

## **First International Conference “Women in Energy” 2017**

Distinguished President of the Government of Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Zoran Zaev, respected Mrs. Mikaela Schweitzer-Bloom, Deputy Director of the Mission at the Embassy of United States of America in Macedonia, honorable Mr. Stefan Peter, Chairman of the Management Board of EVN Macedonia, respected provosts, deans, vice deans, representatives of the institutions which are supporters of this conference, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my great honor and pleasure, as a moderator of the First International Conference “Women in Energy”, to greet you and warmly welcome you.

This conference is an initiative to gather in one place all the relevant institutions and individuals, where through opening of many questions, the foundation for global policies can be laid, which will enable greater participation of women as a determining factor in the energy sector.

The conference organizers are the Engineering Institution of Macedonia and EVN Macedonia, as host and financial sponsor of the event. However, the idea of holding this conference arose as a result of the many activities carried out by EVN Macedonia, for which we are sincerely grateful to Mr. Stefan Peter, but we are also grateful for the vast promotion and the vision of the conference director, Mrs. Aneta Petrovska Rusomarovski, Manager of the Human Resources Department in EVN Macedonia. The Engineering Institution of Macedonia, with all its capacity, contributed for more than 140 participants to be present here today, from international and national professional organizations, from companies in the energy sector and wider, to universities, relevant ministries, state agencies and embassies.

I would like to express special gratitude to all organizations that supported this conference, those being: Central European Initiative, whose representative Mr. Peter Canciani PhD is here today, European Federation of Engineering Associations, the Macedonian National Committee for Large Electrical Systems in Cigre –Makocigre, the Macedonian Association for Power Electronic, Drives and Control (MAKZEEPU), the Association of people involved in energetics of Macedonia – ZEMAK, then the Jordanian Electricity Distribution Company, whose Deputy Director, Rim Hadman, is present here as panelist, ELEM jsc., MEPSO, OKTA and the Organization of Employers of Macedonia.

Furthermore, the universities “Ss. Cyril and Methodius”, “Goce Delcev”, “St. Clement of Ohrid”, State University of Tetovo, Mother Theresa University, and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies in Skopje, which gave full support in the organization of the conference.

I sincerely hope that we will have even more substantial cooperation in organizing the Second Conference, which it is planned to be held next year with different content and more participants.

The Engineering Institution of Macedonia is the only non-governmental, non-party association which is comprised of 20 professional organizations from all engineering fields, and not only few months ago, the Institution celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of existence and operating with national recognition – Charter of the Republic of Macedonia for Achieved Results in Coordination and Stimulating the Development of Science and New Technologies in all Engineering Disciplines. Through its membership in the Association of European National Engineering Organizations, the Engineering Institution of Macedonia is involved in initiatives that are increasing the recognition of our engineers outside the country and ensures them equal status with the others on international level.

The Engineering Institution of Macedonia, along with the Chamber of Authorized Architects and Authorized Engineers, is organizing another event which will be held tomorrow and it is planned within this conference, and that is the awarding of the Recognition “Engineering Ring” to the 11 best graduated engineers from the Republic of Macedonia, that has been held under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Macedonia for 14 years in Ohrid, in the cradle of the Macedonian literacy and culture.

Lastly, I would like to express my opinion on why more involvement of the women is needed in the energy sector, and also on decisive positions in general.

As a university professor and a member of many professional organizations, I have never felt discriminated, especially when one is investing much more than others; therefore, I would refer to a text that I remember since my student times, when you start looking for additional education in motivational literature.

The text says: *"The life path of men is always in a straight line: they know where they are headed and where they need to get in the shortest amount of time, and that is of course the right line!"*

*Unlike them, us women, we have a branched lifeline, we start from one place, then we arrive at some destination, and at that same moment, we suddenly have other priorities, so we turn and go to the other side, and so on! Suddenly, when we look back, we see a branched lifeline where, physically speaking, it is much more slower to reach the goal".*

But what does that branched line means?

That is a deep, branched root, strongly anchored in the ground that ensures safety and stability with your closest ones in the family, and also with the colleagues from work.

This line is also a big, widespread canopy that produces fruit, but it also provides protection in times of storms.

So, according to that, what are my expectations of this day? - Excellent lectures, good discussion on the panels, and exchange of opinions that will enable breaking many taboos and overcoming everyday's prejudices.

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President of the Engineering Institution of Macedonia