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Directorate of Information and Communication

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African Energy Ministers Call for Accelerated Energy Access on the Continent

Nouakchott, Mauritania, 23 March 2018: African Ministers gathered for the First Ordinary Session of the Sub-Committee of Energy from 21 to 23 March 2018 in Nouakchott, Mauritania adopted the energy action plan approved in July 2017 by the First Specialised Technical Committee Bureau and called for accelerated energy access on the continent.

Speaking at the opening session, the Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid said that increasing energy access, improving energy security and developing a vibrant and competitive energy market resonate deeply with the African Union Commission's values and principles.

"In this regard, the AUC in collaboration with various partners is leading several ambitious programmes and we recognise that the continent cannot develop and compete in the global market if its energy supply remains inadequate, inefficient and unreliable; and out of reach for the majority," the Commissioner said.

"Although the support of various partners is appreciated, it is the hard work and sweat of Member States and African institutions, many of which are represented here, which will bring about the energy transformation we are aspiring for," the Commissioner added.

In his opening address, the Minister of Petroleum, Energy and Mines of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Abdel Vetah underscored the importance of cooperation in the energy sector among Member States in order to optimise the energy resources that different regions of Africa are endowed with as a way of enhancing the competitiveness of Africa on the global stage.

At the opening session, Ms Lilia Nass Hachem, Director of North Africa Sub-regional office of the ECA on her part said "Hydropower development is central to energy transformation agenda and the resolution of the STC on energy " She noted that the ECA together with the African Union, the African Development Bank, and the World

Bank, has established the African Resilient investment facility with the overall objective to strengthen the capacity of the African institution .

On behalf of the Vice President for Power, Energy, Climate Change and Green Growth of the African Development Bank, Mr. Jacques Moulot, Chief Energy Specialist at the African Development Bank stressed the need to come together to take stock and further actions towards the successful implementation and monitoring of the programs and initiatives endorsed in 2017.

The Sub-Committee considered the outcome of the July 2017 Summit and adopted the energy action plans; as well as a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating progress of implementation to report progress that demonstrates tangible achievements at the next STC meeting in 2019.

A declaration was also adopted committing to timely implementation of the action plan with regular reviews while at the same time calling upon Member States to work closely with the African Union Commission and to support the specialized institutions including power pools to effectively discharge their mandates.

Organized by the African Union Commission and hosted by the Government of Mauritania, the meeting brought together about 150 participants including representatives from AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, Power Pools, Regional Centres for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, African Union Commission (AUC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and Pan African Institutions including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Africa Energy Commission (AFREC), African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC) and as well as development partners. Technical sessions held on 21- 22 March 2018 fed into the Ministerial Session held on 23 March 2018.

The participants thanked the Government of Mauritania for the warm hospitality and for hosting the event.

The Sub-Committee on Energy was established by the Specialised Technical Committee of Transport, Transcontinental and Inter-Regional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIET) in March 2017.

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