One year ago today, on 20 May 2015 in The Hague, the International Energy Charter was adopted and signed by 74 parties. This was a great moment in global energy cooperation. I remarked then that this was not the end of a process, but rather the beginning of a process. This indeed has been the case. In the year that has followed, seven further countries have signed the International Energy Charter: the Republic of Korea, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Montenegro, the Kingdom of Swaziland, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Many more countries are in the process of examining the benefits of signing the International Energy Charter. Within the existing constituency there is a continuation of the openness and willingness to reach out to new partners on all continents, and to promote the existing principles of the Energy Charter. For many of these Signatories this was their first engagement with the Energy Charter Process. They have helped to extend the geographical reach of the Energy Charter Process to new horizons particularly in the Asian and African continents and in Latin America.

Signing the International Energy Charter grants Observer status to the Energy Charter Conference, which allows such countries to take part in the discussions on shaping global energy governance. The ambition remains that this will result in a system of global rules for cooperation in energy. It confirms the belief that broader energy cooperation is required for economic progress, for social development and for the alleviation of
energy poverty. One year ago I outlined the hope and expectation that the International Energy Charter would do justice to the importance of energy security for producing, consuming and energy transit countries, and in a balanced manner.

Furthermore in the year that has passed since the adoption of the International Energy Charter, one hundred and ninety five countries reached a global Agreement within the UN Framework on Climate Change. The Paris Agreement implies a global transition to a low-carbon economy and sustainable energy model. To implement the goals of the Paris Agreement it is clear that enormous investments in energy infrastructure will be required. That is where the potential of the Energy Charter lies. Progress has been made, but much more needs to be done. As Secretary General I urge the Members and Observers of the Energy Charter Conference to continue to promote the values and principles of the International Energy Charter, to encourage other countries to sign. A global system of energy cooperation and governance is in the interest of all.

Energy Charter Conference and its Subsidiary Bodies

First meetings of the Energy Charter Investment Group and Trade and Transit Group in 2016
12 May 2016

The Energy Charter Investment Group met for the first time this year on 12 May 2016 in Brussels. The meeting addressed several important topics. Delegates discussed i.e. the new guidelines for the preparation of Investment Climate and Market Structure country reports, the final draft of guide on investment mediation and pilot project of the new flagship publication on the Energy Investment Risk Assessment. The next meeting of the Investment Group will be held on 20 September 2016. On 13 May 2016, the Energy Charter Trade and Transit Group meeting was held. The delegates discussed preliminary drafts of the Commentary to the Rules Concerning the Conduct of Conciliation of Transit Disputes and the Concept paper on a Multilateral Framework Agreement on Energy Transit. As an outcome of the meeting, the Group agreed to provide comments on these documents in writing to be finalised before the next meeting of the Group, which will take place on 22 September 2016.

Secretary General’s Activities

Bilateral meeting with OAPEC and keynote address at MENAREC6 in Kuwait City
3—4 April 2016

On Sunday 3 April 2016, the Energy Charter
Secretary General, Dr. Urban Rusnák met with the Secretary General of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), H.E. Mr. Abbas Al-Naqi at the headquarters of OAPEC in Kuwait city. Dr. Rusnák briefed Mr. Al-Naqi on the progress made in the Energy Charter Process in recent years including the modernisation process, the adoption of the International Energy Charter and the new engagements with the Energy Charter by countries from different continents. The Secretary General also discussed with Mr. Al-Naqi the potential for cooperation between both organisations taking into consideration that most of OAPEC member countries are observers to the Energy Charter Conference, and bearing in mind the importance of these countries in the energy sector. On 4 April 2016, Dr. Rusnák, delivered an opening keynote address at the inauguration of the sixth version of the Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference 'MENAREC6' which took place in Kuwait under the patronage of His Highness, the Emir of the State Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Dr. Rusnák referred to the key role of the Energy Charter Process in the worldwide discussions on renewable energy and climate change. The Energy Charter, he argued, "has the potential to provide a unique component of domestic policy to attract the great investments required, by strengthening the rule of law in the energy sector and promoting regulatory stability and market confidence." In the margins of the Conference, the Secretary General met with Mr. Ahmed Khaled Ahmad Al-Jassar, the Minister of Electricity and Water of Kuwait and Eng. Abdullah Mohsen Al-Akwa'a, the Minister of Electricity and Energy of Yemen, Heads of Delegations and many other representatives.

