Nigeria signs the International Energy Charter

On 7 March 2017, the International Energy Charter welcomed its newest member as Nigeria signed the International Energy Charter signalling a historic day for Nigeria's energy community. The event took place at the State House in Abuja in a high-level ceremony chaired, on behalf of the Vice President H.E. Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, by the Hon. Minister for Justice and Attorney General Dr Abubakar Malami. The text was signed by the Hon. Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Ogbonnaya Onu, in the presence of the Dutch Ambassador Mr John Groffen, given the Kingdom of the Netherlands is the depository country of the International Energy Charter.

Kenya becomes Signatory of the International Energy Charter

The Republic of Kenya has joined the International Energy Charter following its signature by the Honourable Charles Keter, EGH, Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum, in a ceremony held on 20 March 2017 at the Energy Charter Secretariat in Brussels, which was also attended by H.E. Johnson Weru Ambassador of Kenya, H.E. Ata Serdarov Ambassador of Turkmenistan, H.E. Wepke Kingma Ambassador of the Netherlands, H.E. Mirjam Blaak Ambassador of Uganda, H.E. Olivier Nduhungirehe Ambassador of Rwanda and the Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák. The Secretary General of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States Dr Patrick Gomes was represented by Mr Henrique Manze.

Burkina Faso latest Signatory of the International Energy Charter

On 16 March 2017, H.E. Jacqueline Marie Zaba Nikiéma, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Burkina Faso to the Kingdom of Belgium and Permanent Representative to the European Union, signed the International Energy Charter. It follows the signature of Benin, Chad, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria, and two regional organisations to which Burkina Faso is a member, namely ECOWAS and G5 Sahel. The universal
principles of the International Energy Charter underpin cross-border electricity trade and mobilise investment to tackle the lack of access to modern, sustainable and affordable energy services.

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ENERGY CHARTER CONFERENCE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Energy transit discussed at the second meeting of the Energy Charter Implementation Group

On 16 March 2017, the Implementation Group held its meeting at the Energy Charter Secretariat which was chaired by the Vice Chair Ms. Klara Rakhmetova (Kazakhstan). The aim of the meeting was to identify particular issues and problems related to energy transit within the Energy Charter constituency. The delegations of Turkmenistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Georgia and Kazakhstan presented their views on the challenges of oil, natural gas and electricity transit in their respective countries and regions.

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SECRETARY GENERAL’S ACTIVITIES

Diplomatic and working meetings in Abuja, Nigeria

During his visit to Abuja on 6-7 March 2017 for the signing ceremony of the International Energy Charter, Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák had bilateral meetings with Ambassadors of Energy Charter contracting parties: H.E. Sadanobu Kusaoke of Japan, H.E. John Groffen of the Netherlands, H.E. Peter Holásek of the Slovak Republic and Richard Young, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation. These meetings were an opportunity to update Ambassadors on the increasing interest of African countries in the market-based principles of the Energy Charter and the importance of having Nigeria as one of the latest signatories. The technical assistance provided by the Secretariat needs to be boosted by the political and diplomatic support of Energy Charter member countries.

The Secretariat of OPEC and the Energy Charter Secretariat agree to develop closer cooperation

On 13 March 2017, OPEC Secretary General Mr Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo hosted a meeting with Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák at the OPEC headquarters in Vienna Austria. The meeting began with the acknowledgement that Nigeria, a long time OPEC member, has just recently

“Adherence to our commitments and respect to the framework established by the Energy Charter Treaty and the International Energy Charter will lead to a level playing field for the benefit of both the host States and the private investors.”

Mr Stelios Himonas,
Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Cyprus

“I have no doubt that being part of the Energy Charter will contribute to the enhancement of collaboration between EAC and our partners as well as the improvement of favourable investment climate for the energy sector in East Africa.”

Hon. Christophe Bazivamo, the Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community

“We believe that the Energy Charter has the potentials to serve as a forum to synergize efforts to ensure energy security; facilitate and support.”

H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan
signed the International Energy Charter becoming the third member of OPEC to adopt this political declaration, following Iraq and Iran. The International Energy Charter can be a useful tool in order to attract investment, create standardised policy frameworks, and to adopt best practices from the industry. During the meeting, Dr Rusnák pointed out that OPEC and the International Energy Charter are aligned in the belief that energy security deserves a holistic approach equally involving security of supply, demand, transit, and universal access.

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ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S OTHER ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

International Energy Charter contributes to the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation

Following the formal approval of the Energy Charter Conference (ECC) as an observer to the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), the ECC Secretariat was invited to contribute to the 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad, Pakistan, on March 1, 2017. Addressing the Summit on behalf of Energy Charter Secretariat Secretary General, Ambassador Urban Rusnak, Dr Marat Terterox stressed during his intervention that the accession of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) by ECO member states Iran and Pakistan, would send a powerful external signal to the effect that energy investments will benefit from legal security in those countries. He added that investments made from those very countries into the energy sectors of other ECT members would likewise benefit from reciprocal legal security.

Energy Charter Secretariat participates in the opening of the EU4ENERGY Regional Office in Tbilisi

The 10th of March 2017 marked the official opening of the EU4ENERGY Governance Project regional office in Tbilisi. The regional office will coordinate the project’s activities aimed at improving the energy legislative and regulatory framework in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The project is funded by the European Union and co-financed and implemented by the Energy Community Secretariat and the Energy Charter Secretariat. The objective of the EU4ENERGY Governance project

“Energy Charter will be the best platform for solving issues related to synchronization of grid system and accessibility in demand and supply issue. I am sure it can play an important role because energy trade is one of the issues that Energy Charter is promoting in this region. Afghanistan will be a good study case for Energy Charter for improving energy trade environment in the region.”

H.E. Mr Ali Ahmad Osmani, Minister of Energy and Water of Afghanistan
is to improve the legislative and regulatory environment and enhance the investment climate for key energy infrastructure projects in the Eastern Partnership countries. The Energy Charter Secretariat will be working in particular with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

**The International Energy Charter, participates in the G20 Energy Sustainability Working Group discussions**

The International Energy Charter, represented by Sarah Keay-Bright, participated in the G20 Energy Sustainability Working Group (ESWG) and the G20 Sustainability Working Group (SWG) discussions, held on 22-23 March 2017, in Berlin. Discussions centred around the development of an action plan on climate and energy for growth. The German Presidency of the G20 led the discussions with the objective of achieving agreement on areas for G20 cooperation and action in relation to accelerating the energy transition in ways that are cost-efficient while supporting objectives such as energy security, innovation, competitiveness, environmental protection, economic growth and job creation. Discussions paid particular attention to the development and implementation of investment frameworks that could deliver these objectives.

**The Industry Advisory Panel meets in Warsaw**

On 23 March 2017 the Industry Advisory Panel (IAP) of the Energy Charter held its 39th meeting in Warsaw, Poland. The meeting was hosted by Gas Transmission Operator GAZ-SYSTEM and was followed by a study visit to the LNG terminal in Świnoujście, Poland on 24 March. IAP session on LNG was attended by over 70 participants from the energy sector and governments. The main theme of the event was: “Pathways to Develop Flexible and Liquid LNG Market - Role of LNG in the global energy future.”