

ENERGY TRANSITION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

Virtual Side Event at the Second Committee of the 76th Session of the General Assembly
19 October 2021, 10:00-12:00 EST

Organised by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

*translation into UN official languages available

** the event will be broadcast on <https://media.un.org/en/webtv>

Background

Countries are increasingly making ambitious and far-reaching pledges to climate action, with over 130 announcing or actively considering net zero emission strategies by mid-century. The speed of change, however, is still far from what is needed to keep the global temperature rise below 1.5°C.

Several events this year, such as the High-Level Dialogue on Energy (HLDE), COP26 as well as Global High-Level Forum on Energy Transition under the umbrella of IRENA reaffirm countries' commitment towards energy transition.

To outline global strategies towards carbon-neutrality and a pathway to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C by 2050, IRENA has released the *World Energy Transition Outlook*. Under IRENA's "1.5°C Pathway", 90% of the solutions shaping a successful outcome in 2050 involve renewable energy through direct supply, electrification, energy efficiency, green hydrogen and bioenergy.

To be in line with the 1.5 scenario, by 2030 renewable power should reach 8 000 GW globally, almost tripling the current capacity. Hydrogen and derivatives will account for 12% of final energy use by 2050. In 2050, two-thirds of the total hydrogen will be green.

USD 131 trillion will need to flow into an energy system over the period to 2050 that prioritises technology avenues compatible with a 1.5°C Pathway. USD 24 trillion of planned investments will have to be redirected from fossil fuels to energy transition technologies between now and 2050.

A transformed energy sector will have 122 million jobs in the energy sector in 2050 - with 43 million in renewables. Under IRENA's 1.5°C Scenario, global impacts on aggregated economic activity are positive. Compared with the Planned Energy Scenario, from 2021 to 2030, the level of GDP is on average 2.4% higher in the 1.5°C Scenario.

Aim of the event

The event aims to promote the joint efforts towards carbon neutrality post-HLDE. It will offer an excellent contribution of the Second Committee to COP26 as that energy transition is among the key priorities of the UK presidency. The event will also be a platform to discuss the energy transition beyond technology and as a driver of deep structural changes that will significantly affect economies and societies, a boost in GDP, aligned with the needs of a post-COVID recovery. Discussions may also enrich this year's Second Committee resolution "Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all" as well in a broader context "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind".

Agenda, 19 October, 10:00-12:00 EST

Agenda item	Speakers
<p>Opening segment (10:00-10:35) Moderated by Ms. Prathma Uprety (Nepal), Rapporteur of the Second Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: H.E. Vanessa Frazier (Malta), Chair of the Second Committee, video message - Welcome Remarks: Mr. Francesco La Camera, IRENA Director-General - Presentation of HLDE outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ms. Damilola Ogunbiyi, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for SEforAll and UN-Energy co-chair (tbc) o Mr. Haoliang Xu, Assistant Secretary-General and Director of Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP
<p>Panel discussion: Linking HLDE and COP26: accelerating energy transition for resilient and climate-safe societies and economies (10:35-11:15) Moderated by Mr. Wilfried Biya, Permanent Observer of IRENA to the United Nations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Dr Nawal Al-Hosany, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to IRENA - H.E. Prof Simone Borg, Malta's Climate Action Ambassador - Mr. Tom Woodroffe, UK ECOSOC Ambassador - Prof. William Moomaw, Emeritus Professor of international environmental policy and co-director of the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University, USA - Ms. Line Renée Batongué, environmental journalist and Chair, Cameroon's Network of Journalists for Renewable Energy
<p>Open Floor: Questions and remarks (11:15-11:50) Moderated by Mr. Wilfried Biya, Permanent Observer of IRENA to the United Nations</p>	<p>Member States and other delegations</p>
<p>Closing remarks (11:50-12:00)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Wilfried Biya, Permanent Observer of IRENA to the United Nations - Ms. Prathma Uprety (Nepal), Rapporteur of the Second Committee