

Renewable energy on global scale

All the UN member states are invited to sign International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Treaty at the founding conference of the IRENA to be held in Bonn on January 26. The treaty would be open for the signature from the day forth for all the UN member states.

The IRENA would be first dedicated intergovernmental agency to promote and expedite adoption of the renewable energy throughout the world. According to IRENA's website it aims to promote "rapid transition towards a widespread and sustainable use of renewable energy on global scale."

The Agency would provide consultancy to Governments of both developed and developing countries on renewable technology transfer.

The entity will help member countries transfer technologies, procure funds and sharing of the information relating to renewable energy sources, tackling global warming and the depletion of fossil fuels.

It plans to support projects in renewable energy sources such as biomass, hydro power, wind, solar and geothermal energy and biofuels. 51 states attended the final preparatory conference in Madrid, Spain for the foundation of the Irena, at the initiative of the Germany, Spain and Denmark and the invitation of the Spanish Government and finalized the discussions on statutes of the IRENA, which has been designed an effective structure to fulfill its task and objectives.

The statute also establishes a solid financial basis for the agency.

The participating states also agreed on a resolution



Wind farm

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establishing a Preparatory Commission as an interim body of the IRENA. Participants expressed a need to begin a swift transition to a more secure, sustainable renewable energy economy. The first meeting of the preparatory commission will be held on following day on January 27, a day after the founding conference, will ensure rapid and effective start of the agency. The Preparatory Commission will convene for the first time and decide on the initial steps of the Agency. It will resolve upon the procedure and criteria for selecting IRENA's interim Director-General and interim headquarters.

Signatories of IRENA

will be invited to put forward applications for the interim headquarters and nominations of candidates for the post of interim Director-General until April 30, 2009. Eventually, in June 2009, the Preparatory Commission will decide on the location of the interim headquarters and the interim Director-General. IRENA should start operating as soon as possible. The barriers cited included low public awareness, ineffective political frameworks and Governments continuing to subsidize conventional energy sources. In 2007, more than US\$100 billion was invested worldwide in renewable energy technology, and that many renewable

technologies and industries have been growing at rates of 20-60 per cent year on year. However, despite repeated requests from Germany, the Japan would not join IRENA on the basis that International Energy Agency (IEA) is currently promoting the use of renewable energy sources, Japanese press reported.

According to the reports quoting the Government sources said that it would not be joining the body since the functions of IRENA would overlap those of the International Energy Agency, in which Japan currently holds the seat of executive director.

It is reported Senior Foreign Ministry official saying that "The IEA has been making efforts to expand the use of renewable energy, so a new organization isn't necessary."

There are speculations that the United States too would not join IRENA. However, it was pointed out that U.S. President-elect Barack Obama has called for a shift from fossil fuels to renewables, might change its stance when the new administration is launched.

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