
IRAQ VIEWS SIEMENS' PLAN FOR ITS POWER SECTOR FAVOURABLY

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Iraq is viewing the proposal by German firm Siemens to overhaul the countrys power infrastructure favourably, according the countrys electricity minister.

"We have a good and equal and balanced relationship with all countries who are willing to support Iraq but I must admit that Siemens roadmap to Iraq is quite helpful because it looks at the cross sector from transmission, distribution and power generation to build that much-needed value chain to help Iraq move its power sector in the right direction, Luay Al Khateeb told *The National* on the sidelines of the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue.

Siemens, Germanys largest industrial firm submitted a proposal to the Iraqi federal government last year to add 11GW of capacity as part a \$15 billion (Dh55.08bn) deal to overhaul the countrys war-torn power infrastructure. Both Siemens and rival GE submitted proposals to rehabilitate Iraqs utilities sector with the US firm pledging to undertake a 14GW capacity addition. Reports suggested last year that the Iraqi government was being pressured by the US to choose GE over Siemens for power contracts. However, both firms signed preliminary contracts for the planned capacities with the Iraqi government.

A World Bank assessment has pegged the cost of rebuilding Iraq at around \$150bn, with the utilities sector ranking high on the governments priority. A crippled utilities network was the main factor behind protests across Iraqi provinces during the summer months, when temperatures easily reach up to 50°C, occasionally requiring government mandated holidays to cope with the extreme weather.

GE had said at the time that its plans for Iraqs power infrastructure could result in 65,000 direct and indirect jobs, leading to annual savings and recoverable losses of up to \$3bn. Meanwhile Siemens had said its plan will examine a series of short, medium and long-term plans to meet the reconstruction goals of Iraq and support the countrys economic development.

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