

Press Release

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REN21 LAUNCHES GROUNDBREAKING RENEWABLE ENERGY CHAMPIONS INITIATIVE TO ACCELERATE THE SHIFT TO ENERGY SECURE RENEWABLE BASED ECONOMIES

Miami, USA – REN21 announced today the launch of its groundbreaking **Renewable Energy Champions Initiative (RECI)** at the **7th session of the Caribbean Renewable Energy Forum (CREF)** in Miami. This bold new initiative is designed to accelerate the global energy transition by pairing national-level decision makers with a powerful network of former ministers and senior officials from the Global South—leaders who have already driven successful renewable energy transformations in their own countries.

“These champions have lived the transition to renewables. They’ve overcome obstacles, implemented bold policies, and delivered real results,” said **Rana Adib**, REN21’s Executive Director. “Now they’re stepping forward to help others do the same—through trust-based, peer-to-peer collaboration that supports countries in building resilient, inclusive and renewables-based economies.”

This first of its kind initiative comes at a crucial moment where greater regional and international cooperation is urgently needed to overcome rising fragmentation and build energy security. At the first Summit on the Future of Energy Security, held in the UK in April 2025, more than 60 countries reaffirmed the need to strengthen collaboration on supply chains, technologies, energy generation, and grid infrastructure, to accelerate the energy transition and to ensure energy security and economic development. The Renewable Energy Champions Initiative can enhance cooperation by connecting countries and stakeholders to reach shared solutions to shared challenges.

In today’s energy security era, more countries are turning to locally available renewables to safeguard and build their economies and reduce dependence on external sources. More than 77 countries now get over 10% of the total energy they use from renewables, and over 104 countries exceed 5%. At least 35 countries have already surpassed 30%—and these numbers are likely even higher, as many countries lack complete data. Former ministers and senior officials of the Renewable Energy Champions Initiative—who have achieved energy security and economic resilience through

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renewables in their own countries—are uniquely positioned to inspire and support their peers, helping other governments go further, faster, and with greater confidence.

A Strategic Network of Trailblazers

The **Renewable Energy Champions Initiative** connects ministers of energy, economy, and finance with trusted peers who bring:

- **Compelling narratives** that make the socio-economic case for renewables
- **Proven track record and experience**, transforming national energy systems
- **Connections to international institutions, financial partners, and technical experts**
- **Confidence in renewables** to build political will and unlock strategic partnerships
- **Access to resources** such as financing, technical expertise and capacity-building opportunities

Meet the First Champions

The initiative launches with two high-profile champions from Latin America and the Caribbean:

- **James Fletcher**, Former Minister for Public Service, Information, Broadcasting, Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Saint Lucia.
Led a comprehensive overhaul of Saint Lucia's energy sector, introducing **modern regulation, international partnerships, and inclusive policy reform** to drive renewable energy development.
- **Ramón Méndez Galain**, Former Energy Secretary, Uruguay.
Spearheaded Uruguay's transformation to **98% renewable electricity**, halving generation costs, boosting resilience, creating 50,000 jobs, and securing near-universal electricity access.

The initiative will be expanded to include other **visionary leaders from across the Global South**, ensuring regional diversity and deepening collaboration across continents.

Champions' quotes:

"We proved that a country can achieve near-total renewable electricity and energy security while lowering costs, creating jobs, and boosting resilience. Now, I'm committed to helping others do the same because Uruguay's experience provides valuable lessons to share and unlock national-scale change. The Renewable Energy Champions Initiative is about sharing what works, avoiding mistakes, and building trust between those leading the energy transition," **Ramón Méndez Galain**, Former Energy Secretary of Uruguay and Renewable Energy Champion from Latin America.

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“We don’t have the luxury of time or trial and error. This initiative is about giving leaders the confidence and tools to act decisively. I’ve seen how political will, clear policy, and inclusive dialogue can transform an entire energy system. As a Champion, I want to help countries fast-track what took us years to learn. Renewable energy is the smartest investment a nation can make—for its people, economy, and future,” **James Fletcher**, Former Minister for Public Service, Information, Broadcasting, Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology in Saint Lucia and Renewable Energy Champion from the Caribbeans.

About the Renewable Energy Champions Initiative: [\[insert here link to brief uploaded to website\]](#).

About REN21

REN21 is the global multi-stakeholder network of governments, industry, NGOs, science and academia that enables the necessary changes to build the renewable-based economy for prosperous lives and societies.

Our vision is a world where renewable energy is the foundation for strong, equitable and resilient economies. Renewables are the undeniable choice for people, nature and prosperity.

Founded in 2004, we’ve built a powerful and diverse network of 119 institutions and a community of more than 4,000 players, from the energy ecosystem and other key sectors. Our inclusive governance structure and collaborative culture enable us to build on the insights and intelligence of our global community to drive the solutions needed for economic prosperity and societal well-being.

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