

ENERGY GLOBE: March, 2002

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## **Linz, Austria — March 6, 2002**

### ABOUT THE PRIZE:

The [Energy Globe Award](#) honors outstanding initiatives in the fields of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources from all over the world.

In past years there have been thousands of initiatives and projects in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources worldwide showing how sustainable energy solutions can make a practical contribution to environmental and climate protection and to economic development.

The Energy Globe Award 2002 attracted 1,300 entries from 98 countries.

### VIETNAM WOMEN'S UNION:

The major aim of the Vietnam Women's Union is to help women increase their knowledge, generate income and improve their living standards.

Presently, 50% of the households in Vietnam's rural areas are still without access to electricity. Building on projects initiated in 1994 with the help of the Solar Electric Light Fund, the Women's Union has already achieved great success by installing photovoltaic systems in remote villages.

About 2,000 households and community centres have been equipped with these systems. And the "green electricity" generated by the photovoltaic plants for many people enables the first access to electricity in their lives. Solar light has helped thousands of people in rural areas to open up new sources of income.

Women have especially benefited as they have more opportunities to earn money, and housework has become less demanding due to the increased use of electrical appliances. Thus the female population plays an important role in communicating the benefits of solar energy.

### AWARD CEREMONY:

The Award were given, besides other high-profile personalities, by the renowned former German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and the last head of state of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. The grand gala event was rounded off by a great show programme. The famous Austrian singer Reinhard Fendrich and the Compania Maria Serrano, a fiery Flamenco dance company from Spain, kept the 1,600 gala guests entertained. The grand ceremony that has been televised all over Europe represents a completely new approach to attracting public attention to the crucial issue of sustainable energy use.

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