ABU DHABI: All countries should modernize and expand infrastructure to ensure that it is fit for the new energy system that we are in the process of creating, the Rwandan Minister of Infrastructure, Dr Jimmy Gasore said Wednesday.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 14th session of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Assembly which is taking place in Abu Dhabi, UAE, the senior Rwandan Government official who is also the President of this year's Assembly points out that current global commitment to triple renewable power capacity requires concerted efforts to enhance infrastructure, policies and workforce capabilities, underpinned by increased financing and closer international cooperation.

While referring to one of the key resolutions from the latest UN Climate summit (COP 28) urging countries to transitioning away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly and equitable matter, as well as the call to triple renewables and double energy efficiency by 2030, Dr Gasore stressed the importance to design and adapt wide-ranging and cross-cutting policies to ensure that the energy transition remains at the core of our national strategies, not only in the short-term, but also in the long-term.



The 14th IRENA Assembly session in Abu Dhabi is centred on the theme "Outcome of COP28: Infrastructure, Policies and Skills for Tripling Renewables and Accelerating the Energy Transition"

"It is evident that urgent actions are needed to deliver on our climate, energy and development goals. We must modernize and expand our infrastructure to ensure that it is fit for the new energy system that we are in the process of creating," the senior Rwandan official told delegates at IRENA General Assembly.

One of the mechanisms suggested by Rwanda to raise funds or trigger initiatives in support of development of renewables energies is the model of Rwanda Green Fund, also known as "Fonerwa" a groundbreaking environment and climate change investment fund that was established in 2012.

Fonerwa has a mandate to invest in public and private projects with the potential to create transformational change, build an ecosystem to incubate, accelerate and provide growth capital to high-impact green ventures and play a catalytic role to

attract climate finance and green investment. The Fund’s purpose is also to unlock the power of green finance to achieve sustainable development.



Mr **Francesco La Camera, the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) addressing the Assembly in Abu Dhabi**, UAE

According to Dr Gasore, countries must ensure that they have a skilled workforce, by up-skilling, re-skilling, and re-designing our education and training systems so that young populations are well-prepared for the variety of employment opportunities offered by the energy transition in olrder the develop and sustain this systemic change.

“must be implemented nationally, regionally and globally, which requires greater financing and stronger national, regional, and international collaboration,” he said.

Official estimates show that 9% of all energy generated in Africa came from

renewable sources where North Africa is the current leader on the continent in terms of renewable energy capacity.

According to the 2023 edition of the SDG 7 Tracking Report, 660 million people are projected to still lack access to electricity in 2030. To reach universal access to energy services by 2030, the world has to drastically increase efforts by scaling up finance, investment, and policy support.

Latest esimates by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) show that an estimated $43-55 billion of annual investment in the energy sector is needed from now to 2030-2040 to meet the demand and provide universal access to electricity in Africa; and only a fraction of that is being achieved.



In response, more and more countries in Africa are introducing strategies and policies to accelerate rural electrification and reduce their dependence on fossil fuels. The majority of African countries now have renewable energy policies.

In addition, the Africa-led initiatives to boost energy production, inspired by Agenda 2063, Africa’s vision for the next 50 years, contain ambitious targets for the provision of energy from new renewable sources.

Commenting on these efforts, Dr Gasore urges countries to mobilize actions as different countries and regions are faced with different needs, challenges, and opportunities.

“We must continue to strengthen international cooperation and bring all hands-on deck to ensure that progress is more equitably distributed, and that our people benefit from the vast opportunities of the energy transition, now and in the future,” the senior Rwandan Government official said.