



Nobel Peace Laureate To Light Up Global Off-Grid Conference In Dubai

August 4th 2015 – For immediate release

Professor Muhammad Yunus, 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner, microfinance pioneer and founder of Grameen Bank and Grameen Shakti, has been announced as the keynote speaker for the 4th International Off-Grid Lighting Conference and Exhibition, to be held in Dubai from the 26th to the 29th of October.

Jointly organised by the Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA) and the World Bank Group under its Lighting Global initiative, this will be the largest event to date to showcase developments and opportunities within the global off-grid solar sector. Stakeholders will gather to determine the best systems to achieve improved solar lighting access using business-driven models. The conference will also facilitate discussions on the role of policy and regulation in creating suitable environments for uptake across the developing world. Of particular importance will be efforts to marry business and development goals to create sustainable markets and bring 1.4 billion people out of energy poverty.

Mr. Koen Peters, Executive Director of GOGLA, says that *“2015 is the UNESCO International Year of Light and with the COP 21 climate summit in Paris mandated to deliver a new international agreement on climate change, it is crucial to showcase the countless positive impacts that solar lighting solutions can have across the globe. Aside from the numerous personal and community impacts, solar lighting can bring annual savings of 90 million tonnes of CO₂ and 270,000 tonnes of black carbon. These are substantial savings in light of the critical climate challenge the world faces”*.

Speaking of Professor Yunus, Mr. Peters notes, *“Grameen Shakti has popularised solar energy in Bangladesh using an extremely successful market based social program. This has brought light and power to millions of people in Bangladesh, and helped to transform whole communities in the process”*. Mr. Peters believes that Professor Yunus will provide *“key insights into the challenges of uptake in rural developing communities”* as well as providing *“an inspirational and uplifting start to such an important conference”*.

Professor Yunus is expected to share his experiences from Grameen Shakti and to discuss the concept of social business. Since its inception in 1996, Grameen Shakti has overseen the installation of over 1.6 million Solar Home Systems in Bangladesh. Mr. Peters is keen to point to the *“transformative social and economic power of off-grid solar energy”* which he says *“enables whole communities to develop and prosper whilst delivering significant improvements in health and educational standards”*.

Mr. Peters added that the 4th International Off-Grid Lighting Conference and Exhibition *“is crucial to ensure that all aspects of clean lighting provision are considered. An inclusive approach must be taken, one that allows for the industry to speak with one clear voice. 1.4 billion people worldwide can benefit from the power of solar lighting and energy. This important event in Dubai is an essential springboard to success and I look forward to Professor Yunus’ essential contribution this October”*.

ENDS



4th International Off-Grid Lighting Conference and Exhibition

October 26-29, 2015
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Notes to editors

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About the event

<http://conference2015.gogla.org>

This event is the centerpiece of the international off-grid lighting community's efforts to chart the business-driven route to improved energy access for those lacking access to reliable, grid-based electricity. With commercial product sales of quality products increasing over 150% per year, the industry is exploding with new product innovations, improving service and affordability and rapidly evolving business models enabling millions of people to climb the energy access ladder at unprecedented rates.

The 4th of these Conferences will be held in Dubai — the hub for a new global industry serving Asian, African, and other markets. This event promises to be the largest to date, attracting a range of industry players and financial service providers. The latest Market Trends Report will be presented and attendees will share market lessons and build partnerships to power the next stage of this industry evolution.

For further information regarding the venue and location

http://conference2015.gogla.org/?page_id=86

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About GOGLA

<http://global-off-grid-lighting-association.org>

The Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA) is a neutral, independent, not-for-profit association created to promote lighting solutions that benefit society and businesses in developing and emerging markets. GOGLA acts as the industry advocate and supports the industry in growing and strengthening the market for clean, quality off-grid lighting and electrical systems. Its main objective is to support industry in scaling the sector based on the principles of the triple bottom line, thus contributing to the objectives of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

About the World Bank Group and Lighting Global

The World Bank Group plays a key role in the global effort to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. It consists of five institutions: the World Bank, including the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA); the International Finance Corporation (IFC); the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). Working together in more than 100 countries, these institutions provide financing, advice, and other solutions that enable countries to address the most urgent challenges of development.

Lighting Global is the World Bank Group's platform to support the development of commercial markets for modern energy services for the more than 1.2 billion people in the world without access to electricity. For more information, visit www.lightingglobal.org

Further information on Grameen Shakti

<http://www.gshakti.org/index.php>

Further information on the Yunus Centre

<http://muhammadyunus.org/>