



Damascus Declaration

On the Role of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency for the future EU- MENA Cooperation Conclusions and Recommendations from the Middle East and North Africa Conference (MENAREC 4)

We, the Ministers, the heads of delegations and representatives from 38 Countries, among them 19 national and international organizations, 15 ministers 7 of them from Europe and MENA countries, convening at MENAREC 4, held at Damascus and Palmyra on 21-24 June 2007 under the main theme:

The Way Forward for Renewable Energy Development & Technology Transfer, EU-MENA Cooperation

Recalling the outcomes of the Abu Dhabi Declaration on Environment and Energy 2003, the MENAREC 1 Sana'a 2004, the MENAREC 2 Amman 2005, the MENAREC 3 Cairo 2006; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Johannesburg 2002, the International Renewable Energy Conference Bonn 2004, the International Renewable Energy conference (BIREC) Beijing 2005, the UNEP Governing Council Dubai 2005, the Berlin Declaration on the Role of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency 2007, and the 15th session of Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD15) 2007.

Aware of the rapidly growing energy demand for satisfying the sustainable development needs in the MENA countries and the rising energy prices.

Acknowledging the recent technological advancement in several renewable energy technologies, the abundant renewable resources in the MENA region and the consequent opportunities for widespread applications;

Concerned about global warming and climate change and related adverse impacts;

Recognizing that Renewable Energy Development and Energy Efficiency measures can strongly contribute to climate protection, energy security, Job creation and sustainable economic development;

Realizing the need in the MENA region for technology transfer and the opportunities for EU-MENA cooperation with benefits for both, utilizing instruments such as the European Neighborhood Policy;

Taking into account that the countries of the MENA region underline their commitment to take necessary measures and develop competent plans to enhance renewable energies in their countries' energy portfolios, as appropriate to each country's resources and needs, and through the establishment of regional markets;



Acknowledging

The German government initiative for supporting establishments of a renewable energy regional center of excellence in Egypt and calls on the MENA countries, concerned national institutions and regional organizations to work closely together with the center;

In discussing the role of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in the context of sustainable Development needs of the MENA Countries and future EU-MENA cooperation, we recommend:

1. The Conference underlines the need to diversify energy resources as well as it underscores the considerable potential that renewable energy and energy efficiency have on achieving sustainable development;
2. The Conference calls upon all of the participating countries to set national targets for renewable energy deployment and energy efficiency measures. In order to meet these targets, appropriate policy instruments and economic incentives are to be adopted;
3. The Conference supports the use of all forms of renewable energy and in particular large scale renewable energy systems, such as solar thermal and wind, in the MENA countries to satisfy their own energy needs as well as to export to European countries. Within this vision, much larger investments are needed to avail the necessary infrastructure for interconnections between Europe and MENA Countries;
4. The Conference agrees that concerted global action to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency is needed. Regional and global cooperation on the optimization of national support schemes, exchange of best practices, "know-how", and technical progress through bilateral and regional arrangements and governmental, non-governmental, local government institutions and partnerships such as REN 21¹, REEEP², MEDREP³, JREC⁴, GEEREF⁵, REEGLE⁶ and WREN⁷ are important in this context;
5. The conference stresses the need for developed countries as well as regional and international financing institutions, such as the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and Arab Funds, to scale up their technical and financial assistance to countries in the MENA region for renewable energy programmes including technology transfer and indigenization, and capacity building to support local manufacture of renewable energy systems' components;
6. The Conference recognizes the need for significant financial resources, both public and private, to be invested in renewable energy. This should include the use of innovative financing mechanisms and market-based instruments, such as Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) as well as through the GEF, which covers the incremental cost of renewable energy and energy efficiency. Conference participants are committed to creating the appropriate conditions for positive investment in energy efficiency and renewable energies to attract private capital for investments;



7. The conference calls upon renewable energy manufacturers, particularly wind turbines and solar systems manufacturers to expand the industrial base in order to meet energy demand and to reduce prices.
8. The conference calls upon countries in the region, regional and international organizations, private sector and NGOs, to put more emphasis on developing and implementing educational, and public awareness programmes on renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and applications in the MENA region;
9. While taking into consideration the needs of different social categories, particularly the poor, the MENA countries are advised to work on energy pricing systems that bring social justice, and induce its economic development and climate protection.
10. The conference expresses appreciation and compliments to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for the organization of MENAREC4, and the government concerted plans for the development of renewable energy with support of the EU countries. Moreover, thanks are extended to the Prime Minister of Syria, the Syrian Ministry of Electricity represented by National Energy Research Center (NERC), and the other co-organizers of this Conference including the German Ministry of Environment, Natural Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the efforts exerted and support extended in carrying out such a successful conference and constructive outcomes.
11. The Moroccan delegation proposes to host MENAREC 5 in the year 2008 while the Libyan delegation extended an invitation to host MENAREC 6 in Libya in 2009. Participants express their gratitude for both invitations.

¹ REN21 – Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century

² REEEP – Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership

³ MEDREP – Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme

⁴ JREC –Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition

⁵ GEEREF – Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund

⁶ REEGLE – Information Gateway for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

⁷ WREN – World Renewable Energy Network

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