

**Address by His Excellency  
Engr. Fahmi bin Ali Al Jowder**

**Minister of Works, Minister in charge of the Electricity and Water Authority  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**EU-Mediterranean-Gulf Renewable Energy Conference  
9<sup>th</sup> October 2009 Brussels, Belgium**

## **Honorable dignitaries and delegates**

**It's a great honour and pleasure to be a part of this esteemed International Conference which offers an excellent opportunity to share our experiences and formulate a common vision for the development of renewable energy sources with other international communities.**

**It is very exciting to see the objectives laid down for this conference where the challenges of the green energy will be discussed in view of supporting and enhancing cooperation in the area of renewable energy between the EU, Mediterranean and Gulf countries with a specific focus on the development of green energy market, research and technology and solar energy development.**

**The Kingdom of Bahrain has been actively endeavoring to foster and develop "Green Energy" alternatives that suit the local environment. The States of the GCC are blessed with an abundance of renewable energy and enjoy the highest solar radiation levels. In spite of the fact that the average wind speeds that the region experiences are moderate, this source can also be**

employed to generate viable electrical energy and therefore these countries are well placed to use the Solar and Wind sources of renewable energy. Although there are promising opportunities in these resources, the research and development programs and the transfer of technology for practical applications are still far less than what is available or required.

Bahrain, like other neighboring GCC countries, generates electricity and desalinated water from the power stations and desalination plants which employ fossil fuel as the main source of Energy. More than half a billion Cubic feet of natural gas is consumed per day in the production of the required power and water. With an estimated annual energy growth rate of 10%, which in itself is a very high rate, the requirement of natural gas will double in less than a decade. Confronting climate change and conserving the fossil fuel resources is the greatest challenge presently faced by many countries. There is thus, a compelling need to identify and develop potential alternative sources of energy including renewable energy.

**Dear Excellences & Delegates,**

**Electricity and water Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain took the first initiative to form a committee to conduct a study for the assessment of potential renewable energy sources in the Kingdom with special emphasis on Solar and Wind energies and to explore the possibility for utilization of such alternatives for the production of electricity and water. The committee has completed a survey of the Alternative Energies in the Kingdom as well as selected locations in the GCC states. Upon completion of this primary task of the committee, we intend to increase the thrust in exploring the applications of Alternative Energy Resources by constituting a larger Working Committee to carry forward the recommendations made in the initial study.**

**In line with our National Economic Vision 2030 we have set up an "Alternative Energy Commission" with a task to develop a clear vision to take advantage of new and renewable energies in the production of electricity and water and develop a strategy to reach this vision.**

**The committee has also the task for Identification of sites and places of production of electricity and water from these energies and initiates a construction of a**

**pilot plant for the production of Green electricity utilizing alternative resources for studying and evaluating their effectiveness in terms of larger practical application.**

**Bahrain sees a two fold role of "Alternative Energy" in perspective of both energy efficiency and renewable energy options. These are, the utilization of alternative energy for the domestic market and for establishing a regional green energy market which will become more attractive under the present and emerging cost trends.**

**The solar energy applications technologies are still facing difficulties as a result of the high capital cost, which makes use of traditional energy for the time being the least expensive. However, in view of technological developments in the past few years, the future for employing these resources in the region is promising. Thus, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council which are falling within the solar belt should seriously endeavor to take advantage of employing the solar technologies for the production of electricity & water.**

On the other hand, Wind energy is currently the lowest cost of renewable energy sources and the economic viability of wind has improved significantly in the past few years and in many developed countries wind energy is considered the least expensive option among all renewable energy technologies. Though the survey study for Bahrain showed low to moderate wind speeds throughout the year, it would still be possible to harness this energy for the production of electricity offshore and around the coastal areas with higher wind speeds due to its economical advantages. The Bahrain World Trade centre is the first of its kind in the Kingdom to utilize wind power to support 10 to 15% of building needs for electric power.

Recently, at the request of the Government of Bahrain, the World Bank has launched a study to devise a strategy for developing and using alternative energy in Bahrain as an integrated component of energy supply, and to examine potential economic and business opportunities for Bahrain to supply alternative energy technologies and services for its own use or to other countries in the Region.

The kingdom's vision is to foster green, reliable and resilient energy system that is environmentally friendly. The Government of Bahrain is looking forward to receiving technical support from the international community for the appropriate assessment of Renewable Energy Sources as their implementation based on the newer and energy efficient system in order to respond to the long-term challenges of energy security and climate change in the face of dwindling gas reserves.

In conclusion, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the EU commission for this kind invitation and initiative and to the international communities for sharing their vision and experience on this vital issue.

I thank you and wish you all a successful and harmonious conference.