

**ENERGY CHARTER  
SECRETARIAT**

---

CCDEC 2014

15 NOT

---

Brussels, 26 November 2014

Related documents: CC 497
---------------------------

**DECISION OF THE ENERGY CHARTER CONFERENCE**

**Subject: Secretary General's Report for the Year 2014**

The Energy Charter Conference at its 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2014 **took note** of the Secretary General's Report of the year 2014 as contained in document CC 497 (attached hereto).

## Secretary General's Report for the Year 2014

This Report provides an overview of the activities of the Energy Charter in 2014. The detailed information on activities planned for 2015 is available in CC 506, the Secretariat's Programme of Work for 2015.

1. There are a number of substantial achievements to the credit of the Energy Charter in 2014 despite a difficult international political situation which has had some major repercussions, not least in the energy area. The political consequences of the conflicts in the Crimea and in the South East of Ukraine brought about a series of economic sanctions between several key members of the Energy Charter Constituency. There has been a negative impact on energy cooperation. This conflict and the resultant sanctions once again highlight the prophetic wisdom of founders of the Energy Charter Process 25 years ago, and their emphasis on cooperation and dialogue in the energy sphere. Cooperation and dialogue on energy issues are the hallmarks of the Energy Charter.
2. As an example of such cooperation in 2014, for the first time in the history of the Energy Charter, the Chairmanship was held by a Contracting Party rather than just by a particular individual from a member state. Kazakhstan was the first member state to hold the Chairmanship under this new practice. Mr. Uzakbay Karabalin, the former Minister of Oil and Gas, and now after the reorganisation of the Ministry, the First Vice-Minister of Energy, was the individual who has personified Kazakhstan's Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference. The Secretariat thanks Mr. Karabalin and his staff for their commitment to the challenging task and for their excellent spirit of cooperation throughout the year.
3. During the Chairmanship of Kazakhstan, the Secretariat, and in particular, the Secretary General worked in close cooperation with Minister Karabalin and the relevant Kazakh energy officials. A number of political initiatives to improve the Energy Charter Process were proposed by Kazakhstan. There was a proposal to develop a mechanism for amicable dispute resolution in an effort to avoid disputes going to actual arbitration, or other formal legal recourse. Kazakhstan also recommended the establishment of an 'Energy Charter' Ombudsman for Investment Protection. The intention is to assist in the more effective resolution of disputes at an early stage and even to avoid the development of disputes.
4. The year has been remarkable in another positive way. For the first time, three countries signed the *1991 European Energy Charter* in one year. Mauritania, Yemen and Palestine became Signatories to the European Energy Charter.

5. There has been significant developments on Expansion and Outreach with a number of countries progressing their internal ratification process of the Energy Charter Treaty.
  - a. Indonesia and Mauritania commenced, and Morocco continued, preparation of their respective accession reports. Yemen confirmed that it would commence preparation of its accession report in 2015. Each of these reports is expected to be finalised in late 2015.
  - b. The Secretariat hosted secondees from Indonesia, Mauritania and Morocco who worked on the preparation of their respective countries accession reports. Yemen confirmed that a secondee will be nominated in the second half of 2015 to prepare that country's accession reports.
  - c. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan confirmed that its internal consultation on the potential ratification of the ECT should be finalised in early 2015.
  - d. Close contact has been maintained with the authorities in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan where the procedure is also underway to initiate ratification in Parliament.
  - e. Secondees from each of Mozambique, Nigeria and Tanzania were hosted by the Secretariat to prepare their respective countries consultations on signing the 1991 European Energy Charter and the International Energy Charter.
6. Montenegro completed its accession reports in 2014. The Ministry of Economy has confirmed that the ratification process is underway. Montenegro is anticipated to accede to the Energy Charter Treaty by early 2015.
7. The Secretariat also hosted secondees from each of China, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation who worked on issues of specific importance to their respective countries.
8. Despite sustained effort on Consolidation there has been no progress on the ratification by any of the five non-ratifying Signatories of the Energy Charter Treaty: Australia, Belarus, Iceland, Norway, or the Russian Federation.
9. The first major achievement of 2014 was the Five-Yearly Review under Article 34 (7) of the Energy Charter Treaty. The Conference approved the Conclusions of the Review under CC 492. Those conclusions were prepared from a comprehensive report on the work carried out in the previous five years (2009-2014). The report was based on the opinion of the signatories of the ECT (compiled through a questionnaire) and took into account the joint reply of the Industry Advisory Panel (IAP). The draft report was thoroughly discussed and finalised by the Strategy Group. The implementation of the conclusions will require further decisions by the Conference, through the Secretariat's Programme of Work for each year, and on the basis of available resources, both human and financial.

