

## **Twelfth session of the IRENA Assembly**

### **High-Level Meeting Peacekeeping Operations Energy Compact**

14 January 2022, 15:30 – 17:00, Room A2  
St. Regis Hotel, Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi

#### ***Background***

This High-Level Meeting formally launches the new “Energy Compact on Renewable Energy in Peacekeeping” which was announced at the High-Level Dialogue on Energy in September 2021. Renewable energy presents a unique opportunity for both the United Nations (UN) and the host countries of UN peace operations to simultaneously deliver on climate, development, and security objectives. This Compact seeks to leverage energy needs of UN peace operations to accelerate the energy transition in host countries, particularly in the rural areas where missions frequently have a presence. This meeting introduces an initial implementation program and provides an opportunity for potential partners to learn about and support the Compact.

The Compact originates in the urgent need to increase energy access through sustainable sources in countries hosting UN peace operations, as well as the UN’s ambitious energy commitments. In his closing remarks at the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, Secretary-General António Guterres committed the UN Secretariat to reducing its carbon emissions and dramatically increasing its use of renewable energy to 80% by 2030. This is an important step forward for the UN to transform its operations towards a more resilient future for the organisation.

By far the largest share of the UN Secretariat’s greenhouse gas emissions derive from its peace operations, including the thirteen current peacekeeping missions and the five special political missions that have a relevant footprint in the field. Thus, to meet its carbon-reduction and renewable-energy targets, the UN will need to transform its approach to sourcing and generating power, and rapidly move away from its current heavy reliance on diesel generators in field missions, without compromising its pursuit of mandates to prevent conflict, protect civilians, facilitate peace processes, and support peacebuilding activities. With renewable energy rapidly undercutting the cost of diesel-generated energy in most settings where peace operations are deployed, this transition can lead to a significant reduction in operational costs. The increased autonomy in power generation brought by renewable energy is expected to also increase the operational capacity available for substantive tasks and reducing the need for security risk prone fuel convoys.

Moreover, the transition of peacekeeping missions to renewables offers a rare window to attract investments in renewable energy infrastructure for host countries that can outlast the mission. Most energy projects in fragile contexts are hampered by the lack of appropriate de-risking. Despite the availability of funding, especially blended finance in high impact projects, very few published tenders are considered bankable and therefore worth the investment. Private developers may face challenges related to low energy consumption customers with limited ability to pay for energy services. On the other hand, UN peace operations are in some cases among the largest energy consumers in their host countries.

The operations' creditworthiness and high energy demand make them reliable customers, providing a revenue basis to either strengthen existing renewables suppliers in host communities or attract investments for new projects.

In response to these opportunities for co-benefit between the UN's energy transition and the electrification needs in the host countries, the UN Departments of Operational Support (UN DOS), Peace Operations (UNDPO), Norway, the United Arab Emirates, and IRENA presented the Energy Compact on Renewable Energy in Peacekeeping during the High-level Dialogue on Energy in September 2021. The Compact is also supported by a range of host States and the leadership of five UN peace operations, including four of those with the largest footprint.

The Compact aims to strengthen ongoing UN and IRENA collaboration with host nations and create an opportunity for peace operations to support the host nation's electrification and climate plans through renewable energy projects. The launch event in January will be an initial occasion for UN peace operations to present the first set of potential project concepts with the hope of attracting the interest of additional partners to enable their implementation. This list will be refined in collaboration with host States through to Q3 2022, with the expectation of having two to three projects with a scale of 15-20 GWh per year being initiated by 2023.

### ***Objectives***

Co-hosted by the Energy Compact's leading entities – UN DOS, UNDPO, Norway, the United Arab Emirates, and IRENA - the objective of this High-level Meeting is to discuss the opportunities that peacekeeping operations present for energy transitions in host countries – especially in rural and remote settings – through presentation of concrete project ideas. The meeting will also discuss implementation steps of the Renewable Energy in Peacekeeping Compact and highlight opportunities for additional partners to engage.

### ***Guiding Questions***

- What are the main opportunities and challenges in implementing the Renewable Energy in Peacekeeping Compact?
- What are promising models from the field to enable UN procurement from the local market, as well as access to energy for host communities?
- How can additional actors – most notably the private sector – support energy transitions in fragile settings?
- How do the proposed projects tie to key national electrification priorities and what are the next steps for the implementation of some of the proposed projects?

### ***For more information please contact:***

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