

Inaugural Conference on "Agency for the Exploitation of Renewable Energies"

Honorable Foreign Minister Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and in the name of the Afghan people, I thank you for the invitation to this conference. As mentioned here often, the energy needs are increasing continuously with the growth of the world population. The same is true of Afghanistan, which is in the process of reconstruction after several years of war. With the increased use of fossil fuels, the climate change is being accelerated. The impacts of climate change are extreme for the developing countries, such as Afghanistan. For several years, many parts of Afghanistan are experiencing a continuous draught. As a consequence of the continuing draught, there is an acute shortage of fresh water for drinking and agriculture. This has led to a fall in the agricultural output. This, in turn, has created a serious food shortage and led to various social problems. In addition to that, the process of soil-erosion and desertification has gained speed.

Afghanistan is suffering from Energy shortage, despite the fact that our country has large resources of renewable energies. In Afghanistan, we have an annual supply of 70 billion cubic meter of water, out of which only 30 percent is used. The rest flows wastefully into depressions or to the neighboring countries. Afghanistan, whose topographical heights vary between 300 and 7,700 meters above the sea level, has a huge potential for producing regenerative energy through hydropower. The existing geological structures allow the construction of dams and hydro electricity plants. The rivers of Afghanistan can generate up to 100,000 MW/h.

The solar energy can also be generated in our country. Solar energy sources can produce about 1945 KW/h per square meter. On an average, Afghanistan has 9 to 11 months of sunshine. In some parts, the average sunshine per year is 3000 hours. Therefore, even this source of regenerative energy should be expanded and utilized.

Because of the geographical situation of the Afghanistan, it receives regional and local wind throughout the year. The wind speed can be as high as 200 km/h. The permanent availability of wind can be a possible source of wind power through the creation of wind parks. Thanks to the availability of hot water springs in some areas, even geothermal energy can be an effective source.

Over and above the natural regenerative sources of energy, the agricultural land could be used for the production of raw-material, which helps in generating bio-energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as I mentioned above, Afghanistan has a huge potential for producing regenerative energies. The sources of regenerative energies could be exploited through technology and know-how transfer. I am of the opinion that, with the cooperation of international community, we can solve the century old problem. We will be setting a milestone with this inaugural conference on agency for the utilization of renewable energies. Thank you for the opportunity.

Professor Dr. M. Zulfacar.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan