

## Ministerial roundtable on Economic Recovery through Investments in Clean Energy

*A special focus on Energy Efficiency and Renewables*

24 April 2020

### SUMMARY NOTE



On 24 April 2020, we participated in a roundtable to discuss how economic recovery plans can contribute to ensuring, and even accelerating, the clean energy transitions.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented global health emergency. Governments are rightly focusing their immediate efforts on protecting the safety and well-being of citizens while putting in place financial and economic firewalls to prevent an even larger crisis.

But we should not lose sight of the world's unavoidable challenge: the need to advance clean energy transitions and to reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions. We will see that emissions will come down in 2020 but not for the right reasons. We have to stay committed and be working together to ensure a secure and sustainable energy future for all.

The roundtable co-hosted by the International Energy Agency and the Government of Denmark, was a kind reminder about the importance of global energy dialogue and collaboration, and enabled us to share our thoughts on what the best approaches are for moving forward, of which some are highlighted below.

“There is no contradiction between economic recovery and addressing the climate crisis. We must create an economic recovery that boosts clean energy transitions on a global scale to save the climate for generations to come. I hope this meeting will create a global alliance for green recovery across the globe and that this will be the first step for ambitious action from governments, organisations and industries. Let’s join forces in promoting green recovery on a global scale” – *H.E. Mr. Dan Jørgensen, Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities*

“By making clean energy an integral part of stimulus plans to revitalise economies after the Covid-19 crisis, governments can deliver jobs and growth while also ensuring that their energy systems become more resilient and less polluting” – *Dr. Fatih Birol, Executive Director, International Energy Agency*

“The COVID-19 pandemic is the biggest test the world has faced since the Second World War. We must work together to recover better. We cannot solve the response and recovery challenges with insular approaches that focus on divisions and borders between cities or states. This is why I was very pleased to join the Ministerial Roundtable on economic recovery packages with a focus on energy co-hosted by Denmark and the International Energy Agency today: to forge a united response and recovery that places sustainable energy and climate action at its heart. To move from grey to green, from coal to clean, from darkness to electricity – in short: to take this moment to invest in a recovery that will allow us to re-enter with healthier societies and economies that are truly sustainable and inclusive. Climate action must be an integral part of economic recovery packages. Enhanced, quality NDCs and long-term decarbonization strategies are critical for all “recover better” strategies. While COP26 has been postponed, climate action has not been postponed” – *Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations*

”When we come out of the lockdown we have to be sure we don’t proceed to a harmful lock-in of polluting technologies with a ‘business as usual’ recovery plan. Let’s invest in the industries that will sustain our health and wellbeing and our planet for generations to come, not those that do us harm. It would be a dereliction of duty to waste all our valuable money and resources in propping up obsolete technologies and businesses, only to phase them out later and spend more for the transition. Building our recovery on the basis of the European Green Deal is not a luxury but a necessity that makes economic and environmental sense. It will ensure that our economies step forward into the future with resilience, not weakly back into the past. As soon as we exit the corona crisis it’s time to drive forward the transition towards a cleaner, fairer and healthier future, and get Europe back to work as well.” - *H.E. Mr. Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President, European Commission*

”Economic recovery requires swift action. Climate recovery requires continuous action.” – *H.E. Ms. Simonetta Sommaruga, President of Switzerland*

”I want Canadian workers, companies and communities economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to know that your government is working hard to help. Working with our international partners is an important part of that work, and we have made good progress today.” - *Hon. Mr. Seamus O’Regan, Minister of Natural Resources, Canada.*

”Rapid investment in the green energy transition is good for our short-term recovery and long-term growth, creating more sustainable and resilient societies. The European Green Deal will be at the heart of EU’s recovery plan and I encourage all governments to design stimulus packages that look forward, not back. Investing in energy efficiency, renewables, clean hydrogen and green infrastructure will pay off economically, environmentally and socially.”  
– *H.E. Ms. Kadri Simson Commissioner for Energy, European Commission*

“What this situation is reminding us, once more, is that the need for a transition towards a sustainable and resilient energy system is more important than ever. This is why we must keep working on the diversification of our energy mix, with a growing integration of clean and renewable energies which will benefit our economies, and our planet.” - *H.E. Ms. Elisabeth Borne, Minister for an Ecological and Inclusive Transition, France*

”Indonesia is resolutely responding to the COVID-19 crisis, but we must not lose sight of our energy priorities. Indeed, this important meeting convened by the IEA demonstrates that our priorities in tackling the crisis and promoting our energy priorities can go hand in hand. Indonesia believes energy is the key to economic development, and its management should serve as the backbone for economy’s stability towards recovery. It is for this reason that Indonesia is currently strengthening policy to support renewables investment and to enhance energy efficiency, working closely with the IEA.” - *H.E. Mr. Arifin Tasrif, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Indonesia*

