



A FRUITFUL DISCUSSION: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 6TH ASIAN MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

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On 9th November, 2015 the Ministry of Energy and Industry of Qatar, in association with the International Energy Forum (IEF) and co-hosted by Thailand, successfully concluded the 6th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable (AMER6) in Doha. This Roundtable was hosted by Qatar under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar. This prestigious gathering was inaugurated by His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Prime Minister of the State of Qatar, with the objective of enhancing cooperation in the field of energy between Asian countries.

The Roundtable focused on important energy issues and challenges which were discussed in the form of plenary sessions under the following themes: “Oil markets: a new normal or just another cycle, and what it means for Asia”; “Gas and coal in Asia’s energy mix: interactions and uncertainties” and “Delivering on the clean energy agenda: prospects and the role for policy”.

The event was attended by Energy Ministers and high-level delegations from twenty Asian countries, as well as the chief representatives of six international organisations. This Roundtable provided a good opportunity to review and reflect on the consequences and prospects of the energy market in the aftermath of the last year and a half of extreme challenges and turbulence in the energy sector.

The participants of the Roundtable reached agreement on many key issues, such as:

- The importance of continuous international dialogue between consumers and producers of energy as the only

way for all nations to reach their development goals.

- The current market instability will not last forever, and all parties have to take the required actions to sustain investments in the energy sector to meet future energy demand and strike a market balance.
- Asia remains a vital engine of growth for the world’s economy, and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The demographic changes will have increasing influence on future energy demand.
- All available resources are needed to meet future growth in energy demand. It is becoming increasingly evident that world economic stability is dependent on stable and transparent Asian energy policies.
- It was acknowledged that every nation has the right to development and growth, in line with their national visions, to meet the aspirations of their peoples and contribute to the betterment of their communities.
- It was reaffirmed that energy security is an essential component of any economic development dialogue. Therefore the role of international organisations and agencies needs to be made more active in order to achieve this.
- There was agreement emphasising the importance of reducing mankind’s carbon footprint, and the important role played by natural gas in the transition to a decarbonised world. In this context the use of natural gas as a clean and affordable source of energy was emphasised. Natural gas will play a critical role in the climate change negotiations at COP21 in Paris.
- It was highlighted that coal continues to be less expensive than gas, even in the current low oil price environment, making it difficult to reduce the rate of emissions produced by coal-fired electricity generation.

Delegates endorsed the proposal of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia delivered by HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al-Saud, to establish an Asian Energy Efficiency Knowledge Sharing Framework, under the auspices of the IEF.

At the end of the Roundtable, participants agreed that active dialogue is of paramount importance in order for our nations to achieve their development goals. Participants from various nations also presented their own energy scenarios and viewpoints, which were well appreciated by those present.

On behalf of the Government of the State of Qatar, I would like to thank all those involved in the event for their positive contributions, which made possible the realisation of the goals of this meeting, and the IEF Secretariat for all their efforts. ■



Dr Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada addresses AMER6