

1st Meeting of MEDREG Presidents

On 10 December, 41 participants, of which 12 Presidents and Commissioners of Mediterranean Energy Regulatory Authorities gathered in Rome to exchange approaches and good practices with regards to renewable energy development and the growing role of gas, which imply important challenges and require the adaptation of the energy regulation from both a policy and regulatory perspective.

Organized at the initiative of Mr. Stefano Besseghini, MEDREG Vice President and President of the Italian Energy Regulator ARERA, this meeting is the first of its kind and is meant to foster cooperation at the highest level of national regulatory authorities, leading to the development of a shared vision for the changing role of Regulators in the Mediterranean energy market.

Opening the event, **MEDREG President Ms. Gülefsan Demirbas** highlighted that:

“Today we witness an increased importance of MEDREG for its member regulators. The more our challenges grow, the more it is important to be able to rely on a network of fellow National Regulatory Authorities which share the Mediterranean borders and work towards increased interconnection and compatibility of the legislations among countries, with a view to establishing a functioning and competitive Mediterranean energy market which can create ample benefits for all”.

ARERA President Mr. Stefano Besseghini added:

“MEDREG is a very important platform to share experiences and develop a common understanding of the main issues and challenges currently faced by Mediterranean Energy Regulators. Such cooperation should be increasingly translated into joint actions with practical and visible outcomes”.

Participants raised country-specific problems and questions, to which fellow Presidents answered in the framework of three sessions of discussion and interaction that brought together the different stances and challenges of the Mediterranean countries.

Under-Secretary of Italian Ministry of Economic Development Ms. Alessandra Todde said:

“The Mediterranean is our present and represents future opportunities in our region. Energy interconnections and investments will surely reinforce and strengthen our historical relations to favor social and economic growth”.

The Presidents of the Moroccan and Egyptian regulators ANRE and GASREG respectively explained how energy regulation is being affected and shaped by the growing importance of renewable energy electricity production and gas trade in their countries. These sharing of experience was enriched by the perspectives of the industry with active contributions from Mr. Antonio Cammisecra, CEO of the Italian energy company ENEL Green Power, and from Mr. Marco Alvera, CEO of gas utility SNAM.

Looking at what the future lies ahead for MEDREG, the President of the French Energy Regulatory Commission CRE, Mr. Jean-François Carencu, explored new perspectives for the Organization and stressed the pillar role that MEDREG plays in the Euro-Mediterranean energy relations. He further emphasized the importance of the continued support received from the European Union.

This Presidents' meeting followed MEDREG's Brussels Forum held last November, which addressed the challenges and opportunities for reinforced cooperation that gas and renewable energy development imply in the Mediterranean region through a proactive dialogue of energy experts from international institutions, regulators, industry and academia.

In the recent years, MEDREG has produced a series of reports looking at smart grids, RES auctioning systems, natural gas infrastructure and gas market competition as well as LNG and storage infrastructure. It also elaborated good practices on tariff methodologies, transparency, capacity allocation and third party access in the Mediterranean region, in addition to personalized workshops, trainings and other studies for its Southern members aimed at supporting energy regulators in exercising their prerogatives for the establishment of a competitive and functioning energy market.

In the margin of this Presidents' meeting, MEDREG is holding in Rome a joint training with the Association of Mediterranean Electricity Transmission System Operators (Med-TSO), meant to build the knowledge on infrastructure investments and the bilateral dialogue between the staff of regulators and TSOs.

At the end of the meeting **Mr. Petrit Ahmeti**, Chairman of the Energy Regulatory Authority (ERE) and Vice President of MedReg held the closing speech of the meeting:

I have the immense honor to conclude the discussion that we had today. I want also to thank MEDREG and especially President Besseghini of ARERA for their organization and their immense work but I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to you all for participating in this high-level meeting and I do believe we share the same opinion and we are very proud of what we already achieved during the last years and look forward to future challenges in the near future.

Topics discussed during the workshop

“Today we had the opportunity to discuss on several topics anyhow I would like to focus especially on two very important topics that concern each country itself and especially the Mediterranean region since it affects us directly.

The development of RES will increase in the Region, in particular, in the southern shore countries. Therefore the choice of the optimal support scheme is crucial as it directly impact several aspect not only of the energy market but also the end customer's itself. Hence, it is also very relevant and crucial to adapt proper energy regulation to create a suitable environment for RES deployment gaining experience from well development countries in this field is imperative and will help avoid difficulties and negative impacts.

In addition, the Mediterranean region is experiencing a big change in the gas market with the new discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean. This will also require additional efforts from MEDREG to update and enhance the regional regulatory frameworks, thus offering a sustainable environment for the development and extension of the regional gas markets”.

Importance to strengthen the cooperation among MEDREG members and external institutions

“MEDREG has always been seeking to strengthen each of its member’s regulator to develop a compatible, transparent and non-discriminatory regulatory framework locally and moreover in the region, and to reinforce the regional and sub-regional cooperation, to achieve our main objectives and to overcome the challenges discussed today.

In this regard, I believe we do all agree that it is relevant to intensify the cooperation between members at all hierarchical level as well as to push further the cooperation with other relevant international institutions both at regional and international level. In addition, MEDREG have been a stable and reliable information provider for energy stakeholders in the last years, therefore it’s important to reinforce the recognition of MEDREG’s role as a reliable partner and high-level institution in this respect. I do also trust that we will be able to raise the level of our Association in the following years to come”.

Final remarks

“It is with great pleasure to notice that the work done so far by MEDREG has been welcomed by various institutions and is based on voluntary cooperation between members, for a common purpose, to understand and overcome the main issues that regulators have to face. Therefore, intensifying the cooperation among the member and with other institutions in terms of regulatory aspects will facilitate the completion of our objectives.

As a final conclusion, I want to thank again all of you for your efforts and your contribution to this meeting and to the MEDREG activities in general, wishing all the best for our organization in the future and let me wish to all of you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and happy new Year 2020 to you, your family and all your colleagues and friends”.