10. The second major achievement was without doubt the most significant. That was the negotiations on updating the Energy Charter. The updated text will be known as the International Energy Charter. Agreement on the draft text was reached subsequent to the fourth session of negotiations which were held in Brussels in late October. There is now a clear conviction from the Contracting Parties that the Energy Charter Treaty is set to become an important instrument for global energy governance, providing the common rules required for developing energy cooperation in a more interlinked world. The text of the International Energy Charter, like the Energy Charter of 1991, sets out agreed principles on international energy cooperation.
11. During the negotiations a total of twenty eight Observer and outreach country representatives were involved in the process as active participants or as observers. By engaging non-members in negotiations on a basic document on energy cooperation, the members of the Energy Charter Treaty demonstrated their openness to reach out to new partners on all continents, and to promote the existing principles of the Charter.
12. The Warsaw Process of updating the political platform of Energy Charter cooperation should now be successfully completed at the Ad Hoc High Level Conference in The Hague in May 2015. This will be an important opportunity for all countries willing to share the principles of the Energy Charter with the current constituency to engage with the Process.
13. The adoption of the Astana Road Map 2015-2019 should provide a further strong signal of openness to change not only to the Members and Observers of the Energy Charter Conference but to the other countries of the world interested in global energy governance.
14. The difficulties posed by the political conflict in the Ukraine was the catalyst for another significant initiative of the Energy Charter Secretariat in 2014. In response to concerns raised by that conflict and its potential impact on energy security, an Energy Security Contact Group was established to facilitate discussion between the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the European Union. An outline Early Warning Mechanism was proposed by the Secretariat as a means to share factual information on the flow of energy across borders, and was intended as a confidence building measure. The proposal was that the EWM might operate on three levels: preventive energy diplomacy, confidence building and emergency measures.

15. The Work of the Energy Security Contact Group and the ongoing crisis provided an impetus to the Trade and Transit Group in the preparation of a more general Early Warning Mechanism to be used by parties involved in or affected by an energy dispute, or facing a threat to their energy security. The Trade and Transit Group met on three occasions to develop a model Early Warning Mechanism. The model encourages states to bring energy security risks to the early attention of the Secretary General, who would then facilitate an active exchange of information among relevant parties and promote transparency in relation to this situation. A Contact Group would be convened to engage the parties in direct talks in order to evaluate the situation and to elaborate possible solutions. The establishment of a special Monitoring Mission to verify information is a further possibility.
16. The announcement of the final awards in the cases commenced by three former Yukos shareholders against the Russian Federation which commenced in 2005 under the Energy Charter Treaty was another significant event of 2014. In July, three arbitrators unanimously decided that the Russian Federation should compensate the claimants in the total aggregated amount of USD 50 billion for certain measures deemed to have had the effect equivalent to an expropriation of the claimant's investments in Yukos and thereby breaching Article 13 (1) of the Treaty. These three final awards, against which no appeal is possible, can be considered as landmark decisions in the legal understanding of the interaction between taxation and investment protection under the ECT.
17. The decisions of the tribunals have proven without any doubt that the Energy Charter Treaty is a very powerful instrument in the protection of foreign energy investments. At the same time it is also obvious that more work needs to be done to ensure transparency of the implementation of the Treaty, and to further define the sensitive boundaries between legitimate energy policy making by governments, and the protection of the rights of foreign energy investors.
18. The Secretariat's efforts towards greater transparency and accountability continued throughout the year particularly through the Secretary General's monthly updates on operational and financial developments. There was further work on access to the archives and *travaux préparatoires*. The upgrading and digitalisation of the Secretariat's archives was completed up to December 1994.
19. During the year 2014 the Energy Charter Knowledge Centre took substantial steps to expand upon its activity from the previous year. Three executive energy training programmes were held, two of which were in Brussels, and the third, in Astana, Kazakhstan. The programmes now represent a substantial, value added service provided by the Energy Charter Secretariat. The value added nature of the training is reflected in the titles of the programmes, which addressed highly practical themes such as 'using good governance practices to address global energy challenges' (Brussels, May); 'investment protection strategies for enhanced energy security'

