

# IRENA THE INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY



# Why IRENA?

- Energy is a basic human need and makes the world go round.
- Today we are facing huge challenges:
  - global warming,
  - depleting natural resources,
  - population growth,
  - increasing energy demand,
  - rising energy prices and
  - unequal distribution of energy sources.
- Renewable energy is one of the key solutions to the current challenges.

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- But there are obstacles to it as well:
    - lengthy permitting procedures,
    - import tariffs and technical barriers,
    - insecure financing of renewable energy projects and
    - insufficient awareness of the opportunities of renewable energy.
  
  - This is where IRENA comes in. Mandated by governments worldwide, IRENA aims at becoming the main driving force in promoting a rapid transition towards the widespread and sustainable use of renewable energy on a global scale.

# IRENA

- IRENA is the first international organization to solely concentrate on renewable energy and offer support to industrialized and developing countries alike.
- IRENA was officially established in Bonn, Germany on 26 January 2009.
- As of today, 137 states and the European Union have signed the Statute of the Agency.

# The very existence

- The idea to promote renewable energy by establishing an international organization was originally presented by EUROSOLAR and the World Council for Renewable Energy and has been extensively discussed for several years at various international level forums. The number of parties supporting this idea has consistently grown.
- Finally, the International Conference for Renewable Energies in Bonn, 2004, supported by the International Parliamentary Forum on Renewable Energies, paved the way towards a break through for the promotion of renewable worldwide.
- The German establishment of IRENA has received positive feedback. Consultations with representatives from countries worldwide in 2007 gave clear evidence of a high level of interest for the proposed initiative.

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- Strongly supported by Spain and Denmark, the German government organized two international meetings in 2008 with the goal of enhancing the preparation process for the founding of IRENA.
  - During the preparatory conference in April 2008 the first activities for the agency were developed along with the first conceptions on the possible structure of IRENA.
  - In June/July 2008 the statutes, the financing and the initial activities of IRENA were intensely discussed within two parallel workshops.
  - At the invitation of the Spanish government 51 states attended the Final Preparatory Conference on the 23rd and 24th of October, in Madrid, Spain and finalized discussions on IRENA's Statute. Furthermore, documents and procedures aiming at an effective and quick start of IRENA were discussed.
  - At the Founding Conference on 26th and 27th January, 2009, in Bonn, Germany, the statutes were signed and IRENA was founded.

- After the establishment of the Preparatory Commission, the Agency began work the day after the Founding Conference on 27 January 2009. The Preparatory Commission consists of IRENA's Signatory States and acts as the interim body during the founding period.
- The Commission will be dissolved after entry into force of the Statute, which will occur upon the 25th deposit of an instrument of ratification. The Agency will then consist of an Assembly, a Council, and a Secretariat.
- In the following June, IRENA's members designated Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, as the Agency's interim headquarters and appointed Ms. Hélène Pelosse as Interim Director-General.
- For the time being, the idea to make IRENA a new United Nations or United Nations-affiliated organization does not appear as a realistic option. To ensure that the Agency can begin operating swiftly, it needs to be set up independently. However, in the long term the integration of IRENA into the United Nations would be considered.

# IRENA's activities

- Developing a comprehensive knowledge base.
- Providing policy advice.
- Promoting technology transfer and providing advice on financing.
- Enhancing capacity building.
- Stimulating research.
- Networking - Cooperating with other organisations, institutions and networks.



# Year 2009, Marks the initial phase

- The initial work program of IRENA focuses on establishing IRENA's internal capacity and infrastructure, at the same time as launching a number of initial activities.
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# A look ahead to 2010

- **Building IRENA's internal resources**

IRENA is planning to enlarge its staff considerably in 2010 and to achieve full gender equity.

- **Enhancing networks with the international community**

In 2010, IRENA's goal is to establish internal and external global communication structures and networks.

- **Developing a global knowledge base for renewable energy information**

Continuing its 2009 efforts, IRENA will assemble relevant and authoritative renewable energy information and data to further establish its knowledge base.



- **Assisting Tonga**

Tonga has turned towards IRENA to seek advice on tailor-made policies to power its remote islands in a sustainable way. Together with the Kingdom, IRENA has charted out a renewable energy based strategy to power the main and outer islands.

- **Working with the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development:**

The Fund offers USD 50 million annually for projects relating to renewable energy. After IRENA and the Abu Dhabi Government jointly decided upon governance structures and selection criteria for the fund, the cooperation could be started in the second half of 2010.

- **IRENA at COP 15:**

IRENA will participate in the UN Climate Change Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen, Denmark, and Ms. Pelosse will introduce the Agency to conference participants.



- **Approving the 2010 Work Program and developing internal frameworks**

On 17 January 2010, all countries that signed IRENA's Statute will gather in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. This meeting will pave the way for IRENA's activities in 2010 and beyond.

- **IRENA's Work Program for 2010**

The IRENA Secretariat is currently drafting the Agency's Work Program for 2010. This important document outlines IRENA's strategic direction for the coming year.



- **IRENA at the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi**

From 18 – 21 January 2010, IRENA will participate in the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Ms Pelosse will speak at the first Plenary Forum on 18 January on “World Future Energy Policy”.

# Headquarters

IRENA Secretariat  
Chamber of Commerce & Industry Tower  
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*The offices in the Chamber of Commerce are provided on an interim basis. The Secretariat is expected to move into the IRENA building - located in the Al Khalidiya area - by mid December. As from 2011 Masdar City will host IRENA's seat of the Secretariat, the first carbon-neutral, zero-waste metropolis on Earth.*



The End

