

**Press release**

## **Bin Shafar took part in the Global Leaders' Panel Discussions at the District Energy Conference 2023 in Latin America.**

**Dubai, UAE, October 3, 2023:** His Excellency Ahmad bin Shafar, the CEO of Emirates Central Cooling Systems Corporation PJSC (Empower), the world's largest district cooling services provider, served as a distinguished keynote speaker at the District Energy Conference 2023 (LATAM2023) held in Cartagena, Colombia, under the theme 'Sustainable Solutions for Latin America and the Caribbean' in the presence of representations from the Ministries of Mines & Energy and Environment & Sustainable Development in Colombia. The opening of the conference and exhibition was attended by His Excellency Salem Rashid Al Owais, the UAE Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia, in addition to the representation from Swiss Embassy in Colombia and various associations and organizations such as ACAIRE, UNIDO, UNEP, and delegation from the International District Energy Association (IDEA) headed by Rob Thornton, President and CEO of IDEA.

During the conference's inaugural day, Empower CEO, who is also serving as a Special Advisor on District Cooling to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for its 'District Energy in Cities' initiative, actively participated in a panel discussion titled "A Global Perspective on Energy Districts." The discussion was expertly moderated by Thomas Stetter, an International Expert on Energy Districts and Consultant to the Economic Cooperation and Development Office (SECO) at the Embassy of Switzerland in Colombia. The panel also featured contributions from the other panelists, representing Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU) in Switzerland, Enwave in Canada, the Sustainable Energy Agency-ASE in Chile, and the Energy District Project in Colombia.

During the panel discussion, the CEO passionately addressed pressing environmental challenges facing the world today. He underscored the critical importance of implementing energy-efficient solutions like District Cooling to combat climate change. As the Middle East region consumes up to 70% of its energy for space cooling in buildings, District Cooling plays a pivotal role in conserving electricity, reducing consumption by as much as 50% compared to traditional air conditioning systems. Dubai, boasting a total cooling capacity of nearly 2 million refrigeration tons, stands as a global exemplar in Energy District execution. The government has set an ambitious target of achieving 40% penetration for district cooling by 2030. Empower, as the world's largest district cooling service provider, stands at the forefront of contributing to Dubai's sustainable objectives, operating over 1.5 million refrigeration tons. Utilizing advanced control systems and technologies, Empower achieves

greater operational efficiency, with around 25% of district cooling water requirements met using recycled water.

Bin Shafar's insights gathered substantial engagement from participants in the panel discussion. Addressing esteemed global leaders and decision-makers in the district energy sector, he said, "Increased investment in energy systems and infrastructure as well as accelerating the pace of work is a need of the hour to transition to a low-carbon future".

"It is important to continue working to expand the district energy activity in all countries of the world to enable communities to make the most of their economic, social, and health gains, and to continue their efforts to protect resources, confront climate change, and create a healthy environment for future generations", the CEO added.

**-End-**