(Astana, June); and ‘amicable settlement of investments disputes via mediation and conciliation’ (Brussels, November).

20. The training programmes are also becoming an increasingly relevant tool for the advancement of some of the Energy Charter’s policy objectives, particularly in relation to expansion and outreach activity. Participants came from as far away as China and Indonesia to participate, while the Astana training was held as part of a capacity building effort with the Republic of Kazakhstan. The total number of young professionals that have now graduated from the Knowledge Centre’s training programs has come close to reaching 150. This has come in just a little over one-and-a-half years of the programmes active existence.
21. The number of Research Fellow’s hosted by the Knowledge Centre during 2014 also expanded substantially, following a ‘call for research proposals’ put out early in the year. The presence of the Fellows bolstered the work of the Secretariat by providing research capacity at the academic level, supporting the Secretariat’s policy work in several areas. Key areas of work developed by Research Fellows and other short term staff hosted by the Centre included energy security, regional electricity cooperation, as well as an examination of the pros and cons of important outreach countries (such as China) coming into a closer relationship with the Energy Charter.
22. The Energy Charter Forums have been conceived and designed to replace the Energy Charter Policy Conference, and as a consequence to reduce the burden on the Energy Charter Secretariat, especially in terms of logistics and financial participation. The Forums are organised as part of the modernisation of the Energy Charter Process. The main goal is to reinforce the substance of the Energy Charter as an essential instrument for clarity in energy trade, investment and transit. Three successful Energy Forums were held so far in 2014. The objective has been to raise awareness amongst Members and non-Members of the Energy Charter’s core businesses and of governments’ increased involvement in the Charter’s visibility.
23. The first was the Moscow Energy Charter Forum on the topic of “Cross-Border Trade and Investment Flows as the Backbone of International Energy Security”. The Forum was jointly organised by the Secretariat, the Energy Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the RAS, under the patronage of the Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation, Mr. Alexander Novak. Over 150 participants from Russia and abroad gathered for the occasion. Representatives of governments, the energy sector, financial sector, regulatory authorities, law firms, international organisations, academia and the media focused on the challenges in achieving long-term energy security, effectiveness of asset swaps and other ways of bringing closer international energy markets, as well as the stronger and weaker points of various measures aimed at the promotion of investment flows.

