**AFREC–IEA Joint Webinar on Energy Security Data: "Securing Africa's Energy Future: Building Robust Energy Security Data Systems."**

Keynote: "**Why Energy Security Data Now? Policy Imperatives and African Priorities**"

Distinguished colleagues, partners from the International Energy Agency, representatives of Member States, regional and international institutions, and all stakeholders joining us today, good morning or good afternoon to you.

It is an honour to deliver this keynote address on behalf of the African Energy Commission at this joint AFREC–IEA webinar titled "Securing Africa's Energy Future: Building Robust Energy Security Data Systems."

Our gathering today is not merely technical; it is strategic. It speaks to one of the defining questions for our continent's future: how can Africa secure its energy systems in an era of volatility, transition, and opportunity?

Energy security is at the centre of national policy debates due to volatile global fuel markets, climate extremes, geopolitical tensions, and fast changing technology landscapes. This reinforces the fact that data is power, and energy security begins with energy data.

In Africa, our energy systems are evolving at an unprecedented pace. Electrification is expanding, new renewable capacities are being built, cross border power interconnections are strengthening, and the demand for clean cooking, mobility, and industrial energy is ever rising.

At the same time, we face import dependencies, limited refinery capabilities, infrastructure bottlenecks, fuel price shocks, and climate induced disruptions to hydropower and transmission systems.

In moments of crisis governments need timely, interoperable, and trustworthy data to act decisively to **identify risks, to target subsidies, to release stocks, to manage demand, and to restore public confidence**.

Without such data, decisions are delayed, interventions are blunt, and the cost of inaction is borne by our citizens and industries.

This is why energy security data is not a luxury, it is a policy imperative.

For Africa, it underpins crucial policy goals:

1. First, **resilience and preparedness**.

To anticipate and respond to shocks, we need early warning systems grounded in robust indicators such as stock levels, fuel import dependencies, power system adequacy, and outage metrics.

2. Second, **affordability and equity**.

With reliable data, policymakers can better monitor prices, track subsidies, and protect vulnerable households. Transparency in data enables trust between governments, markets, and consumers.

3. Third, **investment and planning**.

Investors whether domestic or international rely on credible data to assess risks and opportunities. Data transparency lowers uncertainty and attracts capital for infrastructure, renewables, and efficiency.

4. Fourth, **alignment with global energy transition standards**.

Adopting international statistical frameworks like the International Recommendations for Energy Statistics (IRES) and the Standard International Energy Classification (SIEC) ensures that African data speaks a global language (comparable, credible, and policy ready).

The policy imperative, therefore, is clear: energy security data is the invisible infrastructure of energy governance.

When data systems fail, energy systems follow.

At AFREC, we encourage governments to strengthen energy security data through:

1. **Institutional Coordination**:

Data is scattered across ministries, utilities, regulators, and central banks. We encourage our member states to establish national energy data coordination mechanisms (like energy statistics committees or working groups), led by Ministries of Energy and supported by National Statistics Offices. This is essential for coherence.

2. **Harmonised Definitions and Tools:**

We encourage our member states to use AFREC's data collection templates which are aligned with IRES and SIEC to help countries collect, validate, and share data using consistent classifications, metadata, and quality controls.

3. **Short Term Energy Indicators**:

Africa needs rapid, policy relevant indicators: reserve margins, generation adequacy, fuel stock levels, affordability trackers, refinery utilization rates (in member states that have refineries) and import cover days. These can form the basis for monthly or quarterly energy security dashboards.

4. **Capacity Development**:

Data systems are only as strong as the people who manage them. AFREC and the IEA stand ready to support Member States through training, technical assistance, and peer exchange, building a community of African energy statisticians and analysts.

5. **Regional Integration and Data Sharing**:

Energy security does not stop at national borders. Whether through regional power pools, pipelines, or fuel supply corridors, cross border transparency enhances collective resilience. A regional energy security data platform can provide a continental early warning system a shared shield for Africa's energy future.

Ladies and gentlemen, today's dialogue is about transforming data into actionable insights and turning information gaps into opportunities for resilience.

It is about treating energy security data as a strategic asset to strengthen national and regional data ecosystems grounded in international best practice.

Let us work collectively as governments, regional institutions, development partners, and the private sector in building the energy data foundations for Africa.

In closing, I invite our member states not only to manage crises but to plan confidently for an inclusive, sustainable, and secure energy future, because without data, we guess and with data, we govern. And when Africa governs its energy future with data we secure our energy future.

Thank you.