The Energy Charter Secretariat moves locations

The Energy Charter Secretariat is pleased to announce the final stages of preparation for an office-to-office move which took place in Brussels, Belgium during the week of 18-21 April. As of 24 April 2017, all functions related to the International Energy Charter activities will take place at the new premises: Boulevard de la Woluwe, 46 B-1200 Brussels, Belgium. For those familiar with the Secretariat’s previous location, little has changed, as the new building is less than 100 meters away from the previous site. Travel routes to the new premises remain the same as before:

By Metro:
The nearest metro stations are Tomberg and Roodebeek (Line 1, direction ‘Stockel/Stockkel’ if you are travelling from the centre of Brussels), both of which are 5-10 minutes’ walk from the Secretariat.

By Bus:
Bus no. 28 (Brabançonne – Konkel) stopping at ‘Voot’ or Bus no. 42 (Musée du Tram/Trammuseum – Viaduc E40/Viaduct E40) also stopping at ‘Voot’.

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ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

New Energy Charter Liaison Embassies established in Pakistan and Iran

Poland has designated its Embassies in Islamabad and Tehran as Energy Charter Liaison Embassies (ECLE). The Energy Charter Secretariat is grateful to Poland for its assistance in developing cooperation and involving Pakistan and Iran in the Energy Charter Process. The establishment of ECLEs in Islamabad and Tehran was confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland during a bilateral meeting with Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák which took place on 23rd March 2017 in the margins of the Industry Advisory Panel meeting in Warsaw. The objective of the Energy Charter’s expansion and outreach policy is the growth of the geographic coverage of the Energy Charter Treaty in the mutual interests of current Energy Charter Treaty members and acceding states. The implementation of this policy is considered the shared responsibility of Energy Charter Treaty members and the Energy Charter Secretariat. With the Secretariat’s assistance, the Energy Charter Treaty members provide their political support, either in the form of direct engagement with relevant countries or designating Energy Charter Liaison Embassies on a voluntary basis. Member governments contribute to the promotion of Charter principles, develop cooperation with ECLE host countries in areas covered by the Energy Charter Treaty and encourage these countries to accede to the Treaty. With the ECLEs in Pakistan and Tehran, there are now nine Energy Charter Liaison Embassies established.

Lunchtime Conference - A new International Energy Charter open to Africa. Experience from Swaziland and Uganda

The Energy Charter Secretariat is currently hosting two African energy experts, Mr
Usama Kaggwa of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development of Uganda, and Mr Mzwandile Thwala of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy of Swaziland, who are working on national energy efficiency reports and strategies in line with the common principles of the International Energy Charter. They will present their work on Thursday 20 April 2017 at a “Lunchtime Conference External Cooperation Infopoint” organised by the European Commission. Attendance is free subject to registration.

EU-Central Asia Expert Coordination Meeting held at the new premises of the Energy Charter Secretariat

On 21 April 2017, Energy Charter Secretariat organised an Expert Coordination meeting on the EU strategy for Central Asia, with representatives of the European Union and Central Asia. The meeting was attended by the European External Action Service, DG Development and Cooperation, DG Energy, and representatives of five Central Asian Embassies to Brussels. The aim of the meeting was to contribute to the consultation process initiated by the European Union to reconsider its cooperation priorities with the region of Central Asia. The Meeting was the first to take place at the Secretariat’s new headquarters in Brussels, and welcomed Embassy representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Central Asian representatives reconfirmed the interest of enhancing energy cooperation with the European Union. Participants agreed that the meeting came at the right moment during the mid-term review of the EU Strategy for Central Asia in order to start the discussion on addressing specific needs of the countries.

Iran and representatives of the Energy Charter Secretariat explore cooperation activities

