



20 YEARS OF SUCCESS FOR THE IEF

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It is more than 20 years since the first tentative steps were taken towards the creation of the International Energy Forum (IEF). Today, the membership of the IEF covers all six continents and accounts for around 90 percent of global supply and demand for oil and gas. The Forum is unique in that it comprises not only consuming and producing countries of the IEA and OPEC, but also transit states and major players outside of their memberships, including Argentina, China, India, Mexico, Oman, South Africa and – this year’s host – Russia.

The relationship between consumers and producers has come a long way since that first producer/consumer meeting in Paris, July 1991, as mistrust and suspicion have gradually been replaced by transparency and dialogue. The IEF has grown in strength and scope over the past 20 years, and has played an essential role in the face of numerous energy, economic and geopolitical challenges.

The theme of this 2014 event is “The New Geography of Energy and the Future of Global Energy Security.” Certainly, the geography of energy is ever-changing – with new sources of energy coming on stream, technological innovation increasing and global energy markets becoming ever more complex.

For its part, the IEF is becoming a key source of information and insights for governments around the world, providing an open forum for governments, officials, energy industry executives and other experts to engage in a dialogue.

UNIQUE ROLE: The IEF is currently the only organisation with such global representation addressing oil and gas issues. Other organisations discuss the same issues, but only the IEF is bringing together members from diverse countries. As such, it is more likely to deliver the type of intelligence and engagement that add value for member countries.

The IEF’s neutrality is certainly a valuable currency. IEF events are never interpreted as promoting the agenda of a particular country, group of countries or interests. This neutrality can be leveraged to obtain much better understanding of current energy issues.

As the energy market’s focus shifts to the Pacific Basin, the IEF is also uniquely positioned to facilitate an energy dialogue among the countries of the region as well as an inter-regional dialogue. Neither the IEA nor OPEC has the membership – nor the mandate – to accomplish this in a neutral way. The IEF’s position should advance the objective of obtaining a better understanding of the region’s energy dynamics and, in turn, help promote energy security.

The IEF has already started to deliver new value by generating useful insights from roundtables, seminars, workshops, symposia and ministerial meetings, which help to map the international energy conversation and identify key issues affecting oil and gas market developments. The IEF is an ideal ground for testing new ideas and ex-

ploring the possible impacts of new energy developments in a fast, cost-effective way, with feedback from a broad stakeholder base.

The development of the Joint Oil Data Initiative has been a particularly important step. JODI relies on the combined efforts of producing and consuming countries and other partner organisations to build timely, comprehensive and sustainable energy data. By helping to mitigate some of the uncertainties of global energy markets, JODI aims to help moderate undue price volatility, thereby increasing investor confidence and contributing to greater stability in energy markets worldwide. I firmly believe that all nations should redouble their efforts to ensure regular and timely contributions to this important initiative.

The second theme of this IEF meeting in Moscow is energy security – a topic of fundamental importance to producers and consumers, governments and people around the world. Maintaining supplies and meeting energy demand is in all our best interests. But energy security is not only about meeting the needs of developed nations. While the world quite rightly talks about ways to reduce energy usage, we must not forget that, globally, more than 1.3 billion people are without access to electricity and 2.6 billion people are without clean cooking facilities. This aspect of energy security must also remain foremost in our minds. In the 21st century, it must be addressed.

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Again, I believe the IEF, as an independent and apolitical energy forum, can and does play a key role in addressing many of the challenges facing us today and tomorrow. I fundamentally believe that it is only through dialogue and working together that difficult issues can be addressed and solved.

I am looking forward to a lively and informed debate at IEF14 in Moscow and hope that our efforts at transparency and dialogue result in a productive and positive outcome. ■