

Joint Press Release Germany-Spain-Denmark, 24 October 2008

Breakthrough: IRENA is to be founded in early 2009

Final Preparatory Conference paves the way for the first International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

What has been within reach is now ready to be settled: 51 states from different regions agreed on the Statute (Treaty) of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) at the Final Preparatory Conference held on 23-24 October, 2008 in Madrid, Spain. Further important issues like the financing, the procedures for selecting the interim Director-General and the interim headquarters and the design of IRENA's initial phase have been agreed upon.

Mandated by governments worldwide, IRENA aims at becoming the main driving force in promoting a rapid transition towards the widespread and sustainable use of renewable energy on a global scale. The Madrid Conference constitutes a major breakthrough and a success in the founding process, led by Germany, Spain and Denmark. The Founding Conference for IRENA, where the Treaty will be signed, will be held on 26 January, 2009 in Bonn, Germany. From that day forth the Statute will be open for signature by states interested in becoming a member of the agency.

Emphasizing the urgent need for a shift towards more renewable energy and a low carbon economy the participating states decided to install an interim body of IRENA, the Preparatory Commission, ensuring a quick and comprehensive start. Its first meeting will already take place one day after the Founding Conference. First projects will be designed and implemented from January 2009 on, raising the visibility of IRENA, which will be the first core intergovernmental organisation for renewable energies, and a major multilateral actor in the energy fora, in coordination with other regional and international organisations.

Climate change, rising energy prices, dependency on energy imports, poverty and hunger are serious challenges for mankind. Renewable energies have the proven potential to address these challenges. But even though the potential is huge and many countries want to move into a less fossil fuel dependent future, the diffusion and adoption of renewable energies still faces severe barriers and obstacles.

Acting as the global voice for renewable energies, IRENA will provide practical advice and support for both industrialised and developing countries, help them improve their regulatory frameworks and build capacity. The agency will facilitate access to all relevant information including reliable data on the potential of renewable energy, best practices, effective financial mechanisms and state-of-the-art technological expertise.