Workshop

The ‘Clean Energy for All Europeans’ Package
& Mediterranean Electricity Market Integration

Introductory Remarks by Blanca Moreno-Dodson

Let me first thank the DG Energy of the European Commission for hosting us in this conference room for this very special event, so well attended by stakeholders in the South, as well as from the EU. And before giving you the objectives and the programme of the day, I would like to introduce myself and the CMI.

I am the Manager of the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), a partnership, a platform bringing together Mediterranean countries and donors around the development and integration challenges of the region. The CMI is where development agencies, Governments, local authorities and civil society from around the Mediterranean convene in order to exchange knowledge, discuss public policies, and identify the solutions needed to address key challenges facing the Mediterranean region. Two special partners are the European Commission and the Union for the Mediterranean and our partnership has been very productive, as you can see from the success of today’s event. The CMI is currently under transformation to become a center of excellence where academics, lenders and private investors meet to develop strategies and solutions for a more prosperous and sustainable Mediterranean region.

To address sustainable development issues, the CMI launched, in November 2015, the Mediterranean Forum on Electricity and Climate Change, a permanent discussion platform among countries, international organisations, regulators and electricity companies. The purpose of the Forum is to raise awareness about the benefits of Mediterranean energy market integration to support the transition to a low-carbon economy and to disseminate knowledge on the issues to be addressed to successfully achieve regional electricity market integration. Forum events cover issues such as the role of Mediterranean integration in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the benefits of regional energy market integration for renewable energy scale-up and barriers to building interconnectors to achieve Mediterranean energy market integration.

Energy connectivity contributes both to promoting inclusiveness and creating economic opportunities. Energy is invisible, but energy is everywhere. It is essential to our well-being and to a productive economy (no manufacturing without energy, no food without energy to harvest, etc.). At the same time, energy can be responsible for our ill-being, as energy production and use is the main cause of global warming—the greatest disaster of our century and a threat to the future of our planet! But energy is also the solution. Clean and affordable energy exists, in the form of carbonless renewable energy resources. And the Mediterranean region is endowed with vast amounts of renewable energy—especially the sun that is present
everything in the region. Connecting countries of the southern Mediterranean shore-- which are rich in carbon-free energy resources-- to countries of the northern shore-- which have a strong appetite for carbon-free electricity and are willing to pay for it—would not only increase the flexibility of interconnected electricity systems, but would also support the optimum development of the renewable energy potential of the region to the benefits of all Mediterranean countries. This would create huge economic and business opportunities, if only to develop the vast energy resources of the southern shore and to build the infrastructure to improve connectivity.

As we already heard, and we will hear throughout the day, the ‘Clean Energy for All Europeans’ Package aims at creating an integrated EU energy market to implement the Energy Union. It has important implications for countries of the southern shore.

The objectives of the workshop are to inform the southern Mediterranean countries on the Package and to improve their understanding of its implications for their electricity and renewable energy markets. The workshop will provide a concise presentation of the different documents of the Package, focusing on the proposed Renewable Energy Sources Directive, the proposed Directive for the internal electricity market and the proposal for a Regulation on the electricity market, so that stakeholders in southern Mediterranean countries deepen their understanding of the implications of the Package for the development of their renewable energy potential. The workshop discussions will lay the basis for assessing the requirements for the establishment of an integrated Euro-Mediterranean electricity market.