”Our commitment is to provide affordable clean energy to every citizen, and with scalable and innovative projects on energy efficiency and renewable energy, India will be leading the economic revitalization in the post COVID-19 world.” – *H.E. Mr. Raj Kumar Singh, Minister of Power, India*

”Many countries across the world committed to the greenhouse gas reduction goals set in the Paris Agreement. Therefore, with the expertise of organisations such as the IEA, countries should respond by integrating green and economic recovery policies, making the most of technological opportunities and creating jobs.” - *H.E. Mr. Eric Wiebes, Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, The Netherlands*

”Framing energy efficiency in wider economic and social narratives is more important than ever as economies worldwide invest in COVID-19 recovery measures. Priorities such as health and well-being, energy access, the cost of living, business viability and community resilience must be central to economic stimulus packages.” – *Hon. Ms. Megan Woods, Minister of Energy and Resources, New Zealand*

”We are currently facing an extraordinary crisis. No economy and no sector will go unaffected. Let us join forces to turn this challenge into an opportunity to build a secure, clean and sustainable energy sector in close co-operation internationally.” – *H.E. Mr. Anders Ygeman, Minister of Energy and Digital Development, Sweden*

”Today’s ministerial roundtable was a welcome opportunity to discuss how clean energy and energy efficiency can play a strong role in supporting the world's economic recovery from Covid 19. Clean energy and energy efficiency present opportunities to create jobs, as well as accelerate progress towards our climate objectives ahead of COP26.” - *Rt Hon Mr. Kwasi Kwarteng MP, Minister of State, United Kingdom*

”Developing smart sector integration, such as synthetic fuels, ensures security of energy supply and speeds up clean energy investments.” – *Mr. Kimmo Tiilikainen, State Secretary, Finland*

”The COVID-19 pandemic puts countries globally before vast challenges and Germany is no exception. Once the COVID-19 pandemic is contained and business activity can resume we will devise an economic stimulus package. For this task Germany can build on its successful experience how clean-energy technologies drive growth and innovation.” – *Mr. Andreas Feicht, State Secretary for Energy, Germany*

”We appreciate the IEA resolute guidance in the clean energy transition and we are convinced that a coherent recovery strategy should build on the opportunity to re-design the European energy system - coupling all the advantages offered by renewables and new technologies - as a stimulus in favour of jobs and occupation, while at the same time fostering international cooperation in order to address the problem of energy poverty.” – *Ms. Alessandra Todde, State Secretary for Economic Development, Italy*

”Australia is one of a handful of parties projected to beat our second Kyoto Protocol commitment after comprehensively beating our first Kyoto commitment. On a per capita basis, Australia is installing renewable energy at ten times the global average. Australia’s current priorities are focused on the health of our people, delivering essential services and the immediate economic challenges from COVID-19. Any energy market stimulus measures should be appropriately targeted to best support the economy, community and reliability of the grid. Given the economic hardship many are facing right now, stimulus measures should not impose burdensome requirements, regulations, or taxes”. – *H.E. Mr. Alexander Robson, Ambassador to the OECD, Australia*

”Now is the time for bold choices. Times of uncertainty require decisions for a better future. We have to align immediate stimulus with the long-term perspective of a more resilient, healthy, prosperous, decarbonised and just world. IRENA’s new Global Renewables Outlook may inspire this vision and coherent actions.” – *Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director-General, IRENA*

”The world after the first wave of COVID-19 must be more inclusive, resilient and sustainable. A reconstruction strategy based on international solidarity, reducing inequalities and sustainable economies can be the only basis for resilience. Too many countries are being exposed to the external shocks of COVID-19 without universal social protection, robust public health systems, a plan to reach net-zero by 2050 or a sustainable real economy with quality jobs. The recovery and resilience plan must be based on global co-ordination, debt relief, lending support conditional of SDGs, a global social protection fund for health income and food guarantees - with social dialogue in the development and implementation stages of the plan.” – *Ms. Sharan Burrow, General-Secretary International Trade Union Confederation*

”The unprecedented crisis put across by the COVID-19 outbreak has clearly highlighted the dependence of societies on affordable and reliable power. By going digital and embracing new age technologies like AI/ML, we should strengthen our grids and make them more robust and cleaner.” – *Mr. Gurdeep Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, NTPC*

”As we’re beginning to restart our economies post-COVID-19, let’s make sure we don’t rebuild what we had but instead improve and future-proof by putting green growth at the very heart of our efforts. By creating a green reboot of our societies we are investing in our climate, our people and our planet, (re-) creating sustainable jobs and growth. What we need to get there are more ambitious and well-defined goals and targeted investments to accompany them.” – *Mr. Kim Fausing, CEO, Danfoss*

”We should learn from this crisis. Digital and resilience are key to build a sustainable, more efficient world. Strong IEA efforts to promote these key pillars for the recovery plans” – *Mr. Jean-Pascal Tricoire, CEO, Schneider Electric*