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TERNA CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF THE 'ITALY-GREECE' CABLE AND INVESTS 750 MILLION TO DOUBLE TO INTERCONNECTION

The new undersea works will make it possible to increase electricity exchange between the two countries, while facilitating the integration of renewables. Works launch 2023, operational by 2030

Rome, 9 June 2022 – Terna celebrates 20 years of the undersea cable that connects Italy to Greece and will invest 750 million euros to double the electricity exchange capacity between the two countries, which will facilitate a higher integration of renewable sources. Led by Stefano Donnarumma, the company has included the new interconnection in the *Development Plan* for the national electricity transmission grid, which envisages 18.1 billion euros of investments over the next ten years: works for the project with 500 MW of power and 200 km long will start in 2023 and entry into service is envisaged for 2030. Studies are currently under way to define the route and which technologies to use.

In operation between Italy and Greece since mid-2002, it was the first high-depth electrical cross-border interconnection built in Italy and represented the first steps towards defining Italy's role as the "energy hub of the Mediterranean". The 400 kV direct current connection, considered strategic by the EU, which contributed funding for its construction, has a 500 MW bi-directional transport capacity and allows for energy exchange between Italy and Greece, as well as with neighbouring countries. In the last 20 years, around 40 billion kWh of electricity have travelled along the line. The project makes it possible to optimise the supply of energy during the import phase and to have greater flexibility for production from renewables during the export phase.

The infrastructure is over 300 km long. The Italian section is formed of 43 km of an underground cable connection between the electrical substation in Galatina (in the province of Lecce), where Terna celebrated today 20 years of operation of the infrastructure, and the landing site of the cable in Otranto. Around 160 km long and with a maximum depth of approximately 1,000 metres, the undersea cable arrives in the locality of Aetos, where another 110 km of overhead lines leave for the electrical substation in Arachthos. In 2004, when Athens hosted the Summer Olympics, the use of the cable exporting from Italy made it possible to support the Greek grid operator during summer peaks, thus preventing technical issues and outages of activities associated with the world's most important sporting event.

Overseas connections are one of the key points of Terna's investments in upcoming years. To date, 26 cross-border lines are already active. The new interconnection planned by Terna between Italy and Greece – together with the power lines between Italy-France, Italy-Tunisia, Italy-Switzerland, Italy-Austria and the Sa.Co.I.3 (the project to upgrade the connection between Sardinia-Corsica-

Italy) – will allow the country, due to its strategic geographic position, to strengthen its role as European and Mediterranean electricity hub, becoming a key international player.

Over the years, Terna and the Greek grid operator, Admie, have strengthened their energy collaboration to meet the ongoing changes of the European electricity market, specifically to facilitate the development of renewable sources, especially in Mediterranean countries. Furthermore, the international project SEleNe (***Southeast electricity network coordination center***) established a new regional coordination centre – with offices in Rome and Thessaloniki – to bolster the energy collaboration and increase the security of electricity transmission in south-eastern Europe, which also involves Romania and Bulgaria.