resilience to climate impact. The available funding from international agencies to undertake upstream project preparation work for large regional projects is inadequate. The Ministers urged COP17/CMP7 to consider placing US\$500million as a source of grant funds to finance large scale project preparation for AU member states.

The investments in the energy sector will be substantial, and the Ministers resolved that the policy of localisation of supply chain was critical and, a major contributor to economic growth and development as well as job creation.

Technology transfer was identified as important, especially the establishment of research and development institutions that will be the basis for technological innovation and subsequent invention.

Further, the AEMC's Johannesburg Declaration was noted and supported by the meeting of the African Environmental Ministers during its deliberations in Mali on 16 September 2011.

- END -

Enquiries:

Johannes Mokobane – johannes.mokobane@energy.gov.za – 082 766 3674

Ndivhuwo Khangale - ndivhuwo.khangale@energy.gov.za – 082 465 6090

Thandiwe Maimane Thandiwe.maimane@energy.gov.za – 083 645 7837