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INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Any other business
Joint Statement on “Transforming the Mediterranean Region into a Green Energy Corridor” (MED9 Energy Ministerial Summit)
(Cyprus, 23 September 2024)
- Information from Cyprus

In view of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council on 15 October 2024, delegations will find in Annex an information note from Cyprus on the above-mentioned subject.

Joint Statement on “Transforming the Mediterranean Region into a Green Energy Corridor”

(MED9 Energy Ministerial Summit, 23rd September 2024, Cyprus)

The Republic of Cyprus, acting as Chair of the MED9 Group for 2024, hosted the Energy Ministerial Summit of the nine Mediterranean EU Member States, on the 23rd September 2024. During the Summit, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to support the advancement of a sustainable, secure, and resilient future for the Mediterranean region, in alignment with the EU’s goals for climate neutrality and an affordable energy future for all EU citizens.

The Mediterranean region, positioned at the crossroads of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, serves as a vital corridor for energy cooperation and innovation. Through a collaborative framework, the Mediterranean EU Member States can exploit the untapped potential of renewable energy in the region and, by establishing a green energy hub, facilitate energy exchange between EU and non-EU Mediterranean countries.

In light of these shared priorities, the MED9 Member States endorsed the attached Joint Statement, outlining a unified approach to addressing the urgent challenges posed by climate change and enhancing energy security across the region.

Larnaka – Cyprus MED9 Energy Ministerial Summit

23rd of September 2024

JOINT STATEMENT

We, the EU Mediterranean countries of Croatia, Cyprus France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain, gathered for the second MED9 Energy Ministerial Summit that was held in Larnaka, Cyprus, on the 23rd of September, reaffirm our commitment to support the advancement of a sustainable, secure, and resilient future for the Mediterranean region. This action is in line with the targets set by the European Union with respect to climate neutrality. Considering the unique renewable energy potential and climate challenges that characterize our region, we declare our intention to continue our collaboration towards setting the foundations for the supply of secure and affordable clean energy in the region.

The Ministers acknowledge:

- The importance of the creation of a collaborative framework and execution of joint actions towards the realisation of a resilient energy ecosystem in the region;
- The need for all MED9 countries to access affordable, clean, and sustainable energy;
- The fact that the implementation of the cross-border projects that are required for the envisioned green energy hub, shall promote peace and stability in the region;
- The projected economic prosperity associated with the development of the green energy hub, which is expected to contribute towards the creation of job opportunities and the transfer of knowledge, thus strengthening our industrial competitiveness.

The Ministers took note of the work that was performed during 2024, in accordance with the 2024 Work Programme, including:

- The establishment of the MED9 Energy Steering Committee, which includes high-level representatives from all member countries. The Steering Committee serves as the official platform that plans for and supports energy related activities of the MED9 initiative and plays a pivotal role in the success of its outcomes.
- The efforts of the Energy Steering Committee to secure the support of the European Commission for the preparation of comprehensive studies that will examine the best way to fulfil the ambitious vision of transforming the Mediterranean region into a corridor for green energy trade between EU and non-EU countries.
- The attempts of the Energy Steering Committee to gain access to existing studies that examine the concept of exchange in the region and were commissioned by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG-NEAR) of the European Commission.

Based on the above, we have decided to take the following steps:

- Reiterate our ambitious vision of transforming the Mediterranean region into a renewable energy hub and corridor for green energy development. The realisation of this concept, which requires coordinated efforts between MED9 members, will yield significant benefits for the region, including economic growth, creation of job opportunities, the further integration of EU Member States in the Internal Market and increase in energy security for the Union and the region. In addition, these actions may assist some of the MED9 members to achieve their individual renewable targets set by the EU, as well as contribute to their reindustrialization through competitive renewable energy prices.
- Examine the creation of synergies between our national permitting procedures for renewable energy projects. This will facilitate the deployment of potential cross-border projects, while minimizing the administrative burden for investors. At the same time, these actions will contribute to the protection and preservation of the region's unique ecosystems, species, and natural heritage.
- We acknowledge the wealth of knowledge and insights generated through various analyses and studies related to the development of a Mediterranean

green energy hub, connecting EU and non-EU countries. We commend the efforts of the European Commission, including DG NEAR, in advancing this important field and look forward to further exploring existing reports and findings relevant to this initiative.

- To further progress towards this shared vision, we propose the development of a comprehensive and tailored assessment, focusing on the specific opportunities and challenges associated with establishing a Mediterranean green energy hub. We invite the European Commission to collaborate closely with us in undertaking this assessment, subject to resources availability.
- Following the assessment of the aforementioned report, we will evaluate conducting a new, updated, comprehensive study, tailored to the requirements of the region and its energy vision, potentially financed by Member States on a voluntary basis. We therefore request the support and engagement of the European Commission to potentially carry out the new study, which is expected to build on the findings of the existing reports. This study will provide a robust foundation for informed decision-making and concrete action towards achieving our shared vision for a sustainable and secure energy future in the Mediterranean region.
- Invite the European Commission to ensure an effective communication and close association between the MED9 Energy initiative and the Commission.
- Agree on a recurring annual meeting for the Energy Steering Committee, which will be dedicated for planning the way forward regarding the activities of MED9.

THE CYPRUS STATEMENT

ON

TRANSFORMING THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION INTO A GREEN ENERGY CORRIDOR

Signed in Larnaka, Cyprus on the 23rd of September 2024

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Croatia

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