24. The Ulaanbaatar Energy Charter Forum in June was the second Energy Forum event. It was organised by the Ministry of Energy of Mongolia and the Secretariat. The Forum focused on "Developing Renewable Energy through Gobitec and the Asian Supergrid in Northeast Asia". Policy makers, international organisations, business sector representatives and other stakeholders were given the opportunity to discuss the investment potential of renewables in the Gobi desert and learn about the proposal to connect national energy grids of Russia, Mongolia, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and Japan. The Ulaanbaatar Energy Charter Forum brought together 150 participants from Mongolia and countries in the region and was conducted at a high political level. The President of Mongolia, H.E. Mr. Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, delivered some opening remarks in which he gave a very clear political message: Mongolia will continue initiatives like this forum and will invite all interested countries to actively participate.
25. The third Energy Charter Forum was held in Bratislava in October. The Forum addressed the important topic of protection of critical energy infrastructure. The focus of the event was on the security and safety of non-nuclear critical energy networks against natural disasters and man-made disruptions. The Forum was organised in the context of cooperation between The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Secretariat in conjunction with the Government of the Slovak Republic. The Forum brought together more than one hundred participants from government, industry, international organisations and academia to discuss the criticality of energy networks for the security of supply. Three major aspects were discussed during the Forum: protection of energy infrastructure from natural disasters, the role of human factor and the importance of international cooperation in this area.
26. Two further Energy Charter Forums are planned for later in 2014. In November the Tokyo Energy Charter Forum will focus on Investment Protection under the Energy Charter Treaty. The Ashgabat Energy Charter Forum in December will focus on Reliable and Stable Transit of Energy.
27. The Secretariat continued to provide support and assistance to the Strategy Group, the Investment Group, the Trade and Transit Group, the PEEREA Working Group and the Budget Committee. The details of the activities of these Groups, Working Group and Committee are set out in their respective Reports. The Secretariat would like to express appreciation to all delegations for their active work this year.
28. Support and assistance to the Legal Advisory Committee was provided by the Secretariat. The Committee met once to discuss the proposed amendments to the Transit Conciliation Rules. The Secretariat also organised a successful meeting of the Legal Advisory Task Force (over 30 international experts from US, Asia and Europe – including the major arbitral institutions) on the current use and potential review of the second edition of the Secretariat's Model Agreements for cross-border pipelines

based on a comprehensive comparative study carried out by the Secretariat on existing intergovernmental agreements. It is expected that the Legal Advisory Task Force will meet once again in December to discuss the Draft report of the Secretariat on remedies under the Energy Charter Treaty, as well as the scope of the Model Investment Agreement.

29. The achievements of the Secretariat in 2014 are in great part due to the immense professional commitment and performance of the staff of the Secretariat. The staff is the most valuable asset of the Secretariat. Regardless of the length of their engagement, each member of the staff is strongly devoted to the goals of the Charter.
30. The efforts of experienced core staff members were very effectively complemented in 2014 by research fellows, young energy professionals and trainees. These individuals were engaged on the basis of short-term assignments, mainly working on Expansion and Outreach, the training courses for young energy professionals and the established Knowledge Centre.



## **HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN 2014**

### **January**

The Secretary General was in Moscow where he had constructive discussions with the Russian Minister of Energy, Mr. Alexander Novak. Minister Novak confirmed Russia's interest in strengthening the legal framework for the international energy sector and expressed strong support for the directions chosen for further developing the Charter Process. There was a further discussion of the steps necessary for Russia's deeper involvement in the Energy Charter Process. In his meeting with the Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Vassiliy Nebenzya, the ongoing modernisation of the Energy Charter was discussed.

During the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, the Secretary General met with the Minister of Environment and Water Resources of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nurlan Kapparov. Kazakhstan's Charter chairmanship was discussed along with the ongoing process of updating the 1991 Charter. The Secretary General also met with the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Dr. Majdy Rady. He encouraged the Egyptian government to increase its involvement in the Charter Process by signing the 1991 Charter. With the Turkish Deputy Minister of Energy, Dr. Hasan Mercan, the Secretary General discussed recent Conference decisions, the involvement of Turkey in updating the 1991 Energy Charter and in the Charter Review. The Secretary General also met with the Minister of Energy of the UAE Eng. Suhail Al Mazrouei, where the potential role of the UAE in the Charter constituency was discussed. With Mr. Liu Qi, Vice-Minister of the National Energy Administration of China, there was a discussion on the relevance of the ECT for China's investments and China's involvement in the modernisation of the 1991 Charter. With Mr. Frank Wouters, Deputy Director General of IRENA, the focus was on the ECT's investment protection provisions, which also cover investments in renewables, and strengthening the cooperation between the two organisations through reciprocal observership.

