



PRESS RELEASE

UN-OHRLLS and IRENA Agree to Support Renewable Energy Growth in World's Most Climate Vulnerable Countries

NEW YORK – 27 September, 2019: The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) have today underscored their commitment to strengthen cooperation aimed at advancing renewable energy in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed in New York today by the UN-OHRLLS Under-Secretary-General Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu and IRENA Director-General Francesco La Camera. Strengthened collaboration between the two organisations contributes to global efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in the context of renewable energy.

“SDG7 on sustainable energy is of critical importance to the achievement of Agenda 2030, if not all the Sustainable Development Goals,” said Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu. “The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states are at risk of being left behind, together in partnership we can make faster progress. We must close energy gaps and support countries transitioning to more sustainable and renewable energy sources by 2030. Countries cannot achieve this alone. We are proud to strengthen our collaboration with IRENA to combine our expertise and comparative advantages to support countries to achieve their renewable energy goals.”

“The energy transformation brings significant opportunity to developed and developing countries alike,” said IRENA Director-General Francesco La Camera. “Renewables are not only our most effective response to rising emissions, but they are also an engine of low-carbon development, supporting energy access, energy security and climate resilience in the world's most vulnerable countries. This partnership bolsters the efforts of both organisations to achieve SDG7 and the wider sustainable development goals.”

The two organisations will collaborate on activities to support LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to build renewables-based energy systems, close the energy access gaps experienced by these groups of countries and harness the socio-economic and environmental benefits of renewable energy.

LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS consist of 91 countries with a total population of 1.1 billion. Access to energy in these vulnerable countries remains a major challenge. About half of the people in the world without electricity live in LDCs. In 2016, the proportion of the population in LDCs with access to electricity was 44.8 per cent. In LLDCs it was 53.1 per cent, and in SIDS it was 76.3 per cent.



Ending energy poverty in these groups of vulnerable countries and ensuring that no country or person is left behind is critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

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About UN-OHRLLS

[UN-OHRLLS](#) is the lead body within the United Nations Secretariat on matters related to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, with the specific mandate to mobilize and coordinate international support and resources for the effective implementation of: (i) the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, (ii) the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024; and (iii) SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

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About the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

IRENA is the global intergovernmental organisation that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, and serves as the principal platform for international co-operation, a centre of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy. With 160 Members (159 States and the European Union) and 23 additional countries in the accession process and actively engaged, IRENA promotes the widespread adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy, including bioenergy, geothermal, hydropower, ocean, solar and wind energy, in the pursuit of sustainable development, energy access, energy security and low-carbon economic growth and prosperity. <https://www.irena.org/>

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