

# PRESS RELEASE

VNG / Hydrogen / Delegation Visit / Sultanate of Oman

## **Energy Minister of Sultanate of Oman visits VNG and the Bad Lauchstädt Energy Park with business delegation**

Exchanges focused on potential of hydrogen economy

**Leipzig, 18 March 2024:** After visiting Leipzig's Lord Mayor Burkhard Jung and signing the Golden Book of the City of Leipzig, a business delegation headed by their excellencies Salim Al Aufi, the Energy Minister of the Sultanate of Oman, and Maitha Al Mahrouqi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Germany, visited the headquarters of VNG AG in Leipzig. Together with companies from the Central Germany region, the members of the Omani business delegation discussed hydrogen and its decarbonization potential for the industry as well as the current conditions for ramping up the hydrogen market in Germany and Europe. The Omani delegation engaged in conversations with VNG's CEO Ulf Heitmüller about VNG's corporate transformation to green gases and about selected hydrogen projects within the VNG Group. The talks focused particularly on hydrogen requirements in the Central Germany region, the prospects for the Sultanate of Oman to export green hydrogen in the future and the technical requirements for the development of the hydrogen economy, such as underground storage in salt caverns. In addition, greater cooperation between Oman and companies from the Central Germany region was discussed in the presence of the Prime Minister of the federal state of Saxony, Michael Kretschmer.

"Looking into the future, Oman with its great potential and ambitions for the production of green hydrogen is of particular interest, especially in relation to the decarbonization of the industrial sector. The mutual exchange of views and experience is therefore very valuable to us. We at VNG are in the midst of a corporate transformation with which we are actively shaping the energy transition in our region from natural gas to green gases such as hydrogen and biogas. Such an ambitious project requires international cooperation. In the short to medium term, Germany will not be able to meet its hydrogen requirements through domestic production alone but will also be dependent on imports. Oman can play a significant role here, making an important contribution to the security of supply in our region. We look forward to intensifying talks on cooperation with our Omani partners", said Heitmüller.

"Germany has been a long-standing partner of Oman across multiple sectors and in various roles. As our nations transition towards a net zero future, the collaboration between the two nations should only strengthen. Oman is blessed with both conventional and renewable energy resources, a highly motivated and educated human resource, world-class infrastructure, and well-suited geography to address Western and Eastern clean energy demands. Oman aims to be a leader in the production of low-carbon and green molecules with a vibrant and attractive hub that attracts developers, technology providers, supply chain and downstream manufacturers in a mutually beneficial arrangement with our partners", mentioned his excellency Salim Al Aufi, Oman's Minister of Energy and Minerals.

VNG AG

Corporate Communications | Braunstraße 7 | 04347 Leipzig | presse@vng.de | www.vng.de



The delegation's journey to Leipzig was followed by a visit to the Bad Lauchstädt Energy Park in the south of Saxony-Anhalt. The Omani delegation learned about the state of progress of construction of this flagship project in the Central Germany region to create a real-world laboratory for the energy transition. This project, sponsored by a consortium consisting of Terrawatt Planungsgesellschaft mbH, Uniper, VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH, VNG Gasspeicher GmbH, ONTRAS Gastransport GmbH, VNG AG and DBI - Gastechnologisches Institut gGmbH Freiberg, is modelling the entire green hydrogen value chain on an industrial scale for the first time. The project embraces the production, transportation, storage, marketing and use of green hydrogen in Saxony-Anhalt and in the larger Central Germany region: A large-scale electrolysis plant of up to 30 MW will produce green hydrogen with renewable electricity from a specially constructed wind farm. In November 2023, a major step was taken in the repurposing of a natural gas pipeline for the transportation of hydrogen with the installation of a pigging station. As part of the same project, Germany's first supply contract for green hydrogen was concluded in November 2023 with TotalEnergies Raffinerie Mitteldeutschland, which is to come on stream at the end of 2025.

#### **About VNG**

VNG is a group of companies active throughout Europe with over 20 companies and around 1,600 employees. Headquartered in Leipzig, the Group is a gas importer and wholesaler as well as an operator of critical gas infrastructure, ensuring a secure supply of gas in Germany. With its "VNG 2030+" strategy, VNG is also pursuing an ambitious path for a market ramp-up of renewable and decarbonized gases such as biogas and hydrogen, thus paving the way for a sustainable, secure and climate-neutral energy system of the future. VNG's investments in infrastructure and green gas projects are primarily made in central and eastern Germany, with the aim of making a significant contribution to structural change as a company with regional roots. EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg AG is the main shareholder of VNG. More at: [www.vng.de](http://www.vng.de).