

**Plenary Session D:  
Closing Session and Adoption of  
Conference Outcomes**

**Friday, 4 June, 12.00 – 13.00 h**

**Venue: Plenary Hall IKBB**

Internationale Konferenz  
für Erneuerbare Energien, Bonn  
International Conference  
for Renewable Energies, Bonn



**CLOSING ADDRESS**

**Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul**

**Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany**

At the end of this conference it is time to take stock and to chart the course ahead. What have we achieved at the conference ?

We have sent out an important political message to the world, a message of confidence that, with a strong political will, with the best technology and with adequate financial resources, we can master one of the biggest challenges of our times, the challenge of creating a sustainable energy future for the whole world, for people in the North who are rich in energy, and for people in the South who are energy-poor. A message of hope that we can mobilize enough energy to light the houses of the poor, to cook meals for the children, to power the machinery used by farmers or both small and large enterprises, to keep medicines cold in the hospitals caring for the sick.

We have given birth to a new alliance for a sustainable energy future. The declaration is the expression of a new consensus that renewable energies are the energies of the future. Let us be united in our conviction that this is the only sustainable future and that we can convince all of our fellow citizens to support the policies that will lead us there.

We have adopted a declaration with strong political messages.

First: We have endorsed a vision in which renewable energies will become a most important and widely available source of energy. And let us be clear: because of the huge demand in the developing world, it will need more energy, much more energy than the world is using today. So the expansion needed in renewable energies is enormous. This vision is not wishful thinking. It is possible, if we all mobilize the political will. Internationally respected institutions and bodies have stated that this is possible. But it won't happen by itself. "Business as usual" will not be enough.

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The second important message is that the markets can help us achieve this goal if governments define the frameworks with intelligence and foresight. It is true that some technologies are less competitive on the markets today because the consumer is being asked to pay a higher price. But the energy prices on today's markets are distorted! Distorted prices are one of the most effective barriers to an expansion in the market for renewables. If we could eliminate this distortion, consumers on the market would choose renewable energy solutions.

The third message is that efficiency is also of key importance for renewable energies. We have to increase energy productivity in order to get more benefit out of each unit of energy. Rising prices for energy will help to improve productivity, but only if efficiency-enhancing technologies are made available to those who need them most: the poor.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The most important political achievement of this conference is that we have put energy issues at the center of the great political agenda for this century, for this new millennium: poverty, sustainable development, peace.

Decades ago, energy issues were for experts, for the engineers, for the bankers in their pinstripe suits. Those were the days when you would rarely find a woman in energy meetings. As I have noticed at this conference, this is something that has also changed!

Today, we have stated clearly why renewable energies are important when addressing the agenda for sustainable development.

- *Renewables are important because they provide access to energy.*
- *Renewables help us to avoid climate risks.*
- *Renewables boost local employment and economic development.*
- *Renewables are local energy sources and can ease the financial burden caused by energy imports.*
- *Renewables help maintain peace. In the past, wars have been fought over access to oil. There will never be a war over access to the sun.*

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Poverty is the greatest scandal in the world today. It is obscene that, in Africa for instance, poor women have to struggle to get the firewood to cook the family meal, while in other parts of the world energy is being wasted. In this declaration, we have reaffirmed our commitment to combating poverty. To achieve the Millennium Development Goals, developing countries will by 2015 need more than twice the energy input they have today. As I have said, with additional efforts, we can raise the contribution of renewables so that 1 billion people will have access to modern energy services from renewables. It will not be enough, but it is a major step.

**International Action Programme**

We have put together an Action Programme containing your voluntary commitments and actions. I am really impressed by this programme. We recognize the new and unprecedented commitments made by the development partners towards actions for sustainable energy and development.

Developing countries have committed themselves to objectives and actions. I want to highlight the contributions made to the International Action Programme by China, the Philippines and Uganda. The donor community has also risen to the challenge. The substantial commitment made by the World Bank Group will hopefully send a signal to many countries. There are many more which I cannot mention for lack of time.

I was very impressed two days ago when we signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a programme to support small local energy businesses in Africa to be told that the programme would lead to 60 to 80 new businesses and to access to energy for about one million people. That statement led me to ask my experts to calculate the impact of the entire Action Programme. They came up with an estimate that this Action Programme will deliver access to energy for about an additional 250 million people, if these actions can be sustained until 2015. This is an excellent result, and we can be proud of it. But it will not be enough. More needs to be done in the years ahead.