In Brussels, the Secretary General met with Tajikistan's First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources, Mr. Sulton Rahimov, to discuss the record of cooperation between Tajikistan and the Charter, and various planned projects, including the steps towards ratification by Tajikistan of the ECT Trade Amendment.

### **February**

The President of Turkmenistan, Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, received the Secretary General during a visit to Ashgabat. There were discussions on the significant synergies between Turkmenistan's call for an international agreement on energy security and transit and the ongoing modernisation of the Energy Charter Process. It was agreed to organise an Energy Charter Forum in Ashgabat in late 2014 to promote the implementation of Resolution 67/263, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2013 upon the initiative of Turkmenistan. Regional energy cooperation in Central Asia and

how the Energy Charter could facilitate the diversification of Turkmenistan's gas exports was also discussed. The Secretary General also had follow-up meetings with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Baymyrat Hojammedov, Minister of Oil and Gas Industry and Mineral Resources Mr. Muhammednur Khalylov, and with Mr. Yagshigeldi Kakayev, Director of the State Agency for the Management of the Use of Hydrocarbon Resources under the President of Turkmenistan.

The Secretary General addressed the first Berlin Energy Forum with a keynote speech on the role of the Energy Charter in facilitating investments in domestic sources of energy supply in Europe and energy transport infrastructure. The Secretariat also participated in the Second High-Level Meeting of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership in Addis-Ababa.

### **March**

In Prague the Secretary General met with the Czech Minister of Industry and Trade Mr. Jan Mládek and Deputy Minister Mr. Pavel Šolc. He also had a separate meeting with Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Jaroslav Kurfurst. In Bratislava the Secretary General met with the Slovak Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Mr. Miroslav Lajčák. In each of these meetings recent developments within the Energy Charter constituency, the work of the Energy Security Contact Group, and the ongoing modernisation of the 1991 Energy Charter were discussed. In Vienna there was a meeting with the Secretary General of OPEC Mr. Abdalla S. El-Badri to discuss recent developments in the energy sector, the ongoing Charter modernisation and further cooperation between OPEC and the Energy Charter.

### **April**

In the margins of the Lech Energy Forum the Secretary General had a series of meetings: the EU Commissioner for Energy Mr. Gunther Oettinger; the Minister of Energy of Lithuania, Mr. Jaroslav Neverovic; the Vice-Minister of Economy of Poland, Mr. Andrzej Dycha; and the Head of DETEC of Switzerland Ms. Doris Leuthard. The issues discussed related to the Ukraine crisis and the resulting tensions in EU-Russia relations. The Early Warning Mechanism proposed by the Energy Charter was discussed, as well as investment protection, international energy cooperation, the Energy Charter Treaty and its potential for global energy governance. In Brussels, the Secretary General met with the European Commissioner for Trade Mr. Karel De Gucht to discuss the complementarity of the investment dispute settlement mechanism under the ECT and the provisions of the negotiated Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

### **May**

In Moscow, the Secretary General met with the Russian Minister of Energy Mr. Alexander Novak and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Vassiliy Nebenzya to discuss recent developments in the Charter constituency and increasing Russia's involvement in the Charter Process. The Secretary General also participated in the

14<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting of the International Energy Forum opened by the Russian Prime Minister Mr. Dmitry Medvedev.

In Athens, the Secretary General met with EU Energy Council Chairman and Greek Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change Mr. Yannis Maniatis and Secretary General for Energy and Climate Change Prof. Konstantinos Mathioudakis. Minister Maniatis reiterated Greece's support for the Energy Charter Process in general and for the Secretariat's activities in addressing possible gas supply crises in particular, including the proposal on an early warning mechanism and related transparency measures. While in Athens the Secretary General visited the Institute of Energy for South-East Europe (IENE), where he met with IENE Chairman Mr. John Chatzivasilliadis, and spoke about the 2014 Energy Charter Review, negotiations on updating the 1991 Energy Charter and the investor-state dispute settlement transparency initiative. Knowledge Network on Energy Efficiency Policies and Indicators.

