TERNA, STEG AND HITACHI ENERGY: €770 MILLION CONTRACT FOR ELMED CONVERTER STATIONS, THE FIRST DIRECT-CURRENT INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA

The Elmed project will play a strategic role in increasing the security and reliability of the electricity system in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

The converter stations will be built in Italy in Partanna, in the Sicilian province of Trapani, and in Tunisia in Mlaabi, on the Cape Bon peninsula.

Rome, 24 June 2026 – Terna, the company that manages the Italian national electricity transmission grid, led by Pasqualino Monti, and STEG, the Tunisian electricity and gas grid operator, have awarded Hitachi Energy, a global leader in electrification, a contract worth approximately €770 million for the construction of the converter stations for the Elmed project, the first electricity interconnection between Italy and Tunisia.

The awarding of the contract for the converter stations marks the completion of the procurement process for the first high-voltage direct current (HVDC) submarine link between Europe and North Africa.

The tender, published in 2023 jointly by Terna and STEG in the Official Journal of the European Union, concerned the design, supply, and construction of the converter stations for the interconnection, one of the infrastructural projects included in the Mattei Plan for Africa to strengthen economic, energy, and geopolitical partnerships between Europe and African countries.

The two infrastructures now awarded will be built respectively in Italy in Partanna, in the province of Trapani, and in Mlaabi, in the Menel Temime area, in Tunisia. The link, powered by advanced HVDC technology, will have a capacity of 600 MW and will extend for about 220 km, mostly via submarine cable, reaching a maximum depth of about 800 meters in the Strait of Sicily.

Hitachi Energy is responsible for providing the HVDC solution that combines world-leading expertise in HVDC converter valves; its MACH™ digital control platform, power transformers and high-voltage switchgear; as well as system studies, design and engineering, supply, installation supervision and commissioning. The project will leverage its expertise developed through the successful delivery of some of the world's largest and most significant interconnection projects.

Other companies in the consortium, including D'Agostino Costruzioni Generali S.p.A. for the Partanna station and Orascom Construction SAE for the Mlaabi station, will mainly carry out civil works as well as electromechanical installations and auxiliary systems.

Representing a significant step towards greater interoperability between Euro-Mediterranean electricity systems, Elmed fits into a context in which governments and transmission system operators worldwide are accelerating investments in transmission infrastructure, in preparation for a fully electrified system: a system capable of integrating renewable energy sources on a large scale, strengthening cross-border interconnections and increasing energy security.

Elmed is a major infrastructure project for strengthening energy security and integrating electricity systems between Europe and North Africa, in line with the objectives of the energy transition and market integration defined by the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (PNIEC).

The project, which is strategically important for Tunisia, enjoys the full support of the Tunisian authorities and is part of the national vision aimed at strengthening energy security, promoting the regional integration of electricity markets and supporting the energy transition.

Elmed also strongly supports the dual objective of the European Commission's REPowerEU plan: ending the EU's dependence on fossil fuels and achieving decarbonisation targets, primarily through diversifying energy supplies and developing renewable energy.

Of the total investment for the electricity link, €1.420 million, €307 million has been allocated by the European Commission through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) grant program managed by CINEA. For the first time, the European Union has financed a project involving a non-member country, confirming the importance of the interconnection project.

The project is also supported, on the Tunisian side, by additional European and international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and KfW.