

Press Release

Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue 2023

28 – 29 March 2023 | Federal Foreign Office

How renewables can close the gap to 1.5 degrees

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock opens the 9th Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue (BETD) today. The second day of the conference will be opened by Robert Habeck, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. Under the motto “Energiewende – Securing a Green Future”, ministers and high-ranking delegations from over 60 countries will engage in discussions with representatives from business, science and civil society. On the agenda are strategies for the intelligent transformation of energy systems around the world and paths toward climate neutrality. In addition, numerous bilateral agreements will be adopted, aimed at intensifying existing climate and energy partnerships between Germany and various partner countries, including Chile, South Africa and Ukraine.

What is the starting position going into this year’s BETD? The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has shown us in Europe the very real security risks involved in dependence on individual suppliers of fossil fuels. At the same time, millions of people all over the world are feeling the catastrophic impacts of global warming. Already now, three times as many people are displaced by the climate crisis than by wars. Climate change is a threat to security as well. The current IPCC Report confirms that the answer to both risks is a fast-tracked, global energy transition. The reaction to Russia’s war has proven how quickly the energy supply systems can be transformed if there is the will and the need to do so.

How can we mount a concerted and global effort to build a sustainable, secure and largely independent energy supply system? What role can energy efficiency and renewable energies play in creating a politically stable and economically prosperous world? These questions will take center stage at the BETD, but also in the planned policy discussions. Another question on the agenda is which strategic investments are necessary in the renewable energy sector. Because it has become increasingly apparent that the switch to renewables is no longer just about advancing the goals of climate protection, but about achieving greater security and economic development as well.

This realization has become a global driver of the exit from fossil fuels. Even countries that are traditionally considered exporters of fossil fuels are preparing for a future in which local renewable energy is the predominant source of energy. With this comes the challenge of making the necessary adjustments to their economic systems. For these countries, and many others as well, this is a challenge that creates new opportunities to diversify their economy and produce energy cheaper than ever before.

The global energy transition also leads to an increase in energy trade and a closer networking between countries. One example for this is the formation of energy partnerships that Germany has cultivated with countries around the world. Today we welcome many of the stakeholders in this dialogue to the conference in Berlin.

Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock: "The massive shift toward renewables is not only urgently needed in order to tackle the climate crisis, it also presents an enormous economic opportunity for the public and private sectors. The investments made today will decide who will take the lead in the new industrial revolution. Germany supports its partners all over the world in taking advantage of this opportunity. Countries that invest in green hydrogen today, for example, will be the potential winners of tomorrow. The development of solar and wind capacities in regions where electricity has so far been in short supply offers millions of people around the world the chance to escape the trap of poverty. The BETD conference is the global meeting place for those who want to utilize this opportunity or who are already taking the lead. The example of Kenya shows that a complete shift to renewables is possible. The global energy transition has to pick up the pace – both in the interest of the climate and of prosperity."

Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action Dr. Robert Habeck: "Our goal remains clear: Global warming must be kept to 1.5 °C. This is still an achievable target. We have the knowledge, the technology and the tools to make it happen. But there needs to be more action than has so far been the case. The current IPCC Report is both an admonishment and a motivation to do just that. What is crucial now is that we make real progress in pushing the energy transition forward. One of the prerequisites for that is international cooperation. The climate crisis requires more, not less cooperation: towards the climate-neutral transformation of the energy systems and the decarbonization of industry, which is now the next challenge we need to tackle. We need uniform standards for green hydrogen grids, for green steel manufacturing and the climate-friendly production of building materials. We know what has to be done to contain the climate crisis. What's now needed is the political will to get it done without delay."

The President of the German Renewable Energy Federation (BEE), Dr. Simone Peter: "The fossil-fueled crisis of supply and cost, which has been greatly exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, can only be overcome by the complete transformation of our energy supply and achievement of 100 percent renewables. All countries have the potential to tap into local clean energy sources. Utilizing that potential is safer and cheaper for the population at large and for business interests than continuing to import fossil and nuclear fuels. The necessary technologies exist in all sectors and must now be employed across the board. BETD provides a significant international platform to move this process forward at global level."

In keeping with its tradition as a global energy transition forum, this year's BETD conference will also welcome Federal Minister for the Environment Steffi Lemke, Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Svenja Schulze and the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Francesco La Camera. Kenyan

President William Ruto, the first head of state to attend the BETD, will hold the keynote speech on the first day of the conference; the keynote speech on the second day will be held by Dr. Sultan Al Jaber (United Arab Emirates), President of this year's United Nations COP28 climate conference.

The German Government has hosted the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue since 2015. The conference is organized in cooperation between the German Renewable Energy Federation (BEE), the German Solar Association (BSW-Solar), the German Energy Agency (dena) as well as eclareon.

More than 2.000 guests from nearly one hundred countries are expected to attend the two-day BETD conference.

The up-to-date program of the conference as well as the side-events agenda are available at www.energydialogue.berlin. Information on additional press events can be found here: www.energydialogue.berlin/press/ Questions and comments can be submitted using the hashtag #betd23 on Twitter and @greensofa_betd. The conference language is English.

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