In Brussels, Mr. Kakha Kaladze, Vice Prime Minister of Georgia and Minister of Energy, and Ms. Mariam Valishvili, Deputy Minister of Energy and Vice-Chairman of the Energy Charter Conference visited the Secretariat. The preparations for Georgia's Energy Charter Chairmanship in 2015 and the flagship initiative on regional energy cooperation in the South Caucasus was discussed.

## **June**

The Secretary General addressed the 21<sup>st</sup> International Caspian Oil and Gas Conference in Baku on the importance of international rules for global energy governance.

In Baku, there was a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Energy of Azerbaijan, Mr. Natig Abbasov, to discuss priority areas of cooperation, including activities on the efficient use of energy resources and capacity building. During the same visit the Secretary General also met with Azerbaijan's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev to discuss the country's support for the Charter's expansion and outreach activities.

The Secretary General addressed the meeting of the Energy Council of the European Union in Luxembourg where he spoke about the implications of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine for the European Union's energy security.

In Astana, the Secretary General had a meeting with the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Mr. Karim Massimov to discuss the modernisation process of the Energy Charter and the Kazakh chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference. While in Astana, he also met with the Conference Chairman, Minister of Oil and Gas of Kazakhstan Mr. Uzakbay Karabalin. Mr. Karabalin raised several chairmanship initiatives, including a pre-arbitration dispute resolution mechanism and a proposal on an ombudsman for investment protection. He also supported the proposal of the Secretariat on an Early Warning Mechanism initiated in April 2014. The Secretary General also met with the Vice-Minister of Industry and New Technologies Mr. Bakhytzhan Jaxaliyev to discuss regional electricity cooperation in Central and South Asia.

In Beijing, the Secretary General met with Mr. Zhang Yuqing, Deputy Administrator of the National Energy Administration of China, Mr. Zhang Jun, Director General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Zhang Guobao, Chairman of the China Overseas

Development Association. They discussed China's involvement in the negotiations on updating the 1991 Energy Charter and joint activities to promote the Charter in China.

In Moscow, there was a meeting with the Russian Minister of Energy Alexander Novak. Russia's active involvement in the process of Energy Charter modernisation and the proposal to establish an early warning mechanism on the Charter platform to address the risk of energy flow disruptions were both discussed. They also talked about the work of the Charter's Energy Security Contact Group on the Ukraine Crisis, sharing experience in the area of investment arbitration, and various other issues including the continued status of Russian as a working language of the Energy Charter.

### **July**

As part of the efforts on Consolidation, the Secretary General went to Reykjavik. There he met with the Minister for Industry and Commerce of Iceland, Mrs. Árnadóttir, who indicated that there was no impediment to ratification by Iceland of the Treaty and that this might be completed by the end of 2014.

### **August**

The Secretary General went to Tbilisi where he met with the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Energy of Georgia, Mr. Kakha Kaladze and with Ms. Mariam Valishvili, Vice-Chairperson of the Energy Charter Conference and Deputy Minister of Energy, to discuss the priorities set for the 2015 Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference. They also discussed issues of regional power transit, investment relations between the member countries of the Energy Charter and the ongoing Charter modernisation process. While in Tbilisi, the Secretary General also met with Mr. David Jalagania, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Irina Milorava, the Chairperson of the Energy and Water Regulatory Commission, and a group of representatives of Georgian energy companies.

In Bratislava, the Secretary General met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Economy, Mr. Dušan Petřík. They discussed the situation on the supply of natural gas to the EU through Ukraine and practical engagement of Slovakia in the Energy Charter Process.