Meeting with Benelux Deputy Secretary General in Brussels
6 April 2016

On 6 April 2016, Dr. Urban Rusnák visited the Benelux Secretariat General in Brussels, the administrative office of the Benelux Union composed of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. He had a fruitful discussion with Benelux Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Luc Willems. Benelux is a good example of experience of regional integration relevant to the broader geographical scope of the Energy Charter. Each of the Benelux members is a Contracting Party to the Energy Charter Treaty.

CEEP interview on cross-border energy interconnectivity
22 April 2016

The Energy Charter Secretary General was recently interviewed by Central Europe Energy Partners (CEEP) on the topic of 'Cross-border interconnectivity is an important prerequisite to promote energy trade and regional co-operation', which was published in CEEP Report on 22 April 2016. The interview is available below with the express consent of CEEP.
Meeting with the Ambassador of Tajikistan in Brussels
2 May 2016

The Energy Charter Secretary General, Dr Urban Rusnák, met with the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Tajikistan to the Kingdom of Belgium Dr Erkinkhon Rahmatullozoda on 2 May 2016 in Brussels. The Secretary General updated the Ambassador on the ongoing Energy Charter activities, including progress on Investment Climate and Market Structure (ICMS) In-depth Review in the Energy Sector of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Meeting with Chargé d'Affaires of Nigeria in Brussels
10 May 2016

On 10 May 2016, Dr Urban Rusnák, met with Chargé d'Affaires of Nigeria, Mr. Umar Suleiman, at the Nigerian Embassy in Brussels. Productive bilateral discussions were held on how best to deepen and enhance Nigeria’s relationship with the Energy Charter and on how to accelerate Nigeria’s integration in the Energy Charter Process, particularly given that the country is the largest in Africa and the leader in the West African sub-region.

Conference on Europe's South-eastern periphery in the EU energy security
20 May 2016

The Energy Charter Secretary General Dr. Rusnák participated as a speaker at a conference on the role of Europe's SouthEastern Periphery in the EU Energy Security. Speakers included European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Cretu and Vice President of the European Parliament, Dimitris Papadimoulis. The added value of the Energy Charter to South East Europe but also neighbouring countries and beyond is that it can help with answer by providing an attractive investment climate. No region can by itself deal with these issues in isolation as in effect it's like being a passenger on a global train. The Energy Charter Treaty is a useful legal instrument for South East Europe and Western Balkans in the light of massive investments required in the years to come.
11th International Energy Conference in Teheran and meeting with the Vice-President of the Islamic Republic
30—31 May 2016

The Energy Charter opened the 11th International Energy Conference of Tehran with the Iranian Minister of Energy H.E. Mr H. Chitchian. Dr Rusnák highlighted the need for an improved climate for foreign investments in the energy sector in Iran. He referred to the International Energy Charter as a suitable and relevant instrument for Iran’s international energy relations. On May 31, 2016, the Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, Ambassador Urban Rusnák, held a formal meeting with the Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Masoumeh Ebtekar. Secretary General Rusnák briefed the Vice-President on the work of the Energy Charter in promoting and protecting energy investment amidst a heightening global policy setting addressing sustainability, the environment and climate change.

Energy Charter’ Secretariat Other Activities

Secretariat holds high-level meetings in Colombia
18 April 2016

On Monday 18 April 2016, a delegation from the Energy Charter Secretariat was received in Bogota by the Secretary General of the Senate of Colombia, Dr Gregorio Eljach Pacheco, and by the former Minister of Mines and Energy and current President of the National Federation of Departments, Dr Amylkar Acosta to discuss the follow-up to Colombia’s adoption and signing of the International Energy Charter in May 2015. The Secretariat’s management, represented by Denis Westerhof, and regulatory expert Ernesto Bonafé, and the Colombian energy collaborator, Augusto Hernández, also held meetings with the former Minister, Dr Carlos Medellín, with the President of the National Hydrocarbons Agency, Dr Mauricio de la Mora, and with senior advisers of the Ministry of Mines and Energy. At these meetings, the Colombian authorities expressed support for the Energy Charter Process and confirmed their readiness to take on a regional leadership role.
Secretariat signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Latin American Association of Energy Regulatory Entities
19 April 2016

