

FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST SEMINAR — MEDITERRANEAN ENERGY TALKS

Inaugural Webinar – April 16, 2025

*The Energy, Technology and Trade Nexus in the Mediterranean:
Implications for the Region and its Relations with Key Global Players*

Introduction

The first seminar of the *Mediterranean Energy Talks* series, jointly promoted by [OMEC](#) and [WEC Italy](#), was held online on April 16, 2025. The event brought together representatives from international institutions, multilateral organizations, energy operators, sector experts, and stakeholders from Mediterranean countries.

The initiative served as a platform to discuss on the strategic role of energy in the Mediterranean and the opportunities offered by the energy transition as a tool for cooperation, inclusion, and sustainable development.

Opening Remarks

- **Houda Ben Jannet** – Director General, OMEC
- **Marco Margheri** – Chairman, WEC Italy

Key Speakers

- **Ferid Belhaj** – Former Vice President of the World Bank for the MENA Region
- **Paul Nomba** – Former Regional Director of the Infrastructure Department, World Bank, MENA Region
- **Enrico Petrocelli** – Head of International Institutional Relations, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti; Secretary General, D20 Long-Term Investors Club

Key Findings from the Discussions:

1. The Mediterranean as a Strategic Area for the Energy Transition

- The Mediterranean is one of the regions most exposed to the effects of climate change, while also rich in renewable energy potential.
- It is emerging as a strategic space for new energy corridors linking Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.
- Differing demographic dynamics between North and South will influence future energy needs.

- Euro-Mediterranean energy integration can address security, sustainability, and access to energy, while facing challenges such as economic fragmentation, infrastructure gaps, youth unemployment, and climate resilience.

2. Sustainable Finance and Instruments for the Transition

The transition requires innovative financial mechanisms capable of rapidly mobilizing public and private capital in an inclusive and sustainable way. Key elements discussed:

- De-risking tools to attract private capital;
- Multilateral financing and institutional guarantees for cross-border infrastructure;
- Local-value, inclusive public-private partnership models;
- Policies for impact finance, innovation, and socioeconomic inclusion;
- Integration of industrial and financial policies to develop local supply chains and technologies.

Finance for the transition must focus on youth employment, territorial cohesion, and local resource enhancement.

3. Dialogue and Multi-level Cooperation

- Dialogue between both shores of the Mediterranean is crucial for a fair, shared, and sustainable transition.
- Cooperation must involve institutions, businesses, civil society, youth, and women.
- A pragmatic and inclusive space for exchange based on common interests and tangible outcomes is needed.
- *Idealistic rhetoric should be replaced by efforts to build mutual trust*

4. Toward a New Model of Energy Relations between Europe and MENA

- The energy relationship is shifting from a supply-based model to one of strategic partnership.
- New cooperation trajectories should focus on local industrial supply chains, employment, and technology transfer.
- The EU's climate neutrality goal for 2050 requires more renewable input and collaboration with neighboring countries.
- Energy interconnection projects (electricity and hydrogen) are key, but require investment, de-risking, and long-term commitment.

5. Barriers and Levers for Accelerating the Energy Transition in the Region

Main barriers:

- Financial difficulties of utilities;
- Regulatory and authorization delays;
- Low penetration of innovative technologies.

Available levers:

- Multilateral funds;
- Public-private partnerships;
- Digital platforms;
- Mini-lateralism models.

Necessary actions:

- Cross-border infrastructure;
- Innovative financing mechanisms;
- Policies for social inclusion;
- Business models focused on local value.

The employment dimension is crucial: the transition can serve as a lever for the inclusion of younger generations, countering unemployment and migration.

Conclusions: A Fair, Inclusive and Cooperative Transition

The energy transition in the Mediterranean is not only a technical or environmental issue but also a shared geopolitical and socio-economic challenge.

- A strategic vision, appropriate financial tools, multi-level governance, and political will are needed.
- Energy can become a driver of peace, stability, and development if supported by active policies of inclusion, participation, and equity.
- The *Mediterranean Energy Talks* will continue to delve into key issues and strengthen dialogue among the main players in the transition.