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ANALYTICAL ARTICLE

GRID TRADE · MISSION 300 · EGYPT EXPO

Egypt Hosted a Grid Conversation. Sudan Is Outside Mission 300.

Cairo talked cross-border trade. Sudan has no compact cohort.

3Bi Research Team

15 October 2026

Egypt Just Hosted a Continental Grid Conversation. Sudan Is Still Outside Mission 300's Compacts.

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Research Team

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Egypt Energy Expo 2026 put regional and cross-border power trade on a Cairo stage. Mission 300 still has no Sudan compact in Cohorts I–III. Officials should publish a short grid-and-trade readiness note before COP31.

Egypt Energy Expo 2026 put regional and cross-border power trade on a Cairo stage. Mission 300 still has no Sudan compact in Cohorts I–III — a readiness note is due before COP31. (Illustration: 3Bi)

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The Hook

Cairo spent three days talking about wires that cross borders. At Egypt Energy Expo 2026, held from 12 to 14 October at the Egypt International Exhibition Center, a panel titled around regional interconnection and cross-border power trade brought World Bank economic adviser Wang Cici, Med-TSO Secretary-General Angelo Ferrante, and IFC Egypt head Saad Sabra into the same room (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). Their shared line was blunt: building a transmission line is only the first step; the hard work is regional planning, commercial viability and institutions that can sustain trade — not a string of one-off bilateral links. Ferrante said Med-TSO, which gathers twenty Mediterranean transmission-system operators, had signed a memorandum of understanding with the League of Arab States about a year earlier to support an Arab common electricity market, and had recently signed another with an African Union continental-cooperation body to work on shared methodologies and a continental interconnection master plan (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). Sabra put a finance number on the table that African energy ministries cannot ignore: an Africa renewables finance gap that IFC expects to exceed US\$240 billion by the middle of the next decade (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). The timing matters for Sudan. Mission 300 — the World Bank Group and African Development Bank partnership that aims to connect 300 million Africans to electricity by 2030 — has organised national energy compact cohorts as its delivery machine. As of June 2026, Sudan does not appear in Compact Cohorts I, II or III (Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026). Egypt hosted the continental grid-trade conversation. Sudan is still outside the flagship access partnership's compact pipeline.

The Argument

First, the Expo panel was arguing for a market architecture, not for another bilateral ribbon-cutting. Wang Cici framed cross-border interconnection as a way to trade electricity while Caribbean, Middle Eastern and African systems enter a new phase of energy transition, and stressed that technical feasibility, commercial bankability and institutional durability matter as much as the line itself (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). Ferrante went further: rapid renewable



growth raises the need for transmission and interconnection so that resources can be exchanged and systems stay flexible; Mediterranean–European links and South–Mediterranean projects should sit inside integrated regional plans that identify priority projects, rather than stopping at two-country deals whose full benefits may only appear when neighbours are counted too (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). That is the same logic that Mission 300 writes into its compact design. National Energy Compacts are meant to set measurable targets across five areas, including expanding least-cost generation, facilitating cross-border power trade, scaling distributed renewables and clean cooking, unlocking private investment, and strengthening utilities (Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026). The factsheet also states that Mission 300 has been endorsed by the African Union as a continental initiative, complementing the Continental Power Masterplan and the Africa Single Electricity Market (AfSEM) (Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026). Cairo’s panel and Mission 300’s paper are describing the same problem from two rooms: bilateral projects without a regional market rulebook under-deliver.

Second, Mission 300’s compact cohorts are the practical gate — and Sudan is not on the June 2026 list. Cohort I runs from Benin and Botswana through Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Togo, Zimbabwe and others; Cohort II includes Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Zambia; Cohort III lists Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Gabon, Rwanda and Uganda (Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026). Sudan is absent from all three. The partnership reports electricity access for over 50 million people as of April 2026 across more than 200 energy investments, a pledge of over US\$50 billion in development finance, technical assistance for 36 countries to design National Energy Compacts, and funding for Compact Delivery and Monitoring Units in an initial set of countries (Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026). ODI analyst Bright Simons has challenged whether that “50 million connections” figure reflects Mission 300 acceleration or the completion phase of programmes approved before the initiative launched, pointing to cases in Tanzania, Nigeria and Ethiopia where legacy projects dominate the count (ODI, 9 July 2026). 3Bi is not adjudicating that attribution dispute here. The Sudan-relevant fact does not depend on it: whether the headline connection number is new delivery or re-labelled pipeline, the compact cohorts are still how Mission 300 organises reforms, offtake rules and partner coordination — and Sudan is not in them. World Bank data put Sudan’s electricity access at 66 per cent of the population in 2024, the latest year available (World Bank, EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS, 2024). That is not universal access, and it is not a compact.