The Energy Charter Secretariat participated in the XX. Annual Meeting of ARIAE, the Latin American Association of Energy Regulatory Entities (Asociación Iberoamericana de Entidades Reguladoras de la Energía) on 19-22 April 2016 in Cusco, Peru. The meeting was organised by the Peruvian supervisory body of energy and mining investments; Osinergmin. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Secretariat and ARIAE was signed by Mr Denis Westerhof on behalf of the Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák; and by Mr Jesus Tamayo Pacheco, President of Osinergmin on behalf of ARIAE. In a panel devoted to the regulatory framework and institutions, the Secretariat’s expert Mr Ernesto Bonafé presented the common objectives and complementary approaches of the Energy Charter and ARIAE to the provision of stable, predictable and transparent frameworks for energy investments, cross-border trade and transit. Enhanced regulatory frameworks are necessary to achieve a secure, sustainable and affordable energy in Latin America. ARIAE is a regional organisation that promotes the exchange of regulatory experiences in the energy sector, shares regulatory knowledge, and encourages communication between specialists and professionals from the member regulatory agencies.

EIAS Briefing Seminar
'International Arbitration - European and Asian perspectives'
28 April 2016

On the 28th April 2016, Director Stelvan Defilla spoke at a briefing seminar titled “International Arbitration - European and Asian Perspectives” organised in Brussels by the European Institute of Asian Studies. Mr. Defilla gave a brief introduction of the different dispute settlement mechanisms available in the Energy Charter Treaty. He discussed in particular the similarities of investment arbitration provisions in the latest Chinese Bilateral Investment Treaties vis-a-vis those in the Energy Charter Treaty. He made particular reference to the current efforts of the Energy Charter towards amicable dispute resolution mechanisms as illustrated by the ongoing discussion of Guidelines for Mediation, to be adopted later this year by the Energy Charter Conference.

Deputy Secretary General attends CASA-1000 launch ceremony in Tajikistan
12 May 2016

At the invitation of the authorities of Tajikistan,
the Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Selim Küneralp represented the Energy Charter Secretariat at the launching ceremony of the CASA-1000 Project which was held in Tursunzade on 12 May 2016.

Secretariat team attends Second Stakeholder Forum of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership in Milan
16 May 2016

At the invitation of the Italian authorities, a secretariat team composed of Mr. Selim Küneralp, Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Patrice Dreiski, Senior Expert-Expansion and Outreach and Mr. Matteo Barra, Investment Expert, attended the Second Stakeholder Forum of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership that was held in Milan on 16-17 May 2016.

8th Executive Training Programme to focus on energy security and challenges in light of COP21
17 May 2016

The Energy Charter Secretariat Knowledge Centre organised the 8th Executive Training Programme for Young Energy Professionals: Visegrad+ Session in Krakow, Poland, between 17-20 May 2016. The training focused on energy security and challenges to governance in light of the December 2015 Paris Agreement (COP21). Renowned international energy specialists from both governments and the private sector tackled a host of issues including: the impact of climate change on energy security; transition to low-carbon economies; the volume of investment required to secure energy transition; how to meet energy efficiency targets - all of this in the context of a chronic low oil price environment.

Energy Charter speaks on energy investments at VI. International Legal Forum in St. Petersburg
19 May 2016

On 19 May 2016, at the invitation of Inter-RAO, the Legal Counsel of the Energy Charter
Alejandro Carballo Leyda participated at a roundtable on investment attraction to the Russian energy sector. The panel concluded that the attraction of new investors to the energy sector depends to a large extent on the strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework, protecting the rights of investors. The legal counsel pointed out the relevant role of the Russian Investment Promotion Agency and of the business/investment ombudsman. Russia is a signatory of the Energy Charter Treaty.

In-Depth Energy Efficiency Review of Armenia mission underway in Yerevan
24 May 2016

On the 24 May 2016, as part of a three day mission linked to the In-depth report of the Energy Efficiency Policy and Programmes of Armenia under the Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects (PEEREA), an Energy Charter delegation comprised of national experts from Latvia, Norway and Romania, as well as representatives from the Secretariat, met with various Armenian and international stakeholders in Yerevan, Armenia.