In Tehran, the Secretary General discussed with the Iranian Minister of Petroleum Mr. Bizhan Zangeneh that country's active participation in the ongoing Updated Energy Charter negotiations. Minister Zangeneh expressed Iran's strong interest in closer cooperation with the Energy Charter in the long run with an Updated Charter addressing energy producing countries' interests. The Secretary General also met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abbas Araghchi, who expressed Iran's commitment to engage with the international community and particularly the Energy Charter constituency for mutually beneficial cooperation in the energy sector. The Minister of Energy Mr. Hamid Chitchian emphasised that the process of updating the Energy Charter was viewed as "a gateway for Iran to join the Energy Charter constituency in the long run". While in Tehran, the Secretary General also met with the Secretary General of

IRENA Mr. Adnan Amin and Secretary General of ECO Mr. Shamil Aleskerov to discuss areas of cooperation in the months to come.

## **September**

The Energy Charter was invited for the first time to participate the 11<sup>th</sup> APEC Energy Ministerial Meeting in Beijing, reflecting the progress it had made in engaging with the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region. The Secretary General delivered a speech on trade and investment issues.

While in Beijing the Secretary General met with Deputy Administrator Mr. Zhang Yuqing of the National Energy Administration. They discussed the ongoing Updated Energy Charter negotiations. NEA officially presented China's position and comments on the negotiated text. There was also a discussion on the report on the ECT's relevance to China's relations with the Central Asian region. The Secretary General also met with Director Han of the Energy Research Institute, with whom he discussed issues of global energy governance, as well as further possibilities for the Charter's engagement with China.

In The Hague, there was a meeting with Mr. Henk Kamp, Minister of Economic Affairs of The Netherlands. The progress made in the preparation of the Updated Energy Charter and the Ad Hoc Energy Charter Conference in The Hague in spring 2015 were reviewed. Minister Kamp reiterated The Netherlands' support for the Charter Process and his interest in promoting it in non-member countries.

In Brussels, the Secretary General met with Mr. Stefan Füle, the then EU Commissioner for Enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to further enhance cooperation between the EU and the Energy Charter in line with the EU Energy Security Strategy of May 2014. Many of the countries of the EU Eastern Neighbourhood and of the Western Balkans are ECT members and therefore share a common legal framework for international energy relations with EU member states. Commissioner Füle also acknowledged the importance of extending the ECT's geographic reach to the South Neighbourhood, given that many countries of that region are already involved in the Charter Process as Observers.

The Secretary General also spoke at the European Energy Security Forum in Brussels on PEEREA's relevance to achieving the goal of increased energy security set by the EU and associated countries through greater inclusion of renewables in the region's energy mix.

## **October**

The Secretary General visited Budapest where he met with the Hungarian State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. István Mikola, Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of National Development, Ms. Andrea Kadar, and the Vice-President of the Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority Dr. Attila Nyikos. The discussions focused on recent activities and developments in the process of modernisation of the Energy Charter, as well as other issues of mutual interest and cooperation.

The Secretary General also participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club in Sochi, Russia.

While on mission to Washington, D.C., the Secretary General delivered a speech on the topic of “Russian Energy Relations with the West” during a special meeting of the think tank Atlantic Council.

In Rome, at the Ministerial Conference “Italy-Africa, Working Together for a Sustainable Energy Future” the Secretary General delivered a speech on the role and potential of the Energy Charter Treaty as an international benchmark to inspire and guide national reforms of policy and regulatory frameworks in order to provide an improved environment for private investments. The conference was organised within the framework of the Italian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

### **November**

The acting Prime Minister of the Republic of Yemen, H.E. Dr. Abdullah Mohsen Al-Akwa came to the office of the Energy Charter to sign the 1991 Energy Charter and discussed with the Secretary General his country’s commitment to becoming a Contracting Party.

The Secretary General met with the newly appointed Vice-President of the European Commission for Energy Union, Mr. Maroš Šefčovič in the office of the European Commission in Brussels