

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
CSD15 THEME: ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
Intergovernmental Planning Meeting  
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Mr Chairman, South Africa fully supports the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of G77 and China.

## INTRODUCTION

Energy has deep and broad relationships with each of the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economy, the environment and social development. While certain forms of energy production and consumption may have environmental impacts, energy is crucial for social and economic development. Energy services contribute to meeting basic human needs such as food production and shelter; it contributes to social development particularly in the areas of education and public health. In working toward sustainable development, the manner in which we produce and consume energy is therefore of crucial importance.

## OBSTACLES AND CONSTRAINTS

While South Africa has increased its electricity output by 7,1% since 2003, a key challenge for us from a public health and poverty alleviation perspective is the need to shift from biomass use in households to modern and reliable energy sources and to increase the biomass usage in electricity generation industry. The Integrated National Electrification Programme is one of South Africa's major achievements and is unprecedented internationally. Some 3,5 million homes have been electrified by mid-2005, which translates to the electrification of over 435 000 homes per year. 70% of South Africans now have access to electricity in the urban areas and over 40% in the rural. The rural challenge is the most difficult, and it is important to provide a package of energy options to these areas which will address all their energy needs including, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport and their thermal needs. In doing so, a range of different small scale energy options need to be developed, including energy efficient inter-modal transport systems, non-motorised transport, mini grid and hybrid electrification systems. The key challenges that we face in the choice of which energy technologies to use are the issues of access to and the huge cost differential between older technologies and clean advanced energy technologies. The Hydropower conference of March 2006 emphasised the need for regional cooperation. This is true not only for hydropower development but for cooperation on all levels of energy provision for the poor.

## LESSONS LEARNT AND BEST PRACTICE

South Africa is committed to the promotion of access to affordable and sustainable energy and transport services for small businesses, poor households, small scale farms, schools, clinics, in our rural areas and a wide range of other community establishments. It is important to focus on the development of women and children in all aspects regarding energy including safety and health. Our Constitution stipulates that the state must establish a national energy policy which will ensure that the national energy resources shall be adequately developed to cater for the needs of the whole nation. Energy should therefore be available to all citizens at an affordable cost. Energy production and distribution should not only be sustainable, but should also lead to improvement of the standard of living for all of the country's citizens. For this to become a reality, energy production and consumption efficiency is key.

Some renewable energy technologies are expensive but they could become more affordable once economies of scale are achieved. The application, in a developing country such as ourselves, of different financial assistance programmes to ensure the uptake of renewable energies are being investigated e.g. top-up funding and feed in tariffs. Our Biofuels programme has already been initiated and we have entered

into an international biofuel cooperation programme to assist us in ramping up this initiative.

An Energy Efficiency Strategy with targets for every sector in South Africa to be achieved by 2015 has been approved and the implementation of this strategy is being monitored and this monitoring will be mandatory in terms of our new Energy Planning Legislation.

It is our experience that there is no “magical silver bullet” and therefore, all options for new electricity generation plant in South Africa are being considered including: *in situ* coal gasification, pulverized coal, pumped storage schemes and other large and small hydropower projects, nuclear, fluidized bed combustion coal plant, combined and open cycle gas turbines and renewable energy technologies.

## **CONCLUSION**

South Africa is well endowed with a number of energy resources and opportunities for diversification, in this context our energy planning, investment and legislative programmes are designed to ensure that the best available affordable technologies as well as the most sustainable technologies are promoted and utilized. The programmes provide for existing technologies to be upgraded, the switching to renewable energy (e.g. solar water heating) and full implementation of aggressive energy efficiency measures to ensure a sustainable energy future.