

Sharm El Sheik, 29 June 2009

Commenting on the decision of the Preparatory Commission of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in Sharm El Sheik (Egypt) on the headquarters and the Director General of this newly formed institution, Hermann Scheer, Chair of the World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE) and President of EUROSOLAR said:

This is a historic day for the world wide energy transition. 136 states, representing nearly half of the world's population have gathered to initiate a global breakthrough for renewable energy.

We have come a long way: It was already in 1990 that EUROSOLAR brought forward the idea of the formation of an international governmental organisation for renewable energy. It took 20 years until this agency was founded but patience and stamina have lead to this respectable outcome.

The establishment of IRENA has been my first and foremost aim. I consider this as a very important personal success. On the way to IRENA, it was necessary to surpass numerous obstacles and doubts and a large amount of persuasiveness clearly was indispensable. There were many who time and again questioned whether there would be enough willingness among states to become part of and to contribute to an International Agency for Renewable Energy. The intention has been to establish IRENA as a counterbalance to the two existing international governmental organisations in the field of energy, IEA and IAEA, which have continuously belittled and denounced the potential of renewable energy.

The fact that 136 states have signed IRENA's statute will rebut the sceptics. There does not exist another international governmental organisation which had so many members at its formation. It is now crucial to swiftly set up a powerful organisation and to endow it with the necessary resources to support member states in drafting policies to introduce renewable energies nationally. The German contribution to IRENA's budget will in the beginning amount to approximately 7 Million Euro. In contrast: Germany's contribution to the IAEA alone amounts to roughly 25 Million. After its complete formation, IRENA will have to be supplied with similar resources, not only on the part of Germany but also by other industrialised countries.

Internationally, Germany is the leader when it comes to the proliferation of renewable energies and will contribute with its experience to the work of IRENA. The agency will draft concepts, tailored to the specific regional environments and circumstances in IRENA's member states. This is about a technological revolution.

WCRE and EUROSOLAR will accompany IRENA's work constructively and will support the agency in its task to enable its current and future member states to swiftly take part in the central project to supply humankind with a safe energy supply and to make a contribution to halting climate change.