Press Release

South Africa's energy transition is hampered by infrastructural and financial constraints, energy experts outlined at RES4Africa's "South Africa's Conference"

Sponsored by Nedbank, the two-days event provided the opportunity for an in-depth discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of the country's energy sector and decarbonisation path

Rome, 15th of June 2022 – On the 14th and 15th, RES4Africa Foundation hosted the event "South Africa Conference", sponsored by **Nedbank**. High-level personalities of the South African and international energy sector took part to the conference, among which the Executive Director at Presidential Climate Commission **Dr. Crispian Olver**, General Manager of Buisness Strategy Enablement at Eskom Distribution **Gabriel Kgabo**, and Director General, Climate Action at European Commission **DG Mauro Petriccione**. The panelists analysed the evolution of the national energy market, focussing on key themes such as the enablers of the energy transition, the regulatory developments and the infrastructural issues.

South Africa is at a crucial point of its **energy transition**: important regulatory advancements are being introduced and proposed (e.g. licensing cap increase to 100MW), bid window announcements are back on track, and the transmission segment is expected to be unbundled. Despite these important milestones, **some criticalities persist**: grid capacity constraints, regulatory issues, and Eskom's financial instability.

"We believe there is an imperative for the private and public sector to embrace the opportunity to transform and liberalise the energy model, underpinned by the unique advantages of renewable energy" says ***Amith Singh****, Head of Energy Finance at Nedbank Corporate and Investment Bank. "As a financial institution with purpose, we undertsand that we have a role to play in transforming the energy model and partnering with both private and public sector players to ensure we build energy*

infrastructure that will enable and support the country's economic development and growth," added Singh.

RES4Africa's event represented a dynamic space for structured discussion and reflection with international energy experts. The first day focussed on new supply scenarios, disruptive drivers and the enablers of decarbonisation, while the second one provided a site for a discussion on **how grids can maximise the potential of REs**. The gathering was inaugurated by presenting *Grids4Africa*, RES4Africa's programme dedicated to distribution and transmission grids, which laid the foundations for a further analysis of critical aspects of the South African grid sector: necessary regulatory modernisations, related business models, how to transform existing grids in sustainable infrastructures, and relevant case studies.

"This conference was crucial for RES4Africa's activities in South Africa" commented **Roberto Vigotti**, RES4Africa Secretary General. *"The country is experiencing fast and deep changes in its energy landscape, taking giant steps towards sustainability, but carrying along major challenges to be won. This and alike events are valuable occasions to set priorities, create greater coordination among partners and take stock of the present and future features of Africa's energy transition".*

Participants and moderators:

- First day: **Silvia Marrara** (Deputy Head of Mission at Italian Embassy to South Africa), **Dr Crispian Olver** (Executive Director at Presidential Climate Commission), **Roberto Vigotti** (RES4Africa Secretary General), **Niveshen Govender** (CEO at SAWEA), **Rethabile Melamu** (CEO at SAPVIA), **Amith Singh** (Head Energy Finance at Nedbank CIB), **Mauro Petriccione** (Director General, Climate Action at European Commission), **Christo Fourie** (Head Energy Sector at Industrial Development Corporation at IDC), **Louise Paulsen** (Managing Director RSA at VESTAS), **Wendy Poulton** (Secretary General at South Africa Nation Energy Association) **Amel Chadli** (Vice President Digital Energy & EM Software for Middle East & Africa at Schneider Electric), **Ronald Marais** (Strategic Grid Planning Manage at ESKOM), **Vally Padayachee** (Strategic Advisor at the Association of Municipal Electricity), **James Mackay** (Associate Director Energy Strategy and Infrastructure at PwC South Africa),

Wezi Gondwe (Head of Business Development at Africa GreenCo), Ashen Jugoo (Partner Project & Finance at Fasken), Kumaresan Cunden (Senior Consultant Renewables & Sustainability at RINA Consulting), Sumaya Nassiep (Senior Manager at Eskom Just Energy Transition Office), Kittessa Roro (Head of Energy Center at CSIR), Reitumetse Molotsoane (Head of Environment at NBI), Manuele Battisti (Country Manager Southern Africa at Enel Green Power), Janek Winand (Managing Director at Siemens Gamesa). Moderators were: Nontokozo Nkosi (SAWEA Co-Opted Board Member and Head of Commercial Office at Enel Green Power South Africa) Amith Singh (Head Energy Finance at Nedbank), Rethabile Melamu (CEO at SAPVIA), Mpho Mookapele (CEO at EWSETA), and the RES4Africa team.

- Second day: Prof. Carlos Batlle (Comillas, MIT, FSR), *Gabriel Kgabo (* General Manager, Buisness Strategy Enablement, Eskom Distribution), Marcelo Castillo Agurto (Head of Business Development at Enel Global Infrastructure & Networks), Taru Madangombe (Power and Grid Leader for Middle East & Africa at Schneider Electric), Paul Vermeulen (Chief Engineer Renewable Energy at City Power Johannesburg), Carlos Oros (BD and Sales Manager – Africa & APAC, Gridspertise), Fabio Riva (Energy Engineer Consultant at CESI), Paolo Perani (Sustainability Manager ELDS Division at ABB). The moderator was Niveshen Govender (CEO at SAWEA).

RES4Africa Foundation (Renewable Energy Solutions for Africa) envisions the sustainable transformation of Africa's electricity systems to ensure reliable and affordable electricity access for all, enabling the continent to achieve its full, resilient, inclusive and sustainable development. The Foundation's mission is to create favourable conditions for scaling up investments in clean energy technologies to accelerate the continent's just energy transition and transformation. See more: www.res4africa.org

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