The first Rabat Energy Forum took place on 20-21 September 2012 in the Moroccan capital. This Forum, co-organised by the Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment and by the Energy Charter Secretariat, brought together over 220 participants from 30 countries. Representatives of governments, industry, regional and international organisations and academia put forward suggestions aimed at enabling the creation of a competitive integrated regional energy market.

The Forum highlighted the importance of energy issues in the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) region, taking into account the strong growth in energy demand in the countries of this region, the demographic and economic growth of these countries, sustainably high and volatile fossil fuel prices, the need for an urgent response to ensure the direction towards a more sustainable global energy system and more stable and more secure energy markets in the future.

Aware that several cooperation initiatives have been undertaken or considered for the Euro-Mediterranean region, while few of them involved the countries of the MENA region in their entirety, notably the countries of the Middle East;

Aware that strengthening regional and international dialogue and cooperation in this field is likely to be beneficial for the multiple synergies and meet the challenges of sustainable development in the MENA region;

Taking into account the strategic character of reinforcing electricity interconnections and exchange in the MENA region in order to strengthen energy security, contribute to the integration of the regional energy market and to exploit the region’s renewable energy potential;

The participants recognise:

- the need for promoting a set of principles aimed at developing cooperation, which would be beneficial for all concerned countries,
- the need for promoting an energy governance model, which would favour exchange as much with the countries of the European Union as within the North African and Middle Eastern region,

- the development of renewable energy as the determining vector for building cooperation within the region in question,

- the opportunity for developing an integrated regional energy market in this region as a means of promoting a regional energy network, which would favour structured industrial integration, offer new employment possibilities, while benefiting from the opportunities of synergies and economy of scale,

- the Energy Charter as capable to contribute and strengthen energy cooperation in the MENA region,

- that it is advisable to promote the principles and objectives of the Energy Charter within the MENA region.

**The Forum recommends:**

- to accelerate the pace of energy resources diversification initiated by the countries in the region during this past several years,

- to develop further or to establish institutional, legislative and governing frameworks, which would favour the creation of an integrated and competitive regional energy market through the creation of an environment which would encourage energy investments and deployment of innovative and flexible financing mechanisms and instruments, which would increase the participation of the private sector, including through public-private partnerships, which promote research, development, innovation and strengthening of professional skills,

- to promote the transfer of clean technologies and know-how towards and within the countries of the MENA region and the strengthening of networks for exchanging experience and knowledge at the level of local, regional and national authorities, as well as technical and professional organisations,

- to provide special focus on the promotion of energy efficiency, notably in transport, buildings and the industry,

- to pay special attention to possible distortions, which can result from policies of subsidising energy prices, for industrial consumers as for households; such distortions hinder the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Forum participants invite the Energy Charter Secretariat, in cooperation with the League of Arab States and the government of the Kingdom of Morocco, to conduct a study on the necessary conditions for the creation of an integrated competitive regional energy market within the MENA region (member countries of the League of Arab States).

The participants agreed on the importance of holding the Rabat Energy Forum regularly in order to maintain the dialogue between the countries of the MENA region and to ensure the monitoring of the above recommendations.

The participants express their gratitude to the government of the Kingdom of Morocco for the warm welcome, good organisation and the smooth running of the Forum.

The participants also express their appreciation to the Energy Charter Secretariat for its essential contribution to the success of this important event.