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MPs Back New Parliamentary Solar PV Forum

London, 19th July 2010 Leading figures in the UK solar PV sector have warmly welcomed the launch of a new Parliamentary forum for the technology. The Associate Parliamentary Renewable and Sustainable Energy Group (PRASEG) Solar PV Forum has been established at a time when demand for solar PV is rising thanks to the impact of the new Feed-In Tariff scheme. By 2020, the Government expects hundreds of thousands of households to have installed systems under the new scheme, with a total PV market nearly 100 times greater than today.

The establishment of the Forum comes just one year after a pro solar PV House of Commons motion attracted 285 MP signatories, including all the current Department of Energy & Climate Change Ministers, making it the second highest supported motion in the 2009 session. Plans for the Forum in 2010/11 include MPs visits to Sharp Solar's PV manufacturing plant in Wrexham and regular MP briefings and educational visits to innovative solar PV installations. The Forum is sponsored by Sharp Solar UK and Solarcentury, and is being supported by the Micropower Council.

The new PRASEG Solar PV Forum group provides an important arena for Parliamentarians and the industry to consider the success of the Feed-In Tariff scheme going forward and to debate the numerous regulatory challenges still facing the technology in the UK.

- **Alan Whitehead MP, Chairman of PRASEG**, said: "The Solar PV Forum is an important and very timely addition to our work. We're launching it at a time when interest in the technology among voters has never been greater. The Feed-in Tariff scheme will deliver hundreds of thousands of household solar PV installations by 2020, so it's vital that Parliamentarians know more about the technology and its potential. I know from the experience of living with my own household system that solar PV can make a reliable, hassle free contribution to Government targets and to encouraging more and more people to contribute to the fight against climate change."

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- **Seb Berry, Head of Public Affairs at Solarcentury**, said: "We said during the long lobby for an effective Feed-In Tariff that solar PV could deliver instant returns in terms of UK investment and green jobs. Three months into the new scheme, our UK staff numbers are growing by 25% this year alone and this reflects rapid jobs growth across the whole solar PV sector in the UK. We very much welcome this important initiative from PRASEG."
- **Andrew Lee, General Manager UK & Ireland of Sharp Solar UK**, said: "Sharp Solar is proud to support PRASEG's new Solar PV Forum, at what is a key moment in the sector's development. Solar PV manufacturing in the UK is already well established, with Sharp Solar employing more people at our module manufacturing plant in Wrexham than any other "micro" renewables factory in the UK; and we serve the whole of Europe, producing power for more than 700,000 homes a year. We look forward to working with other leading industry players and Parliamentarians to deliver on what is an ambitious solar PV agenda, and wish the Forum every success!"
- **Dave Sowden, Chief Executive of the Micropower Council**, said: "The PV industry's rapid growth in recent months is a shining example of just how policy can drive citizens' involvement in energy, build successful industries and create many new, green jobs. We welcome this interest shown by leading environmental campaigning Members of Parliament, through the creation of this new forum within PRASEG, one of the most influential All Party groups operating in this sector".

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