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Citizens United for Renewable Energy and Sustainability

The NGO Network at the Bonn International Conference for Renewable Energies.

Governments Agree the Future is Renewable: NGO's Call for Action on Rhetoric

Vision->Objective->Plan->Implementation-> Reality

Bonn: 4th June 2004: New renewable energy and energy efficiency were recognised by the International Conference on Renewable Energies as holding the key to providing safe and affordable energy services to those that have none, supplying future global energy needs, and decreasing the threat of disaster from climate change.

Reduction of inequality and universal access to adequate energy services, preventing the dangers of climate change, reversing environmental degradation, creation of jobs and sustainable livelihoods are our overriding objectives. New renewables, often decentralised and small scale, coupled with an end to policies that promote wasteful energy consumption, are essential to achieve these objectives.

At the conference Governments, industries and Non-Government Organisations, announced important commitments to the increased use of new renewable energy. Over 180 submissions were made as part of an International Programme of Action. While many are existing projects, vague programmes, or proposals seeking funding, some are new initiatives that will make improvements to the environment and lives of people in the South and North. The most significant include a programme for a dramatic increase in renewable energy use in China; the doubling of new renewable energy use in the Philippines; providing greater sustainable energy services in Africa; and increased use of offshore wind power in Europe. These initiatives must be evaluated according to their social and environmental impacts and their compatibility with sustainable development.

'The outcome of this conference will not be judged on its paper mandates, but on how it increases the use of new renewables. New plans and actions have been pledged to make this happen and NGOs will work with willing partners to monitor, strengthen and accelerate them'.

NGOs are calling upon Governments to act on their rhetoric and remove the preferential treatment given to conventional energies such as the failure to account for their full environment and social impacts. NGOs further demand that International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Regional Development Banks fulfil the requirements of the Political Declaration to 'significantly expand their investments in renewables and energy efficiency' as the proposals presented at the Conference by the World Bank are totally inadequate.

'Some Governments are reluctant to change their energy practises and policies, but they are fast losing public support and unless they reform they will be phased-out just like the fossil and nuclear fuels they support and use'.

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