

**Question for oral answer O-000080/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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Subject: Access to energy in Africa

Access to energy in Africa today is largely insufficient. Almost 700 million of Africa's 1.111 billion inhabitants do not have access to electricity. By 2030, this number will rise to 1.3 billion. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that access to energy is a precondition for many other basic needs, including access to water, education, health and employment, and for services and industry, agriculture, stability, security and territorial balance. We must consider that an Africa boosted by better access to energy is an opportunity for Europe, representing new sources of economic supply for the EU. In addition, the Paris Agreement at COP21 stated clearly in its conclusions the need to promote universal access to sustainable energy in developing countries, in particular in Africa, through the enhanced deployment of renewable energy.

Africa can raise its energy access rate from 30 % to 80 % in less than ten years. Initiatives to expand the electrification of Africa are already under way. On 15 June 2015, during the summit of the African Union, the heads of state and government expressed their support for the creation of an instrument dedicated to financing the electrification of Africa. This instrument will enable the mobilisation of human and financial resources and the traceability of grants allocated and their use. Projects allowing the development of access to energy in Africa exist and have been identified. Now the only obstacle to their development is the issue of financial solvency. The EU has a major role to play to help overcome this last hindrance to African energy development.

In this context, is the Commission drawing up a strong European policy on Africa, specifically through the establishment of a Europe-Africa partnership for the electrification of the continent? Following the COP21 conclusions, how will the Commission support the deployment of renewable energy in Africa?

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