2016 Year of the Japanese Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference

27th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference takes place in Tokyo, Japan

H.E. Mr Fumio Kishida expressed gratitude that Japan had become the first country in East Asia to take the Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference this year, while the Energy Charter Treaty was gaining importance as the foundation of international cooperation and a contribute to strengthening the rule of law in the energy sector. Foreign Minister Kishida also reaffirmed Japan's continuous contribution to the modernisation and internationalisation of the Energy Charter Process.


“An investment climate in which companies can receive legitimate profits through their investments is necessary for the activation of energy investment. The Energy Charter Treaty functions as a multilateral legal framework and it has realised the ‘rule of law’. More concretely, it is playing a prominent role in promoting energy sector investment, improving stable supply and access, and encouraging the use of clean energy by legally securing stability and transparency of the investment climate between contracting parties.”

H.E. Mr Kentaro Sonoura, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Japan during the Ministerial Session

The Energy Charter Conference held its 27th meeting on 25-26 November 2016 in Tokyo, under the Chairmanship of Japan and the kind invitation of the Chairman of the Energy Charter Conference, Mr Fumio Kishida, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

After its conception 25 years ago, the Energy Charter Conference took place for the first time in East Asia. This is a milestone as it emphasises the increasing importance of the Asian region in the global energy landscape and also the role of the International Energy Charter as a universal regulatory framework for energy investment, cross-border trade, transit and energy efficiency. The relevance of the Energy Charter Process to global challenges was the topic of the ministerial conference in Tokyo. The goal of universal energy access under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the commitment to a low-carbon economy expressed in the Paris Agreement require, as stressed by the G20, continued investment in energy projects and better regional interconnection. Moreover, the G20 endeavours to improve universal access to affordable, reliable, clean, sustainable and modern energy services in Sub-Saharan and Asia-Pacific regions, which are key areas of expansion and outreach of the International Energy Charter.

The 27th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference was organised in three sessions over a day and a half. In the morning of Friday 25 November, the Statutory Session, open only to members and observers of the Energy Charter Conference, was held and discussed the internal work of the Energy Charter. There was an evaluation of the results achieved this year as well as an outline of the
activities and challenges for the coming years.

In the afternoon, an Outreach Event entitled "Global Energy Architecture and its Implications in Asia" followed. This event brought together non-observer countries and other international organisations and discussed the issues of strengthening energy security by better mobilisation of global energy architecture, addressing climate change and its implications in Asia as well as challenges and opportunities for better global energy future. The main objective of this event was to create a forum for interested countries to discuss the potential and benefits of a multilateral global energy architecture.

On 25 November, the fourth Energy Charter Award was bestowed upon Ms Klara Rakhmetova, the Energy Charter Project Manager at KAZENERGY Association. The Award was presented by H.E. Mr Kazuo Kodama, the Ambassador of Japan to the European Union and the Vice-Chairman of the Energy Charter Conference, together with the Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák during the Statutory Session of the 27th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference in Tokyo, Japan.

Ms Klara Rakhmetova accepted the Award in person and thanked the delegates for their recognition of her long-standing support of the Energy Charter Process and the honour the Award represents.

Ms Rakhmetova was nominated for her long-term representation of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Energy Charter Process, and as the most experienced delegate from the Energy Charter constituency. Ms Rakhmetova has been a stable and reliable counterpart between Kazakhstan and the Energy Charter Secretariat. She had welcomed and contributed to the transition of the Energy Charter from a regional organisation to an organisation of potential global energy governance. In 2014, during the Chairmanship of Kazakhstan, Ms Rakhmetova provided vital support for the Energy Charter Conference, promoting the country’s initiatives, inter alia, on exploring voluntary mechanisms for early amicable settlement of investment disputes and the possibility to resume negotiations of a Multilateral framework Agreement on Transit of energy resources, as set out in the Astana Declaration. Ms Rakhmetova is currently promoting the International Energy Charter within the Eurasian Economic Union. Due to the exceptional efforts of Ms Rakhmetova, the work of the Energy Charter has become well known in Kazakhstan and in the whole region.
Furthermore, the Energy Charter Conference welcomed six new observers to the Energy Charter Conference during a signing ceremony of the International Energy Charter on Friday 25 November. During the latter, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Guatemala, and three international organisations, i.e. the East African Community, G5 Sahel and the Economic Community of Central African States, signed the International Energy Charter Declaration, thus becoming observer to the Energy Charter. The ceremony extends the overall number of countries and organisations that signed the International Energy Charter to 80.

The 27th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference continued with the Ministerial Session on Saturday 26 November 2016, open also to international organisations and the business sector. It discussed the topics of the relevance of the Energy Charter Process to global challenges, mainly vis-à-vis its potential contributions to sustainable development and global efforts on climate change for Asia and Africa.