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I also want to highlight the Policy Recommendations for Renewable Energies. These recommendations are a manual for decision-makers in public and private institutions. I hope that they will be used widely, and certainly they can be developed further, as we continue to assess our experiences.

**Follow-up**

Many of you have said that the success of this conference will not be complete unless we can identify a follow-up arrangement and commit ourselves to making it work. I agree.

I see a consensus emerging for a follow-up that pursues several tracks:

1) The International Action Programme will be followed up and implemented by all the actors who have contributed their own voluntary commitments. It will also be followed up with monitoring on a voluntary basis, and a mechanism for this task needs to be identified.

We hope that, two or three years from now, a follow-up conference, hopefully in a developing country, will take stock of and further develop the Action Programme.

This is in line with the commitment contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation that a review will take place. Progress on the Johannesburg commitment will be reviewed by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in 2006, and the Action Programme can contribute to this effort. This review needs input from many partners, just as this Action Programme is a major contribution towards implementing Johannesburg.

2) But there should also be a second track. The conference has called for a global network on renewables, a network of those actors in governments and international organizations who are highly committed to a sustainable energy future. A network that also reaches out to other stakeholders, who have been such a prominent part of this conference: to the private sector, civil society, the professional community and the local authorities.

I am aware that the global network for renewables is a design, not yet a fact. Concrete commitments and timetables are needed if we are to make it a reality. I hope these will

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emerge from the International Steering Committee, which has overseen preparations for this conference so well. The committee intends to meet again in the fall of this year.

This network may well organize its work around the three basic topics which have proved useful for this conference: policy frameworks, financing options, research and capacity development. Around each topic, a cluster could be established of institutions and actors with comparative advantages in dealing with these topics in greater detail. However, the structure should be kept to a minimum.

The financing of renewable energy services in developing countries is doubtless a challenge for the development finance institutions. The international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank and the regional development banks, have been challenged to accept an active role. And they are in an excellent position to provide leadership, given their activities and their leverage power. However, not even the World Bank can do it alone. Support is needed from partner countries, in the North and in the South. I hope that Germany will be joined by others in offering to be such a partner.

**German commitment**

For the German government, I am proud to confirm our commitment to increase our development assistance for sustainable energy – and that includes financial assistance. In Johannesburg, we committed ourselves to allocate one billion euros over 5 years in support of renewable energies and energy efficiency programmes with our development partners. We stand by this commitment; the assistance is flowing to our partners. The programmes and projects are under way and several new agreements have been concluded during this conference.

Yesterday, Chancellor Schröder announced an additional commitment of assistance funds which will lead to investments of 500 million euros in renewables and energy efficiency over the next five years. We intend to use these resources, in partnership with the KfW banking group, to act as a catalyst, in particular to leverage additional investments from the private sector.

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**Thanks**

We as convenors have many people to thank for the success of this conference.

I want to thank all of you who came to Bonn and to thank you for your contributions to the International Action Programme.

The governments that hosted the preparatory meetings deserve our special gratitude. The meetings were hosted by the governments of Brazil, Kenya, Thailand and Yemen and by the European Commission.

We are all grateful to the governments who contributed to the Trust Fund to support delegates from Least Developed Countries. We much appreciated the financial contributions from the Netherlands, Norway, Italy and the United Kingdom. Other sponsors have also supported the participation of delegates.

The members of the International Steering Committee met three times and have invested many days and hours of work and shown great dedication. My sincere thanks go to all the members, and I hope we can count on their support in the future again.

The parliamentarians have had their special forum and have enriched this conference with the perspective from their lawmaking mandate. We are also grateful for this contribution.

I am deeply grateful to Mohamed El-Ashry. With his experience and with his powers of persuasion, he has guided the consultations on the conference outcomes in a professional manner and with a dedication and outstanding skill we all appreciate. Thank you very much.

All the other facilitators and experts who have helped to enlighten or moderate our discussions deserve our gratitude. I want to thank David Hales in particular, who guided the stakeholder dialogue in his very charming, yet frank and decisive manner.

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The staff of our ministries have put in many hours of hard work over many months. They have done a professional job in organizing an excellent conference. We all owe them a big "thank you". They will be relieved that this conference has been brought to a successful conclusion.

Finally, I want to thank the conference secretariat, organized by GTZ, and all the staff here in this beautiful conference centre. They have been excellent organizers, working until they were exhausted. I also thank the interpreters for their services, sometimes going on until late into the night. We all appreciate their professional service in helping us understand each other.