



Inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors Draft minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2017

Present:

H.E. Prof. Alpha Condé, President of Guinea

H.E. Prime Minister of Ethiopia

Dr Yasmine Fouad, Assistant Minister of Environment, Egypt

H.E. Idris Debby, President of Chad

Ambassador Neville Gertze, Namibia Permanent Representative to the UN

H.E Dr Nkoko Zama Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson, African Union Commission

H.E. Dr Akinwami Adesina, President of the African Development Bank

Mme Segolène Royal, Minister of Environment, Energy and Oceans, France

Mr Neven Mimica, Commissioner for International Development, EU

Dr. Youba Sokona, Interim Head of the AREI IDU

1. Opening of the meeting

The convener of the meeting **H.E. President Alpha Condé** opened the first, inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) by welcoming all participants and warmly thanking all those who had so far contributed to the Initiative.

2. Agenda and purpose of the meeting

President Condé noted that the meeting was called on short notice on the margins of the African Union Summit taking advantage of African leaders' presence. The focus of the meeting was to constitute Board membership, present a progress report of the interim Independent Delivery Unit (IDU) of the initiative, and outline the immediate next steps to speed up on procedural and governance matters.

3. Membership

The three AREI Co-Leaders: H.E. Prof Alpha Condé President of the Republic of Guinea, and Coordinator of Renewable Energies in Africa, H.E. Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, the Chairperson of the AUC; and H.E. Dr Akinwami Adesina, President of the African Development Bank, were joined by the nominees of the other African Regions including Egypt (North Africa), Namibia (Southern Africa), Chad (Central Africa) and Ethiopia (Eastern Africa) to host the inaugural meeting of the AREI. The EU Commission and the Government of France also participated in the meeting at the invitation of H.E President Alpha Conde.

4. AREI Operationalization and Progress Report and Discussion

The Co-Leaders in their remarks, presented a report on the operationalization of AREI following the African Union **Assembly/AU/Dec.609 (xxvii)** ("AU Decision 609"). Dr. Sokona presented the report on the activities of the Interim IDU.

5. Discussion

H.E Idris Deby, President of Chad acknowledged with satisfaction the operationalization process undertaken and the fact that the five sub-regions of Africa were duly represented on the Board. He thanked for all the contributions so far, noting that pledges would now need to be materialized. He highlighted the importance of all projects being responsive to the need of countries and that they would need to facilitate the opportunity for widening energy access and creating jobs, particularly for youth and in the rural areas.

H.E Desalegn Hailemariam, The Prime Minister of Ethiopia thanked all, and in particular President Alpha Condé, for steering this important initiative and highlighted the importance of African ownership. He commended the efforts already deployed by the African Union and African Development Bank and recognized the effort and support of partners, particularly highlighting France's substantial contributions. He explained that Ethiopia will remain highly supportive and involved in the initiative and emphasized the importance of energy for development and that the initiative should help meet Sustainable Development Goal 7, facilitating the industrialization and transformation of the continent.

H.E Dr Nkokoza Dlamini Zuma, The Chairperson of AUC, reiterated the appreciation of thanks to the other Co-leaders in bringing the initiative to this stage and emphasized that implementation should be further accelerated.

Mr Neven Mimica, Commissioner for International Development, EU expressed his thanks to President Condé for inviting EU to join the board of the initiative. He said that EU is a natural partner for Africa and fully committed to AREI objectives. He stated that EU is engaged in implementing 5 GW of renewable energy by 2020 in Africa which would help achieve both climate change targets and the achievement of the 2030 agenda. He further more highlighted the importance of broad collaboration and mobilization of stakeholders. AREI would need to succeed in order to support development efforts in Africa.

H.E. Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank welcomed the fact that the inaugural Board meeting of AREI has been successfully convened on schedule as per the mandate given to the Co-Leaders by the AU **Assembly/AU/Dec.609 (xxvii)** ("AU Decision 609"). He expressed his appreciation for the commitment of the Co-leaders, and the role played by President Al-Sisi as coordinator of CAHOSCC. He acknowledged that much progress had been made in a short time frame, and indicated that the bank itself will invest 12 billion USD to the energy sector in order to leverage an equal amount for electricity access in Africa. He thanked Partners (especially Germany and France) for the funds they have committed to the African Development Bank to support the IDU, and acknowledged the commitment by the EU and others. He called for the speedy implementation of the initiative going forward.

Mme Selogène Royal, Minister of Environment, Energy and Oceans, France recognised that despite the fact that Africa has limited responsibility for the increasing GHG built up, African countries had been instrumental for the entry into force of the Paris agreement. Both COP 21 and COP22 had shown the need for concrete action, with AREI so far being the most important outcome of Paris and the type of action necessary to limit the raise of temperature to 2 degrees. She said that the initiative had strong political support and finance is not a problem. Noting that a wide range of projects already exists, she urged to speed up implementation and also commended the EU for supporting the initiative.

H.E. Yasmine Fouad, Assistant Minister of Environment, Egypt expressed her apologies that President Sisi were not being able to attend the meeting as he was en-route to Addis Ababa. She

said Egypt appreciated the progress made by the Independent Delivery Unit and thanked the Co-Leaders especially the African development Bank for the progress made so far. She expressed a number of concerns in relation to the Co-leaders report and the governance framework, including the importance of legal personality for AREI, issues around membership, voting and avoidance of conflict of interest and the need to finalize the governance framework in a consultative manner.

Ambassador Gertze, Namibia apologized that the President could not attend the meeting personally, but acknowledged his full support for the initiative and how energy is critical for the industrialization of the continent. He noted that number of issues of concerns exist and need clarification to ensure the conditions for an acceleration of the implementation of the initiative.

President Alpha Condé thanked for all the interventions and acknowledged that this inaugural board meeting was not meant to have substantive discussions due to the short time for preparations.

6. Decisions

The meeting mandated the IDU to finalize the technical and procedural documentation for the AREI and present for the consideration of the next Board meeting of AREI scheduled in Conakry, Guinea on 4th of March 2017 following the technical meeting with Partners between 2 – 3 March 2017 to clarify funding mechanisms and criteria for AREI projects.

7. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Board meeting shall be hosted on 04 March 2017 in Conakry, Guinea.

8. Closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked all the Members of the Board of Directors for their participation and declared the meeting closed.