

## A transformational project

### **The Government of Ceuta, the Government Delegate's Office and Red Eléctrica present the interconnection project with the autonomous city, a strategic infrastructure for Spain**

- The President of Ceuta, Juan Jesús Vivas, the Government's Delegate for Ceuta, Salvadora Mateos, and the Chairwoman of Red Eléctrica, Beatriz Corredor, took part in this event where the details of the project were presented.
- The future link will enable the Ceuta system to be integrated into the mainland electricity system, which will mean it will cease to be an electrically isolated system, thus increasing the security of supply in the autonomous city and improving its quality indexes in terms of energy not supplied (ENS).
- The link will enable 87% of Ceuta's demand to be covered by carbon-free energy sources. At present, 100% of Ceuta's demand is met by fossil fuels.

Ceuta, 21 April 2022

The Government of Ceuta, the Government Delegate's Office in the city and Red Eléctrica de España have today presented the electricity interconnection project that will integrate Ceuta into the mainland electricity system, which will mean Ceuta will cease to be an electrically isolated system. This is a strategic and transformational project that will bolster the security of supply in the autonomous city of Ceuta by connecting it to a more robust and efficient system, notably increasing its quality indexes to values comparable to those of the Spanish mainland system. The project contributes to a shift towards a more decarbonised energy model and which, as part of the green transition roadmap, will enable greater integration of renewable energy, a cleaner generation mix and less dependence on fossil fuels.

During the event, the Chairwoman of Red Eléctrica, Beatriz Corredor, highlighted that "thanks to this interconnection, the people of Ceuta will enjoy an electricity supply that is more secure and that offers higher levels of quality, just like in the rest of Spain, thus putting an end to Ceuta being an electrically isolated system. This will also allow the city to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels and help it to take the necessary steps to progress in its green transition, which is essential to making it possible to achieve a cleaner city".

According to the Government's Delegate for Ceuta, Salvadora Mateos, "the Spanish Government's commitment to Ceuta and the people of Ceuta is both clear and determined. The largest investment ever made in our city in decades is being presented today. This long-awaited project, which is now a reality, will generate new opportunities that, in addition to improving the quality of life of the people of Ceuta, will create new possibilities for development and prosperity".

For his part, the President of the Government of Ceuta, Juan Jesús Vivas, stressed that the project "represents the fulfilment of the aspiration to establish an umbilical cord with the peninsula in a vital service for the present and future of our city". In addition, Mr. Vivas thanked Red Eléctrica and its Chairwoman, Beatriz Corredor, for their



maximum involvement and determined support for the initiative, "as it is clear proof of Spain's commitment to the future of the people of Ceuta".

Red Eléctrica, as transmission agent and operator of the Spanish electricity system, has initiated the administrative and permitting process of the project, one of the most important for the national electricity system. This procedure begins with a first phase of public information in which the Company makes the project available to the public administrations and all stakeholders to ensure that they can make consultations and contributions to the project that they deem necessary.

### **Improved air quality and savings for the electricity system**

The electricity link between the mainland and Ceuta will enable 87% of Ceuta's demand to be covered by carbon-free energy sources. At present, 100% of Ceuta's demand is met by fossil fuels. Thus, the energy coming from the peninsula will replace the current one -generated by diesel generators and gas turbines-, with the consequent improvement in air quality in Ceuta and throughout the Strait of Gibraltar, one of the areas most affected by the consequences of climate change. Its commissioning will prevent the emission of 300 kt of CO<sub>2</sub> per year in this area, contributing at the same time to achieving the 2030 goals of Spain's National Energy and Climate Plan.

Additionally, the new link will provide Ceuta with sufficient electricity capacity to meet the growing energy demands of its economy, without the need to install new electricity generation facilities.

Furthermore, in terms of benefits for Spain as a whole, the interconnection will lead to considerable savings for the national electricity system, as it will replace high-cost energy from the current thermal power station in Ceuta with energy from the Spanish mainland, and especially from Andalusia, the region with the second highest installed renewable energy capacity in Spain. Specifically, it is estimated that the savings for the national electricity system will reach 30 million euros per year, to the benefit of all consumers.

The scope of the project is set out in detail in the new 2021-2026 Electricity Planning, approved by the Council of Ministers on 22 March and which is binding for the Company. The project foresees an investment of 221 million euros, most of which will go towards the installation of a 132 kV insulated double-circuit link, which will run underground in the land sections at both ends and with the underwater section buried in the seabed as it crosses the Strait of Gibraltar. The link will be connected in Ceuta to a new substation called Virgen de África, which will be the first substation in the city's electricity transmission grid.

### **An environmentally friendly infrastructure that is economically sound and socially respectful**

The route of the Spanish mainland-Ceuta interconnection has been designed with the clear goal of achieving the greatest possible integration into the environment and the least possible impact on the terrestrial and marine ecosystems and on the cultural heritage of the area. To this end, the strictest environmental, economic and social sustainability criteria have been taken into account in its design at all times and the Company has constantly maintained an open dialogue with the regional authorities and social agents to reach a consensus on the alternative with the least impact and the greatest economic and social benefit.

For the 58 km underwater section, the best route has been sought on the basis of technical and environmental criteria, taking into account the complexity of the marine orography, which at some points reaches a depth of 900 metres. The cables that will be used in this part of the route incorporate cutting-edge cable technology and dry insulation, and will run across the seabed protected and buried to ensure their safety.

The transition between the underwater section of the link and the underground section on land in Ceuta will take place in the area of the southern Bay of Ceuta, specifically in the area of the Chorrillo car park, from where the link will run in conduits within a concrete covered trench for approximately 1.7 km to the point where the new 132 kV Virgen de África substation will be located. The latter will be constructed on land managed by the Ceuta Port



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Authority, right next to the Thermal Power Station which currently guarantees the city's electricity supply, taking advantage of the synergies of both facilities and reducing the need for additional electricity infrastructure to connect it efficiently to Ceuta's electricity distribution network.

Similarly, the layout of the link will use the route of an old disused railway tunnel (the Salas tunnel) to minimise the impact on the city's Cultural Heritage Sites and cause the least possible impact on the main communication routes.