

## Ministerial Roundtable on the Infrastructure for the Energy Transition: Utilities for Net Zero Alliance

This roundtable discussion aims to address the crucial role of infrastructure in the energy transition and achieving the goal of tripling renewables by 2030. Key discussions will address overcoming barriers, accelerating the energy transition to cut emissions, and unlocking the utility sector's potential to meet Net Zero targets by addressing structural, regulatory, and financial challenges.

In his opening remarks at the Ministerial Roundtable 'Infrastructure for the Energy Transition: Utilities for Net Zero Alliance', **H.E. Dr Jimmy Gasore, Minister of Infrastructure of Rwanda and 14th Assembly President** noted the shifts towards renewable electricity and green hydrogen that are crucial to reducing carbon emissions, requiring a redesign and strengthening of energy infrastructure.

"Achieving this ambitious target requires a fundamental transformation of our energy infrastructure," says **Mr Francesco La Camera, Director General, IRENA**, on the changes needed to meet tripling targets and doubling energy efficiency. "This includes modernising and expanding electricity grids and integrating storage solutions."

"We need a 'Marshall plan' for power infrastructure development, and it is not an exaggeration to say that we literally need to rewire the energy system today," says **Mr. Jasim Thabet, CEO TAQA, Co-Chair [UNEZA](#)** on the ambitious actions needed to modernise and expand the current energy infrastructure in the shift towards renewable energy. He highlighted the importance of global cooperation across industries and governments needed to make a significant difference in upgrading the energy grid to accelerate the energy transition, tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030. "The alliance members collectively reaffirm their commitment to increase their combined renewable energy capacity to 750 gigawatts by 2030, which is close to 2.5 times their joint capacity today," he concluded.



**Mr. Martin Pibworth, COO, SSE, Co-Chair UNEZA**, continued the discussion focusing on the role that the governments can have in incentivising the build-up of reliable renewable energy solutions to modernise the infrastructure needed for the energy transition. “Offshore wind, which has been a major success story in the UK, has been the engine behind the decarbonising of the power sector. There are many positive lessons to take from this, including the value of long-term government commitments enshrined in good law and innovative policy mechanisms to derisk investments to lower the cost of capital,” he stated.

In a scene-setting presentation from **Mr Gurbuz Gonul, Director of Country Engagement and Partnerships, IRENA**, he called attention to urgent actions and international cooperation saying, “Together we can join our sources to build the fact base and foundation towards a net-zero future,” emphasising an approach focused on action to implement projects on the ground based on best practices to accelerate the energy transition in the power sector.

“The main challenge for public authorities to succeed in the energy transitions is the financing of networks and the interconnection of networks and the financing of infrastructure.” **H.E. Philippe Henry, Minister of Climate, Energy, Mobility, and Infrastructure of the Walloon Region, Belgium**, on the challenges faced by the public sector, adding that the private sector can help address the infrastructure and labour shortages that have slowed down the pace of renewables adoption and installation of

relevant infrastructure “It is important to have collaboration on the international level and the local level to facilitate the holistic approach needed for the energy transition.”

**Luc Rémont, CEO, EDF** says, “Our ambition at EDF is to accelerate towards net zero emissions as quickly as possible. Currently, we have surpassed the industry average with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at 37 grams per kilowatt-hour, and we are aiming to achieve 22 grams by 2035. In Europe, the average is much higher at 251 grams per kilowatt-hour, providing a clear benchmark for our journey ahead.”

**Mr. Anders Hoffmann, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities, Denmark** spoke on the importance of private-public collaboration to speed up the deployment of relevant infrastructure for further adoption of renewable solutions. “We have been working with industries to find the barriers and get rid of them, creating a task force that found the barrier standing in the way of solar and wind deployment, and to get fossil fuels out of heating in houses. And now the government is looking at all of these suggestions one by one to implement them to make sure that the speed of adoption goes up,” he said.

Closing the Ministerial Roundtable of the ‘Infrastructure for the Energy Transition: Utilities for Net Zero Alliance, **Ms Melinda Crane** reflected on the need to interconnect policymakers and industry in a pragmatic and effective way in order to remove barriers, ramp up financing, and get the legislative frameworks in place to foster an environment to modernise renewables infrastructure needed to meet tripling goals.