



**MINISTRY
ENERGY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa's Opening Remarks as host of COP17

By the Minister of Energy, South Africa
Ms Dipuo Peters”

At the International Energy agency Ministerial meeting – 19 October 2011

“Accelerating the transition to a secure, low carbon future”

South Africa is preparing to host the Seventeenth Conference of the Parties “dubbed” COP 17 by facilitating transparent, inclusive process to ensure that there is global cooperation in saving tomorrow today. South Africa will show case all the projects and best practices it has embarked on in the past years to date in an effort to address climate change matters from all the sectors in partnership with all the national and international stakeholders.

The UN declared 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy Access for All. The targets which have been set are as follows:

- 40% energy efficiency by 2030
- 30% universal access
- 30% renewable energy

Therefore expanding access to modern energy services and ensuring energy security is of utmost importance in addressing the basic needs of millions of African citizens, and contributing towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

Less than 42% of African citizens have access to electricity. In sub-Saharan Africa, only one in three people, have access to reliable electricity – the lowest rate in the world. The entire power generation capacity of the continent stands at 124 GW, and 30 GW of that total is attributed to sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa).

Unreliable power supply has a significant bearing on economic development in the Sub-Saharan region. It affects over 30 sub-Saharan countries, depressing

competitiveness and employment and imposing significant costs especially for rapidly growing urban areas which contribute some 79 percent of total GDP growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. Inadequate access to energy constrains the delivery of social services such as education, health, water, sanitation and security

□ To make universal access a reality by 2030, an additional 512 million people, 460 million of them in the Sub-Saharan region, should be provided access to appropriate and safe energy services. The scale of the challenge requires that all approaches, including grid and off-grid solutions are taken into account and adopted based on an efficiency principle. Rural and urban demands can best be met with a diverse technology mix that takes full advantage of sub-Saharan Africa's exceptional solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and sustainable hydropower resources.

□ As part of the road to Durban, South Africa hosted the African Energy Ministers conference. The conference recognized that climate change is a development challenge that threatens to reverse gains made in recent years. African economies and communities, and the poor among them are most at risk and will likely be impacted the most.

□ Supporting the transition to more sustainable fuels for cooking and heating and the use of more efficient stoves is also paramount in reversing the health implications and the environmental degradation imposed by the use of traditional biomass.

During the COP 17 event, the Department of Energy together with the IEA, IRENA, UNIDO, World Business Council and other organisations and technology development agencies will host the Energy forums to further create a platform for the energy business sector to interact and forge partnerships that will take the commitments forward for implementation.

If Energy Ministers could send one policy message to environmental ministers, what would that be?

□ Access to reliable, affordable and sustainable energy services is essential to job creation, decent work, poverty alleviation. It also promotes equitable and sustainable social and economic development, and leads to better environment and climate resilience.

□ There is a fundamental need to build essential human and institutional capacity; design and implement bankable projects, effective policies and regulations; and negotiate favourable agreements to ensure the provision of sustainable energy for all and also meet the Millennium Development Goals.

□ Energy issues should also hold a prominent place in the Rio+20 agenda, as it constitutes a key international milestone.

□ Reforms of the CDM and the carbon market are required in order to support development of Africa's rich hydro resources.

□ The UNFCCC process has to date has tended to prioritise the mitigation of emissions, however, adaptation to the negative impacts of Climate Change

deserves equal weighting and adaptation projects need to be recognized for support in the Green Climate fund.

-END-