



Press Release

WORKSHOP ON ENERGY CRISIS SOLUTION

EXPERTS CALL FOR INTEGRATED ENERGY POLICY

At a workshop on “Solutions for Energy Crisis in Pakistan” held in Islamabad today experts of the field pointed to the compartmentalized approach to the energy issue and called for formulation of an integrated policy keeping sources, resources, costs and sustainability in view. They described the present policy as a collection of power point slides. The workshop was organised by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) and the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) Islamabad.

The participants unanimously agreed that there were gaps between policy and implementation which needed to be removed to find a solution to the crisis. Moreover there was a need to differentiate between energy and power. Pakistan did have a power policy but a comprehensive energy policy covering all aspects such as hydrocarbons (oil and gas sectors), alternative energy resources and nuclear energy was lacking.

Ms Ameena Sohail, energy expert and corporate lawyer pointed to the institutional disarray such as was seen in opposition to privatization and insolvency of the power sector. There was serious control paralysis. What was needed was national vision and mission to meet the challenges. Mr Ashfaq Mahmood, former federal secretary, Water and Power, emphasized institutional strength. Dr Waqar Ahmad of SDPI speaking on investment and funding in the energy sector described the bottlenecks and called for rationalization of SROs and cutting down cumbersome procedural formalities. Dr Shaukat Hameed Khan, Coordinator General COMSTECH, speaking on resource mobilization analysed the issue of fuels and finances in respect of different options particularly coal and the nuclear power. Dr Shaheen Akhter favoured greater reliance on hydel power through run of the river projects. Mustansar Billah Hussain emphasized the involvement of universities and education institutions in promoting awareness about conservation. Mirza Hamid Hassan, former secretary Water and Power chaired the session and presented the recommendations of the workshop.

Earlier in his welcome address Ambassador Sohail Amin, president IPRI, described the government’s energy policy as comprehensive which was later stoutly defended by Planning Commission Energy head Mr Akhtar Ali.