During 19-21 April 2017, a delegation of officials from the Energy Charter Secretariat conducted a visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to explore how Iran’s recent signature of the International Energy Charter can be of practical benefit for the country. Iran signed the International Energy Charter in November 2016 in Tokyo, leading to the emergence of a number of work-streams and cooperation initiatives with the Energy Charter Secretariat since that time. During the visit to Tehran, the government of Iran and the Secretariat took these activities further forward. Continuing its enduring efforts to build mutually beneficial cooperation, the Secretariat delegation held extensive meetings with Iranian partners from the Ministry of Energy; the Niroo Research Institute; the Iranian power generation, transmission and distribution company: TAVANIR; and the Iranian state thermal power plants holding company (TPPH). The delegation from the Secretariat also held an information round table with members of the Iranian Parliament, Petroleum and Natural Resources Committee, where Iranian law makers were informed about the legal and political basis of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), the Energy Charter political declarations and other relevant binding and non-binding documents. The informational discussions with MPs received wide media coverage, bringing Iran and the International Energy Charter closer together, and explaining the complimentary role that the Charter plays in relation to OPEC, the IEA, IRENA and other global energy governance actors.
While Iran is well known internationally as an oil and gas powerhouse, developing the country’s power sector, particularly with respect to exporting electricity, is one of Iran’s energy policy priorities. Within this context, the Ministry of Energy of Iran and the Energy Charter Secretariat plan to co-host a stakeholders’ seminar on regional electricity markets in the Caspian and Gulf region during the summer months. This activity builds on a previous line of work on electricity cooperation in Central Asia and the South Caucasus, which the Secretariat has been developing with stakeholders from those regions in recent years. The prospect of conducting an in-depth, cost-benefit analysis of Iran’s accession to the ECT was also discussed within the context of cooperation between the Secretariat’s Knowledge Centre and Iranian partner institutes from the scientific community. The Secretariat delegation also held meetings with the Ambassador of Poland in Tehran, as the Polish embassy was recently designated as one of the Liaison Embassies of the International Energy Charter in Iran, and the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), which has its HQ in Tehran. Eight of the ten ECO member countries are also ECT members, and the International Energy Charter was just recently proclaimed as an ECO observer at the ECO Summit held in Islamabad, Pakistan, on March 1, 2017.

**The Government of Swaziland and the International Energy Charter collaborate to improve energy efficiency in Swaziland**

For the past three months, the Energy Charter Secretariat hosted Mr Mzwandile Thwala, of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy of Swaziland for the objective of developing an Energy Efficiency Policy for Swaziland. The policy aims to ensure energy efficiency plays its full role in the development of the country as an energy resource. The policy work is designed to ensure effective governance for energy efficiency, including improvements in the institutional and legislative frameworks, funding mechanisms, stakeholder engagement and the development of strategies and action plans for implementation. Furthermore, the policy work makes recommendations to improve energy efficiency in buildings (commercial and residential), industrial energy efficiency, energy performance standards, lighting, labelling, and integration of renewable energy systems. The successful collaboration between the Secretariat and Swaziland’s authorities is being funded by the European Commission, DG DEVCO, through the EU Technical Assistance Facility for the SE4ALL initiative. As a signatory of the 2015 International Energy Charter, Swaziland has benefited from the Secretariat’s technical assistance in order to strengthen its
Tomorrow (Friday) is my last day at the Energy Charter Secretariat. It seems like it was just last week that I quit the security of my job at the Namibia Ports Authority as Commercial & Legal Graduate to become an intern at the Energy Charter Secretariat. I was tired of the limited growth prospects that I would receive if I limited myself to only my country – we have a total population of just 2.3 Million people. I decided that I want to “change the world”, to design, engineer, and direct the course of development of the continent, through energy. My priorities at the Secretariat were very clear. I wanted to learn as much as I can about the energy industry, the challenges, the opportunities, the realities, and specifically how I can use this knowledge to plow back in Africa. Today, I have literally read all the available disputes on our website (Thanks to Ruslan), I have a rudimentary understanding of different energy environments from around the world, I have read almost every English publication I could get my hands on at the office, and I am left with more questions and more confused than I have arrived here – I think that is a good sign. My plans for the future are a bit complicated. I never schooled outside Namibia, in fact, this is the first time I was out of my country for a continuous time of more than a week. I received interview requests from newspapers from Namibia and South Africa asking me to tell them more about the International Energy Charter. When I reach home, I have a few TV interviews and conferences that would require me to talk about my experience at the Energy Charter Secretariat. This might appear insignificant when looked at through your lens, but understand that back at home, a few people like me exist. I am both humbled and proud to have worked with each and every one of you. I will of course lobby for my government to strongly consider joining the Energy Charter Treaty, and I, therefore, hope that I will stay in contact with some of you so that we can reach that milestone. I know I will need some support and guidance in publishing some papers related to the Energy Charter, and I will need the direct contact to link up people from home so that we work on that goal. I also hope that you will all keep me in mind when you see opportunities out there for people with my profile. Believe me when I say that it is very rare for us to get opportunities that might sometimes be taken for granted on this side of the world. The other day my mother was telling how casually I just take the bus/metro to anywhere I want in Brussels. If you ever are in Namibia or South Africa, please let me know. Maybe I can link you up with nice places to go, people to see, or things to do. You have not seen the last me, I am sure I will meet some of you. Others will become part the story in my plan to “change the world!” – it sounds so cliché.

Thank you again.
Gawie Kanjemba