



## Welcoming Address

### 6<sup>th</sup> St.Gallen Forum for Management of Renewable Energies

#### “(EM)POWERING the Future – Contours of Tomorrow’s Energy System”

May 21<sup>st</sup> / 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015



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Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the sixth St.Gallen Forum for Management of Renewable Energies. The theme of this year’s Forum, “(EM)POWERING the FUTURE – Contours of Tomorrow’s Energy System”, is intimately related to the current energy transformation we are witnessing globally. Thanks to rapid technological innovation, falling technology costs, appropriate support policies, steep learning curves and clear examples of success around the world, renewables have moved from the margins to the centre of the global energy discourse.

In 2013, under the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) began sketching out the “contours of tomorrow’s energy system” with REmap 2030, our largest energy analysis to date. Taking the 26 countries accounting for 75% of global energy use, we examined the realistic potential of renewable energy shares in the energy mix of each nation by 2030.

We spent a year engaging with experts and gathering data to identify policies and actions required to double the share of renewable energy worldwide by 2030. We found that the global share, which in 2014 stood at 18%, can reach at least 30% and as much as 36% by 2030 with the renewable energy technology options identified in the study.

Today, these technologies are available and affordable. Solar PV module prices have dropped by more than three-quarters since 2009, while global wind turbine prices have declined by around 30% in that time. For off-grid investment, renewables are now the most affordable option globally.

REmap 2030 also found that by 2030, the net savings of a doubling in the renewable energy share, accounting for substitution of conventional energy and health and environmental benefits including a reduction in annual CO<sub>2</sub>

emissions of 8.6 gigatonnes, would amount to at least USD 123 billion and up to a huge USD 738 billion.

In addition to the business case for accelerated renewables deployment, IRENA has also quantified an array of positive social and economic benefits. For example, renewables provide huge potential for job creation – we project that the renewable energy sector will employ at least 16.7 million people in 2030.

It has never been cheaper to reap these benefits, nor has the commitment to doing so every been so strong from governments, civil society and the private sector. Just recently German utility E.ON announced a fundamental change to its structure to equip itself for the energy transition. Now market structure and business models are also changing.

These considerations leave us in no doubt that we are now in the midst of a golden age of opportunity for renewable energy. I trust that this knowledge will frame your discussions at this conference and that some compelling conclusions will be drawn that will allow you to better seize this opportunity. And this is key. Your contribution to the renewable energy transition today will help to define the contours of the energy system of tomorrow.



**Adnan Z. Amin**  
Director-General  
IRENA