

## PRESS RELEASE

### Officials from the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council discuss policies and technologies for economic diversification in the context of climate change

Experts and officials from the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are discussing economic diversification in the context of climate change during the two-day EU GCC workshop that started yesterday in Brussels. The workshop is organised by the European Commission in partnership with the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat General (GCC SG) and is facilitated by the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network, a project funded by the EU. The event is part of series of EU GCC cooperation initiatives organized in the field of clean energy and climate change.

The EU is a front-runner in the transition to clean energy sources and in leading the climate change agenda globally, whereas, in the GCC, countries have set out concrete targets for their energy transition and for diversifying their economies to reduce strong focus and reliance on the hydrocarbon sectors. The objective of the workshop is to share respective policies, technological solutions and research experiences in these fields.

“In Europe we are in the process of giving new impetus to fighting climate change and have set out a vision for a clean energy transition that should lead us to climate neutrality by 2050. As we move irreversibly to low carbon, we also expect others to uphold their commitments under the Paris Agreement. This transition to low carbon economy offers clear opportunities! Today’s workshop is therefore an opportunity to start identifying where we can work together, under this common agenda.” said Ms Yvon Slingenbergh, Director of DG CLIMA.

“Today, relations between the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States are stronger than ever.” noted Ms Nona Deprez Head of Unit -Partnership Instrument of the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, during her welcome address. “This year marked important milestones for EU GCC cooperation, among which the inauguration of the new EU delegation in Kuwait in July, the 3<sup>rd</sup> one in the Gulf after the ones in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi. Moreover, based on continued interest from stakeholders both within the EU as well as GCC, FPI had the pleasure to launch the third phase of the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network project earlier this year.” added Ms Deprez.

During his opening, Dr Hilal Almkhaini, Director of Energy at the GCC Secretariat General noted: “The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries attach increasing importance and interest to achieving the highest level of coordination, cooperation and dialogue between the European Union and the GCC countries to achieve the desired outcomes in the interest of both sides. Since its establishment, the GCC has believed in the need to preserve the environment and has made clean energy and related advanced technologies a top priority. The GCC has taken the initiative to strengthen cooperation ties with its partner countries, including the European Union. It has also adopted laws and regulations and established institutions to manage these efforts and raise public awareness. The Economic Diversification Workshop in the Context of Climate Change is a clear example of the close cooperation and continuous coordination between the two sides to encourage experience and information exchange and create a conducive environment to promote developments in the energy sector.”

The GCC delegation consists of representatives from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and the GCC Secretariat General while at the EU level, participants include officers from DG CLIMA, Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, European External Action Service, DG RTD and DG ENER as well as the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network. The workshop is enhanced with valued contribution from representatives of IRENA, the Global CCS Institute and the Global Covenant of Mayors.

“It is gratifying to note that the agenda of the workshop covers a wide range of very interesting items relating to economic diversification in the context of climate change as well as those directly related to aspects of strategies, policies and best practices including a site visit.” said Dr Mustapha Taoumi, Energy Technology Expert of the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network. “The EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network stands ready to cooperate with the GCC and the EU stakeholders to move forward the clean energy and climate change agendas through our workplan and activities”, Dr Mustapha added.

During the two days, the delegates have the opportunity to interact and discuss on domestic policies and INDC implementation; on long- term Strategies and national Monitoring-Reporting-Verification (MRV); on Engineering and Technology Advancement including Carbon Capture Storage and Utilisation; on Research, innovation as well as on the Role of Local Authorities –focusing on the Global Covenant of Mayors. Moreover the delegates will visit the CCS plant of LEILAC (Low Emissions Intensity Lime And Cement), Horizon 2020 project at HeidelbergCement in Lixhe.

**ENDS**

**Photos**



Yvon Slingenberg, Director of DG CLIMA



Dr Hilal Almukhaini, Director of Energy at the GCC Secretariat General



Nona Depez, Head of Partnership Instrument, Service for Foreign Policy Instruments,



Family photo

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