The second part of the Ministerial Session allowed for CEOs of energy industry enterprises to present their views. The Conference concluded with a presentation of the Tokyo Declaration on the Energy Charter and closing remarks of the Japanese hosts.

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Secretary General’s Activities

Visit to Ireland for high-level meetings with Government officials
3 November 2016

The Energy Charter Secretary General, Dr Urban Rusnák undertook a one-day visit to Dublin on Tuesday 2 November 2016. There he had a series of meetings with officials from Ireland’s Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. He also met with Minister Denis Naughten whose portfolio includes responsibility for Ireland’s energy policy. Among the topics discussed was the potential for Ireland of the Energy Charter Treaty in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement (COP 21) and of Brexit. The Secretary General also visited the office of Eirgrid, Ireland’s TSO. In the
evening Dr Rusnák along with Minister Naughten was a guest speaker at the annual dinner of the Energy Institute an important gathering of Irish energy businesses and policy makers.

Ambassador of Kenya H.E. Mr Johnson Weru receives the International Energy Charter 7 November 2016

The Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Rusnák met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya H.E. Mr Johnson Weru in Brussels on 4 November 2016. The Secretary General informed the Ambassador on his visit to Nairobi in August 2016 and the fruitful high level meetings held during his stay in Kenya. Mr James Nyamongo, from the state-owned Kenya Pipeline Company, joined the Energy Charter Secretariat shortly after the Secretary General’s visit to Nairobi to develop the relations between the International Energy Charter and the Ministry of Energy of Kenya and the Attorney General’s Office. The Ambassador expressed his appreciation for the informative visit and kindly communicated his support to the procedure underway in Kenya to sign the International Energy Charter in order to become an observer to the Energy Charter Conference.

International Energy Charter discussed at a meeting with the Ambassador of Guatemala in Brussels 22 November 2016

On Monday, 21 November 2016, the Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák met Ambassador Jose Alberto Briz of the Republic of Guatemala prior to the 27th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference this year in Tokyo, where the Central American country will join the Energy Charter Process, as an observer. The development of earlier contacts with the Government of Guatemala and also the results of the visit of the Secretary General to Latin America, paved the way for the first Central American country to join the International Energy Charter.


On 24 November, the Energy Charter Secretary General, Dr Urban Rusnák delivered a keynote speech in Session 5 on the topic of Producer-
Consumer Cooperation as part of the 5th Annual LNG Producer-Consumer Conference 2016 held in Tokyo, Japan. The Secretary General recapped the activities of the International Energy Charter in the area of LNG across its constituency, especially in the Asia-Pacific region and outlined future endeavours in this respect. He also underlined the indispensable role of the International Energy Charter and the Energy Charter Treaty in providing for a stable multilateral regulatory framework for all stakeholders in the energy sector, namely in the areas of cross-border trade and transit, and investment. The 5th annual LNG Producer-Consumer Conference was hosted by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan (METI) and the Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre (APERC).

In the margins of the LNG Producer-Consumer Conference, the Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Rusnák held a series of high-level bilateral meetings. On Wednesday 23 November, the Secretary General met with Ms Mika Ohbayashi, the Director of the Renewable Energy Institute of Japan and discussed potential areas of mutual cooperation between the International Energy Charter and the Institute, and Mr Ihsan A. Ismaeil, the Director General of the state-owned Iraqi South Gas Company, who confirmed Iraq’s interest to cooperate with the Energy Charter.

The following day on 24 November, he met with Mr Yosuke Takagi, the State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, Dr Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu, the Honourable Minister of State of the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources of Nigeria, and the delegation of Pakistan led by Mr Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources of the Government of Pakistan together with M. Adnan Gilani, the Chief Operating Officer of Pakistan LNG Ltd.

He also held discussion with Dr Xiansheng Sun, the Secretary General of the International Energy Forum and H.E. Alfonso G. Cusi, the Secretary of Energy of the Republic of the Philippines, with whom the Secretary General discussed a deeper engagement of the Philippines in the Energy
Charter Process as well as current expansion activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

**High-level bilateral meetings held during the 27th Energy Charter Conference in Tokyo**
24-26 November 2016

In the evening of 24 November, Dr Rusnák held a meeting with the Deputy Administrator of the National Energy Administration of China (NEA) Mr Li Fanrong where he discussed the main areas of cooperation between the International Energy Charter and China.

The following day, the Secretary General met with the delegations of the new observers to the Energy Charter Conference, Mr Ahmad Allam-Mi, the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Mr Elhadji Mohamed Najim, the Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel Secretariat and Mr Rodrigo Fernandez, the Vice Minister of Energy and Mines of Guatemala and discussed the next steps of their engagement in the Energy Charter Process.

