Comment by the Ministry of Economic Affairs of The Netherlands on the occasion of the Tbilisi Conference

"The Energy Charter is a cornerstone of international energy governance. During the past few years the Charter went trough a logical transformation. The International Energy Charter (IEC'15), which was adopted by 75 countries and international organisations in May 2015 in The Hague, is the first political milestone in the Energy Charter process after the Energy Charter Treaty came into force in '94. To be more precise: by extending its geographical scope the new Charter transcends the former Eurasian context. By including newcomers like China, Iran, Chile, Tanzania and South Korea the IEC'15 has presence on five continents (Europe, Asia, North America, South America, Oceania). Countries that sign the IEC'15 express their commitment to work together and engage in dialogue in the field of energy on basis of common principles and overcoming economic divisions. Signing the IEC'15 is a first step for countries to engage in the process towards the Treaty.

As founding father of the Energy Charter back in '91 we always have been very closely involved in the evolution of the Charter. Following this tradition it has been an honor to organise the recent Ministerial Conference on the International Energy Charter in The Hague. Now we call upon other countries to take the political lead and to find common ground with the existing parties to the Treaty and newcomers to further develop the Charter's basic principles, like investment protection, trade, transit and – since the adoption of the International Energy Charter – greening the energy supply and access to energy. We have high trust in the upcoming 2016 Japanese Energy Charter chairmanship as Japan, an important partner in the Energy Charter process, indicated to give an impulse to the second phase of the Charter's modernisation."