



## PRESS RELEASE

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## ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER PAOLO GENTILONI VISITS ENEL'S INNOVATION LAB IN CATANIA

- *The Enel Innovation Lab, already the HQ for laboratories for the testing of new energy technologies, will become a tech campus and an accelerator for young entrepreneurs in Italy and internationally*

**Catania, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017** – Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni today visited Enel's Innovation Lab in Passo Martino near Catania. Italy's PM was welcomed by Enel CEO Francesco Starace, who, together with Enel's Head of Global Renewables, Francesco Venturini, in the presence of the President of the Sicily Region Rosario Crocetta and Mayor of Catania Enzo Bianco presented the company's investment programme of over 100 million euros in the Sicilian technology hub. Planned investment for the project includes over 80 million euros for the 3Sun solar PV panel factory and 20 million euros for the Innovation Lab.

The assembly line at the 3Sun factory, already owned by Enel and located near Passo Martino, will be upgraded to allow it to produce modules based on an innovative and highly efficient technology. The new bi-facial, heterojunction modules, which use amorphous and crystalline silicon, ensure high efficiency and production levels, as well as low deterioration levels. The first of these new modules will be realised in early 2018, with production of 240 MWp expected in 2019.

*"The development of renewable energy sources and the use of new digital systems are the key to staying at the cutting edge of an energy sector undergoing rapid change,"* said Enel CEO **Francesco Starace**. *"Thanks to this investment of over 100 million euros we will be able to bring to market ever more reliable and sustainable energy solutions. We are opening ourselves up to the outside world in order to find the best ideas and the most innovative technologies, and through the Innovation Lab we will collaborate with the most promising domestic and international start-ups. We are particularly proud to have realised a technological excellence hub in Catania, helping to create an entrepreneurial environment that is attentive to young people in southern Italy."*

The investment in the 3Sun factory is tightly linked to the 20 million euros for the Enel Innovation Lab, where the company's specialist renewable energy laboratories are already present. These labs enable experimentation of innovative solar thermal, PV, microgrid, storage and wind power technologies, with indoor and outdoor testing equipment. Thanks to this new investment, the Innovation Lab will become a tech campus and an accelerator for young entrepreneurs aimed at stimulating energy sector research and innovation. The Lab will also host local and national start-ups, as well as important national and international research centres, and will have links to the world of innovation through Enel's Innovation Hubs, creating a meeting place for innovative technological excellence.

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