Interview Prof. Speh, Chairman of the ETG-Congress 2015

April 17th, 2015 in Frankfurt/M.

VDE: Good morning Prof. Speh. It’s a pleasure to meet you here in the VDE Headquarter. You are the chairman of the ETG Congress which is taking place this year from November 17 - 18 in Bonn. What topic is the congress about?

Speh: Well, the Power Engineering Society (ETG) decided to change the headline of the ETG-Congress to - Die Energiewende. “Die Energiewende” seems to be a little bit strange because it’s a German word but it made already its way into the English vocabulary and I think the rest of the world knows pretty well what’s meant if we are talking about “Die Energiewende”. We are talking about an electricity system or an energy system which comprises more at the end of the day more than 60% on renewable. At the ETG-Congress we will address all the important topics but not just the single components or reference projects so far but at least the whole system necessary to control such an energy system.

VDE: That sounds very interesting. Could you give us some more details please?

Speh: Well, we will have four sessions where we address different topics. We will start with system aspects just to address the system in general. Then we will talk about components and technologies which are necessary to control those systems. Market and regulatory environment is also an important topic which is addressed in the third session as well as at the end we will talk about reference projects gaining the first experiences about this kind of systems which are necessary in the future.

VDE: You mentioned twice that you have a certain focus on the system aspect. What is the reason for this?

Speh: Around the world there are a lot of investigations done on single components like storage devices or AC/DC links but at least nobody or just a few people are discussing the whole system what we have to have at the end of the day in 2050. So this is the reason why we are concentrating on the whole system and we are doing it in a very special way at the Power Engineering Society and maybe also during the congress. We are doing this with a retrospective approach, that means we assume that we already achieved this 60% or even more on renewable energy supply and then all of this
decides or discuss how to control the whole system. The problem is that we can’t take an evolutionary approach to get there cause we have a lot of obligations from the legal and regulatory point of view. We have made a lot of experience in the last 150 years and these are to some extend in contradiction what we would like to achieve. The system in 2050, which is called the Energiewende system will look totally different. To address this from the technical point of view, we have chosen this approach and this is why systems aspects are so important.

VDE: Prof. Speh, I found it interesting that a call for posters was made and not a call for paper. Why?

Speh: We changed a little bit the format of the whole congress. We have four sessions but within the four sessions we will have invited speakers only. Also we will have two of the authors of the posters contributing to each session and we will spent a lot of time in discussions. So each and every session will comprise a separate panel discussion on the dedicated topic and the poster will be shown at dedicated timeslots during the whole conference. This is not just a single one but we will have three of them during the whole congress. The authors of the posters have to be aware that they are competing to other activities during this dedicated brakes.

VDE: What are these activities?

Speh: Well, we will have beside the poster presentations a forum of suppliers in the electrical and energy industry which will have the chance to make their own presentations during the dedicated time slots. Additonally, we will have a standard fair with booths to show products, and offerings. But more important is, that the vendors are giving presentations during these time slots and hopefully this will be highly accepted by the participants.

VDE: The ETG-Congress is the first time held in English. There must be a reason for this approach.

Speh: Sure there is a reason. I said in the beginning, that Energiewende is well known also in the English speaking countries today and we would like to make this congress to the main congress in the world to show the path to future energy systems. These systems will be reliable and will be sustainable, because they are comprising more than 80 % of renewable energy resources. And Germany will be the blueprint not just for Germany but for the rest of the world. Or in other words, Germany will be the living lab for the benefits of Europe and for the rest of the world. This is the reason, we established the ETG Congress in English.

VDE: Dear Prof. Speh, I am really impressed. This will be an outstanding event and I am looking forward to it. I wish us all good luck for this.

Contact

Dr.-Ing. Christian Groß
VDE Conference Services, Frankfurt / M.
Phone: +49 69 6308-381
Mobile: +49 171 7602007
www.etg-congress.com