

**PRESS RELEASE N.../2016****East Africa Donors' Coordination meeting with focus on encouraging Geothermal Investment held at the African Union Headquarters**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 17 June 2016:** The East Africa Donors' Coordination meeting was held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June and Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016. H.E Dr. Elham M Ibrahim - AUC Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy convened with Gary Quince - the Head of the EU delegation to the AU, H.E Mr. Bruce Shepherd Ambassador of New Zealand, H.E Mr. Thomas Terstegen - Deputy Head of Mission of Germany, Sakari Oksanen - Deputy Director General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), as well as with Ministers responsible for energy and Ambassadors of the East African Rift System (EARS) countries, representatives of donors, representatives of development partners and experts from public- and private beneficiaries of the Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility (GRMF) . The focus of the two-day meeting was to encourage further geothermal investments (i.e. to improve access to equity or other funding sources) in line with the general aim of the AUC to play a catalytic role in establishing geothermal energy as a strategic option for expanding base-load power generation along the Eastern African Rift.

This was the first meeting of its' kind held by the African Union. The Commissioner Dr. Elham Ibrahim expressed her warm regards to the delegates and congratulated the Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility (GRMF) team for organising the gathering and its' ongoing contribution to encourage public and private investors to develop geothermal prospects for power generation in Eastern Africa. Dr. Elham noted that now more than ever it is important to promote the deployment of geothermal projects in order to increase the rate of energy access in Africa, especially to serve the growing population and as basis for economic transformation. This, she said, can only be achieved with reliable- and competitively priced modern electricity generation, such as geothermal.

Dr. Elham further highlighted the AUC Agenda 2063 and the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). She noted that on the road to achieving an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, in the initial ten year plan energy is being tackled as one of the major enabling aspects.



"It is our responsibility as a continent to join hands and coordinate our efforts to develop our short-, medium- and long term plans to efficiently exploit the resources in order to satisfy the continents energy needs", she concluded.

H.E Mr. Bruce Shepherd - Ambassador of New Zealand to Ethiopia, elaborated on New Zealand's contribution to East Africa. While countries in the

region seek to decrease their imports of fossil fuels and substituting these by exploiting their abundantly available renewable energy resources for electricity generation, sustainably developing one of the world's most significant indigenous geothermal resources is a pre-requisite. To support this, New Zealand will avail its' recently updated and well-developed policy instruments, hard- and soft tools, its' cutting edge technology, as well as expertise derived from over 60 years of Geothermal energy development.

Mr. Shepherd highlighted the African Union Code of Practice for Geothermal Drilling, a product that resulted from a unique collaboration between New Zealand and the African Union. The Code of Practice will become an important reference not only for developers and supervising government authorities, but also for investors, banks and risk insurance providers.

Ambassador, Gary Quince - the Head of the EU delegation, stated that geothermal energy has high potential for contributing to renewable energy development

in Africa. He noted that that geothermal energy is a unique option for improving power supply, as due to its' high capacity factor it provides base-load capacity in an environmentally friendly manner.

He noted that the Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility has proven to be a highly effective tool for reducing the barriers for investment, while attracting public- and private partners to engage in the development of geothermal power.

The Deputy Director General of International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) – Mr. Sakari Oksanen, called upon the 11 GRMF eligible countries (Ethiopia, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia) to increase their efforts in promoting geothermal investments. He noted that if utilised to its' full potential, this has the potential to be an important building block for establishing sustainable energy systems within the region.

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