Secretariat takes part in Algeria–EU Energy Business Forum in Algiers
24 May 2016

The Energy Charter Secretariat took part in the Algeria–EU Energy Business Forum on 24 May 2016 in Algiers, Algeria, which was opened by Algerian Minister of Energy H.E. Dr Salah Khebri and European Commissioner Energy and Climate Mr Miguel Arias Cañete.

Energy Charter meets Mission of China to the European Union
25 May 2016

Energy Charter Director visits Korea
25 May 2016

The Energy Charter Secretariat has been invited to present its views on establishing closer energy cooperation among Northeast Asian countries on 25 May 2016 in Seoul, Korea. An event organised by the Renewable Energy Institute (former Japan Renewable Energy Foundation) brought together various stakeholders that potentially can contribute to strengthening energetic ties among Northeast Asian countries.

Energy Charter participates at Danube Region Seminar on LNG in Brussels
26 May 2016

The Energy Charter Secretariat participated at the Third Stakeholder Seminar of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region dedicated to the topic of “LNG – Dream or Reality for the Danube Region?” on Thursday 26 May 2016 in Brussels. The event gathered more than 100 stakeholders active in the energy sector. The seminar was opened by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Hungary to the EU, Amb. Tibor Stelbaczyk and the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the EU, Amb. Jakub Durr, who highlighted the importance of energy security and LNG for the Danube region.

Energy Charter Secretariat Announcements

Energy Charter Award call for nominations open

The Energy Charter Secretariat has opened a call for nominations for the 2016 Energy Charter Award. This call is open from 1 June to 15 July 2016. This year constitutes the fourth edition of the Award, which is given annually to any individuals or entities in recognition of their deep involvement and valuable contribution to the Energy Charter Process.

$50 Billion Arbitration Awards against Russia quashed

The Hague District Court has quashed the $50 Billion arbitration awards against the Russian Federation. The Hague District Court reversed the awards on the grounds that the arbitral tribunals lacked jurisdiction since the Russian Federation had signed the Energy Charter Treaty, but never ratified it. The court considered that the wording of Article 45 of the ECT requires to consider whether or not the content of each separate article of the ECT is contrary to the constitution or other legislation of the state involved.

Letter of the Secretary General in "Nezavisimaya Gazeta"

A letter of the Energy Charter Secretary General, Dr. Urban Rusnáč, to the editorial office of the Russian newspaper "Nezavisimaya Gazeta" was
published on 13 April 2016 in the section "Polemics" in Russian. The letter was sent as a reaction to one of the articles which described the third energy package of the European Union (EU) as an instrument of the Energy Charter.

No contradiction between the Energy Charter Treaty and legislation of Jordan

During discussion on accession to the Energy Charter Treaty in the Parliament of Jordan, the Chairman of the Parliament Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources, Mr. Ra'ed Al-Khalayleh said that there was no contradiction between the Energy Charter Treaty and the legislation of Jordan.

Energy Charter Conference invites Mauritania to accede to Energy Charter Treaty


Upcoming Events

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<td>14 June 2016</td>
<td>Expert Meeting on removing pre-investment barriers in energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 June 2016</td>
<td>Strategy Group Meeting</td>
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<td>16 June 2016</td>
<td>Budget Committee; Panel Discussion on Energy Efficiency Policies; Procedural Issues Working Group Meeting</td>
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<td>28 June 2016</td>
<td>Industry Advisory Panel meeting after the ground-breaking ceremony for the Trans Adriatic pipeline (TAP) on the Southern Gas Corridor, Baden, Switzerland</td>
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<td>29-30 June 2016</td>
<td>Secretary General’s visit to China and participation in the G20 Energy Ministers Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 July 2016</td>
<td>Fourth International Meeting of Experts on Reliable and Stable Transit of Energy, Tirana, Albania</td>
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Energy Charter Publications

Regional Electricity Cooperation in the South Caucasus: Cross-border Trade Opportunities and Regional Regulatory Uncertainties

This occasional paper addresses major developments in cross-border electricity cooperation in the South Caucasus. The position of the South Caucasus, at a crossroads between the emerging Eurasian and European electricity markets, offers lucrative opportunities for cross-border trade and provides incentives for restoring the single transmission network that used to serve the countries of the region before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

This study examines regulatory, economic, and political factors that affect the prospects of a regional electricity market. Accordingly, the paper is organised into three parts, addressing institutional, economic and political developments in the region, and relevant barriers to more in-depth regional cooperation.