Dr Rusnák also held meetings with Mr Batyr Ashyrov, Vice-Minister of Energy of Turkmenistan, with whom the upcoming Turkmenistan Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference in 2017 and its priorities were discussed, and Mr Hayk Harutyunyan, the Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Armenia, during which the partners discussed the ongoing and future cooperation within the framework of the EU4Energy Programme administered by the European Commission. The Secretary General also discussed Poland’s active role in the coming year in the Energy Charter Process with Mr Michał Kurtyka, the Undersecretary of State of the Ministry of Energy of Poland.

Moreover, the Secretary General met with H.E. Venetia Sebudandi, Ambassador of Rwanda to Japan and Ms Irene Muloni, Ms Jabulile Mashwama, the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy of Swaziland, and the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development of Uganda, with whom he discussed the possibility of a deeper engagement for Uganda in the Energy Charter, e.g. via a secondment programme.

Finally the Secretary General had extensive discussions with Mr Fumio Kishida, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan who is the Chairman of the Energy Charter Conference.

On 26 November, the Secretary General met with Mr Kentaro Sonoura, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and Ms Fatma Zohra Cherfi Talantikite, the General Secretary at the Ministry of Energy of Algeria.

He also met with the delegation of Iran led by Mr Hamid Chitchian, the Minister of Energy, with whom there was a discussion on an enhanced engagement with the Energy Charter Process following the signing of the International Energy Charter in Tokyo, as well as future areas of mutual cooperation, including integrating electricity markets in the region.
Dr Rusnák also held bilateral meetings with Mr Victor Vlad Grigorescu, the Minister of Energy of Romania, with whom he discussed the priorities of the 2018 Romanian Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference. There was also a meeting with Mr Ali Ahmad Osmani, the Minister of Energy and Water of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, where there was a discussion on the delivery of Investment Climate and Market Structure Review for Afghanistan in 2017 and on regional electricity cooperation between Central and South Asia.

Moreover, the Secretary General held discussions with Mr Christophe Bazivamo, the Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC) on the future relationship between the International Energy Charter and the EAC following its signing of the International Energy Charter declaration the day before.

The bilateral meetings concluded with Dr Tun Naing, the Deputy Minister of Electricity and Energy of Myanmar and Mr Lean Tun, the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Mines and Energy of Cambodia and a discussion on further enhancement of their countries’ relations with the International Energy Charter.

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**Energy Charter Secretariat’s Other Activities & Events**

**Slovakia, Malta and Estonia coordinate their EU presidency activities with International Energy Charter**

4 November 2016

On Thursday 3 November 2016, representatives of Slovakia, who currently holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU), and Malta and Estonia, who will be holding the Presidencies next year, visited the Energy Charter Secretariat to discuss their upcoming activities and cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Rusnák briefed the delegates on the organisational aspects of the 27th
Energy Charter Conference meeting to be held in Tokyo later this month under the Japanese Chairmanship of the Conference and invited them to participate to this high-level annual event. Moreover, the officials discussed potential areas of mutual cooperation in 2017. In particular, the Secretary General invited Malta to jointly contribute to the work of the Energy Charter on the energy security of island states as part of its EU presidency. The parties also discussed mutual coordination of the Secretariat’s internal modus operandi for next year’s Working Groups meetings. Malta will hold the Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2017, followed by Estonia in the second half. The year 2017 will also mark the Turkmenistan Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference.

Regional energy cooperation discussed in Almaty, Kazakhstan
11 November 2016

The 12th meeting of the Task Force on Regional Energy Cooperation in Central and South Asia (RECA) was held in Almaty on 10-11 November 2016. The meeting was jointly organised by the Energy Charter Secretariat and USAID Energy Links project. The meeting brought together representatives of the Ministries and energy companies from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as the representatives of regional organisations such as CDC “Energiya”, Executive Committee of CIS Electric Power Council and CASA-1000 IGC Secretariat. The meeting was opened by Mr Michael Curtis, Energy Team Leader of the USAID Mission in Central Asia, Mr Michael Bekker, Acting Chief of Party of Energy Links project, and Mr Kanat Botbaev, Expert of the Energy Charter Secretariat, on behalf of the Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák. The meeting addressed wide range of issues related to challenges and opportunities of energy cooperation in Central and South Asia.

Benefits of the International Energy Charter discussed with executive officers of Indian energy companies
23 November 2016

On Wednesday 23 November 2016, the Energy Charter Secretariat Knowledge Centre Principal Coordinator, Dr Marat Tarterov, provided an extensive briefing on the subject of cross-border energy cooperation to a delegation of 20 Indian executive officers and managers from large state-owned enterprises. The group of high level Indian managers were in Brussels on a one-week study tour and were participating in a sequence of specialised trainings on EU-related subject matter. The program for the Indian delegation was organised by the European Institute of Asian studies, with which the Secretariat cooperated with respect to the delivery of segments of the training exercise.