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## **Press Release**

### **Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy addressed Italia-Africa Business Week on 17 October 2017 in Rome, Italy**

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**Rome, 18 October 2017:** The African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, H.E. Dr Amani Abou-Zeid led on 17 and 18 October 2017 an official mission to Rome, Italy, to take part to the **Italia-Africa Business Week** organized in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Economic Development and International Cooperation. This event organized for the first time aimed at facilitating economic, commercial and financial relations between Africa and Italy.

On 17 October 2017, H.E Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, in her opening address highlighted the importance of the partnership with Italy in the renewable energy sector, particularly on geothermal and hydropower. She recalled that Africa is a land for opportunities driven by its dynamic growth and its youth that is involved in the new technologies. Key initiatives under the African Union Commission plan of action, such as the single digital market will bring more opportunities to private sector. She called upon the Italian private sector to take the opportunity of the Business Forum to be organized in the margins of the AU-EU Summit in November 2017 for more involvement in the African infrastructure development. She also welcomed the remark by Mr. Mario Giro, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy showing the willingness of his country to strengthen the cooperation with Africa through a win-win partnership

On 18 October 2017, Mr. Cheikh Diakhate, PIDA Coordinator, on behalf of the Commissioner took part in the panel regarding Renewable Energy (RE) focusing on " Empowering investments to create innovative and clean solutions for Africa". He recalled that the African Union Commission is playing an important role in facilitating RE development as a tool to reach universal access to modern energy services to the African people. The initiatives towards this objective such as PIDA, AREI, Geothermal Development, bio-energy as well as partnerships such as the Africa-EU Energy Partnership were presented. In addition, the need to build a strong and stable regulatory framework for integrated infrastructure was pointed out as key measure to attract private sector participation in the development of infrastructure.

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