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Message from the UfM Gas Platform Secretariat

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Gas Platform Conference and the workshop gathering Mediterranean gas TSOs organized respectively on 16 and 17 December 2019 in Brussels, Belgium, by the Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Energie (OME) concluded the first phase of the Platform activities.

The conference reviewed all the achievements of the platform over the last three years and the planned activities for the 2020-2022 period. While the workshop examined how Mediterranean Gas Infrastructure Operators (GIOs) could beneficially cooperate.

Participation of delegates from both institutions and the industry from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea contributed to the success of these two events and underlined the growing role of the platform as a "gathering place of reference" to strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean gas sector.

A lot has been achieved so far but now new challenges are in front of us. All key activities and events that will deliver the objectives of the next UfM Gas Platform Work Programme to be covered in the period 2020-2022 will be presented and discussed in Barcelona on 29-30 January 2020 at the annual meeting of the three UfM Energy Platforms.

Meeting of the UfM Gas Platform Working Group on gas hubs

On 28 October 2019, members of the UfM Gas Platform working group on gas hubs met in Paris, at OME premises. On this occasion, the principal authors of a draft report assessing the conditions for creating and developing gas hubs in the Med. region presented the main findings to participants, with a view to finalizing the report.

The participants debated with the authors on some elements to be revised and/or clarified in the report. A revised report, including all comments made, was made available to WG members for final review and wider dissemination.



The UfM Gas Platform is a concrete outcome of the will of the UfM members and major stakeholders to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and South and East Mediterranean countries.

More information available at: ufmgasplatform.org



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Mediterranean Energy Scenarios meeting

On 9-10 December 2019, the OME organized, at the Maison de l'Amérique Latine in Paris and in cooperation with the European Commission, a brainstorming meeting on the theme: "Building a shared energy vision for the future: Mediterranean energy scenarios meeting".

The meeting, as part of OME's activities as the secretariat of the UfM Gas Platform, aimed at defining the bases of a common UfM-OME energy scenario, a "ProMed scenario", which could offer a shared and contrasted vision of the possible energy future in the Mediterranean region,

Including two sessions, first experts provided insight on the current geopolitical, climate and energy situation in the region. Then, in the second session, experts from South Mediterranean countries provided insight on their respective country as well as energy existing and foreseen scenarios and their possible evolution.

Last, participants confronted their expertise from various fields and topics to provide input on current and future energy trends and policies to define and build a most representative and ambitious energy common scenario. They agreed to reconvene for another meeting early 2020.



UfM Gas Platform Conference in Brussels

On 16 December 2019, with the support of the European Commission, the OME, as Secretariat of the platform, organized a UfM Gas Platform Conference entitled "Summing up of the activities in the 2017-2019 period and plans for the next phase" at the Cercle de Lorraine in Brussels, Belgium.

Opening the conference, Anne-Charlotte Bournoville, Head of Unit at the DG for Energy of the European Commission, acknowledged the important steps that have been made by the UfM Gas Platform since its launch in June 2015 which confirm the will by Euro-Mediterranean gas stakeholders to work together and to step up cooperation in the energy sector. Next, Houda Ben Jannet Allal, UfM Gas Platform Secretariat, Director General of the OME, gave an overview of the activities carried out over the past three years within the framework of the approved platform work programme.

During this first phase, activities of the UfM Gas platform were of four kinds: development of studies and ad hoc background documents; capacity-building through specific training sessions on gas-related matters; awareness raising and public outreach through different communication tools; and management of the platform and support activities. Between 2017 and 2019, the UfM Gas Platform Secretariat launched dedicated working groups (WGs) for all studies of the approved work programme, the UfM Gas Platform website as well as quarterly newsletters.

The conference concluded looking at next steps. A roundtable discussed emerging trends and challenges in the gas industry and how they could be addressed during the next phase of the activities



UfM Gas Platform website
online at
<https://www.ufmgasplatform.org>
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of the UfM Gas Platform. All future work of the gas platform will feed the new UfM Energy Ministerial Declaration planned in June 2021.

Meeting of the UfM Gas Platform on cooperation among TSOs in the Med. region

On 17 December 2019, in Brussels, back-to-back with the UfM Gas Platform Conference, the OME organised a workshop gathering almost all the Gas Infrastructure Operators (GIOs) in the South and East Mediterranean region.

Concluding the first phase of the UfM Gas Platform initiative, the meeting was part of the activities of the working group on cooperation among TSOs in the Med. region (Task 2.5 in the Work Program). It examined how GIOs could all beneficially cooperate and participants discussed (under the Chatham House Rule) the need and the necessity for increasing cooperation on different issues. They proposed the creation of a GIOs forum within the umbrella of the UfM Gas Platform, which all participants considered as the most appropriate avenue for facilitating such a cooperation among the GIOs in the Mediterranean region.



Future events

On 29-30 January 2020, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) will organize the Annual Meeting of the three UfM Energy Platforms in Barcelona to discuss the status of activities of the three platforms. This annual meeting will be key since it will give the opportunity to express the priorities both for actions and strategies to be adopted at the third UfM Ministerial Meeting on Energy.

In the opening session, OME General Director, Houda Ben Jannet Allal, will present the status and next steps of the OME publication *Mediterranean Energy Perspectives 2020* that will include a common UfM-OME energy scenario (see also above). Later on, she will update participants on the state of play of the UfM Gas Platform and present the planned topics and activities to be covered during the 2020-2022 period.

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