Third, Sudan is moving on solar procurement while the regional trade conversation runs without a Sudanese compact map. Sudanese reporting in early October said the Sudan Electricity Holding Company had opened a prequalification window for local companies wanting to work on public and private solar projects — covering supply, manufacturing, installation, operation, maintenance and advisory work — with applications from 6 October 2026 and a deadline of 30 November 2026 (Alsudantoday, 6 October 2026). That is a useful domestic signal for one technology. It is not a substitute for stating how Sudan wants to sit inside Mission 300, AfSEM and Egypt–neighbour interconnection options. Ferrante’s Expo remarks underlined the cost



of assessing projects only on the benefits to two countries; IFC's Sabra linked Egypt's renewables track record — more than US\$2 billion mobilised over nine-plus years for solar, wind and battery storage — to a wider African finance gap and to the need for regulatory reform plus private capital, storage and interconnection that match when power is generated with when it is needed (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). 3Bi is not inventing megawatt figures for any Egypt–Sudan or East African link. We have not seen a public Sudanese grid-and-trade readiness note that maps compact eligibility, AfSEM participation, priority cross-border options, or the institutional home for interconnection planning. Until that note exists, partners have little to finance beyond project-by-project improvisation.

Why It Matters to the Reader

If you work on energy, climate finance or infrastructure coordination for Sudan — or for a neighbour that trades or could trade power with Sudan — the Expo panel and the Mission 300 cohort list are the same file. Cross-border trade is one of the five compact reform pillars; the Continental Power Masterplan and AfSEM are the continental frames Mission 300 says it complements (Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026). Egypt has just hosted a public conversation that names regional methodologies and a continental master-plan track (attaqa.net, 14 October 2026). COP31 opens in Antalya on 9 November 2026 (PINA, 9 October 2026; confirmed in recent 3Bi coverage). The practical ask before that window is narrow. Sudan's Ministry of Energy and Oil, coordinating with the Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources and the electricity holding company, should publish a short grid-and-trade readiness note. The note should say whether Sudan intends to seek a Mission 300 compact pathway; which AfSEM / regional-market building blocks it can join first; how Egypt–neighbour and East African interconnection options will be screened without claiming unverified capacities; and which office owns the file. The solar prequalification already under way shows Sudan can open a dated process when it chooses to (Alsudantoday, 6 October 2026). Extending that discipline to grid trade costs little compared with arriving at COP31 and at the next Mission 300 stocktake without a map.

3Bi is not recommending that Sudan sign any specific interconnection treaty this month, or that partners treat the IFC US\$240 billion gap figure as a Sudan-specific fundraising target. We are recommending a two-to-four-page public note that lets officials and partners argue from the same sheet. Without it, Cairo's continental conversation and Sudan's solar window will keep running on parallel tracks.

Close

Egypt put regional power trade on a Cairo stage. Mission 300 still has no Sudan compact on its June 2026 cohort list. Publish the readiness note before COP31 — or watch the wires get planned



around you.

Sourcing & Contact

Primary sources: attaqi.net, “[الهيئة العامة للغازات والوقود تطلق مناقصة لخط أنابيب الغاز من مصر إلى السودان](#) :مصر” (Egypt Energy Expo 2026 interconnection panel), 14 October 2026; Mission 300 factsheet, as of June 2026 (Rockefeller Foundation–hosted copy verified 15 October 2026; AfDB–hosted PDF blocked at fetch); ODI / Bright Simons, “Has the World Bank really ‘accelerated’ 50 million electricity connections in Africa?”, 9 July 2026; World Bank Open Data, EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS for Sudan (2024 value), accessed 15 October 2026; Alsudantoday, Sudan Electricity Holding Company solar prequalification report, 6 October 2026; African Development Bank, “The Mission 300 Journey” page, accessed 15 October 2026; PINA on COP31 dates in Antalya, 9 October 2026. For methodology questions or to propose a correction, contact 3Bi’s Research Team via 3bisudan.org.

3Bi Research Team. This piece was produced through 3Bi’s automated daily publications workflow, which monitors regional and international climate and energy reporting.

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