

## **Vienna Energy Forum participants formulate key messages reflecting role of energy in implementing SDGs and Paris climate agreement**

VIENNA, 15 May 2017 – Participants at the Vienna Energy Forum, which concluded on Friday in the Austrian capital, agreed on ten key messages that highlight the catalytic role of energy for the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on climate.

**Key message 1** - Many of the capital investments we make today have a very long replacement time, therefore the energy choices we make today will lock us into a development path for decades to come. Long-term integrated strategies are imperative to cover all SDGs. The deadline set for the SDGs highlight the urgency of moving forward now if we are to achieve tangible milestones by 2020, 2030, and 2050. The vision for 2050 for sustainable development must shape the decisions made today.

**Key message 2** - Energy is the key enabler for food security, health, land and water. From food refrigeration to wastewater treatment, energy is a basic requirement for rapid and healthy development. The urgency of the implementation phase of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement highlights the need for a holistic approach which mitigates the trade-offs while positively enhancing the numerous interlinkages between these sectors.

**Key message 3** - With the global megatrend of rapid urbanization, its proportionally growing energy demand and corresponding greenhouse gas emissions, cities are calling for innovative approaches to urban design and transformative change. One of the solutions could be innovative infrastructure that uses renewable energy in an efficient way to cope with the rising demand of energy without detrimental impact on the climate and the environment.

**Key message 4** - Affordable and clean energy is the biggest opportunity to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The majority of the Nationally Determined Contributions see the energy sector as a vital component to achieving the objective of the Paris Agreement. Technology transfer, investment, capacity building and institutions will help energy play its role in fighting climate change.

**Key message 5** - Technological innovations are central for sustainable energy development. New concepts and game-changing technologies are being introduced, but the level of readiness remains uncertain. This is the first generation that has the technology to solve climate change and related issues of sustainability. Current development strategies need to be continuously updated to reflect newly available technological innovations.

**Key message 6** - Sustainable solutions depend on innovative and inclusive business models that can be scaled up, replicated, and are self-sustaining. These business models exist already and are ripe for financing by financial institutions, development banks, as well as private investors. The financial resources necessary to accomplish SDG 7 and the Paris Agreement also exist, yet the appropriate instruments are not being applied in a way that enables new businesses to blossom and large-scale projects to move forward. This represents a collective opportunity for collaboration and partnerships between the public and private sector to provide such solutions.

**Key message 7** - Governments are able to stimulate innovation by demonstrating political commitment and setting ambitious targets and plans to provide the incentives to realize those goals; supporting research and development in cross sectoral innovation and providing platforms to deliver technologies and integrated solutions that respond to the differentiated needs of users; and by developing the energy system based on an integrated network rather than a top down approach.

**Key message 8** - Recognizing that innovation works at multiple levels, and that it can trigger fast and transformative change, target setting and regional cooperation can further ensure that results of innovation trickle down through all levels. Additionally, women are the best placed agents to absorb innovation and successfully turn it into higher income and better lives. Private sector players can also help drive down the cost and increase the efficiency and speed of mainstreaming of innovation.

**Key message 9** - Energy is a crucial component for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, but also for meeting the energy security needs of various countries. The elements of trust, confidence and transparency are essential enablers for the means of implementation. Additionally, tailored sustainable solutions, according to specific national needs, are vital for ensuring the success in meeting these global agreements.

**Key message 10** - The role of the private sector in implementing the SDGs and the Paris agreement is growing, and the public sector should embrace it as the driver of innovation. The design of policy should incorporate the needs of small and medium enterprises in developing countries. This can be done alongside the creation of frameworks which enable new entrepreneurs to create quality and cost effective solutions which can address energy and sustainability demands simultaneously.

The fifth edition of the Vienna Energy Forum brought together over 1650 participants from 128 countries. It was co-organized by UNIDO, IIASA, the Austrian Government, and SEforALL.

An outcome document is expected to be issued in several weeks, and a summary report of the sessions has been provided by the IISD Reporting Services <http://enb.iisd.org/energy/vef/2017/>