

In his speech to the conference, the Prime Minister stressed the following key points:

- There is a need for an **energy efficiency** strategy and the development of **renewable energy** sources.
- **Power generation** capability has to be strengthened.
- Investments in **natural gas** have to be stepped up.
- Coherence in the **organization of the energy sector** needs to be improved.
- National skills in terms of applied **scientific research** into energy need to be strengthened.
- The **environment** has to be better protected.

Mr. Larayedh pointed out that state subsidies to the energy sector soared from 550 million Tunisian dinars in 2010 to **TD 2,700 million** (\$1,611 million at the current exchange rate) in 2012, which corresponded to 10.7% of the government budget and 4% of Tunisia's gross domestic product (GDP) last year. And he added that the cost of these subsidies could reach **TD 2,990 million** in 2013. Nor does the government hide its concern about the rapid growth in the country's petroleum product consumption and the development of its energy deficit.

Cost of state subsidies to the energy sector jumped almost five-fold between 2010 and 2012

For his part, the Minister of Industry, Mr. Mehdi Jomâa, pointed out that the purpose of this national debate was to define a vision for the future and new approaches that corresponded to the country's current and future needs *"in a participatory, transparent and responsible framework that is consistent with the strategies adopted in other sectors"*.

□ Tunisia Oil & Gas Summit 2013, Hammamet, Tunisia - 19-21 September 2013

The **Tunisia Oil & Gas Summit 2013** will take place in Hammamet from 19 to 21

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September next and will be the third edition of this international conference. The main themes on the agenda are unconventional hydrocarbon resources, reservoir evaluation, drilling and well interventions, enhanced oil and natural gas recovery, health, safety and environmental challenges, legislation and standards in the hydrocarbon sector, companies' social responsibility, and development projects in Tunisia.

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