2017 Year of the Turkmen Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference

ENERGY CHARTER CONFERENCE & ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Meetings of the Strategy Group and the Budget Committee held on 7-9 June 2017

The meeting of the Strategy Group and the Budget Committee of the International Energy Charter took place on 7-9 June 2017 at the Energy Charter Secretariat in Brussels. For the first time a full day was devoted to an Energy Dialogue on policy and market regulation, while the second day addressed issues related to the orientation and functioning of the Organisation.

The Energy Dialogue was opened by high-level representatives of the current, outgoing and incoming Chairmanships of the Energy Charter Conference (Turkmenistan, Japan, Romania): Mr Batyr Ashyrov, Deputy Minister of Energy of Turkmenistan; Mr Kazuo Kodama, Ambassador of Japan to the EU; and Ms Elena Popescu, Director General for Energy Policies, Ministry of Energy of Romania.

The Energy Dialogue hosted the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Energy Charter Secretariat and the Nigeria Energy Commission, represented by its Director-General Professor Eli Jidere Bala. Furthermore, the Strategy Group dealt with a series of current issues, including the mid-term review of the 2017 Turkmen Chairmanship; the International Energy Charter’s strategic communications; the UNCTAD World Investment Report issued on 7 June 2017 and how the new trends in International Investment Agreements could be considered for further modernisation of the Energy Charter Process.

SECRETARY GENERAL’S ACTIVITIES

Secretary General Meets High-Level Officials in Astana

On the margins of the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák held a number of bilateral meetings in Astana, Kazakhstan. The Secretary General met the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Vice-Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan to discuss the ongoing Energy Charter activities including chairmanship of Turkmenistan, Energy Investment Risk Assessment and Energy Diplomatic Dialogues. The Secretary General had a discussion with Ms Olga Algaerova, Executive Secretary of UNECE, and Dr Shamshad Akhtar, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, to explore synergies and joint coordination with UN regional economic commissions.

Dr Rusnák also met with Mr Vadim Zakrevsky, Deputy Minister of Energy of Belarus, Ms Nataliya Boyko, Deputy Minister of Energy and Coal Industry of

Quotes on the International Energy Charter

Condolences expressed for the passing of Azerbaijan Minister of Energy Mr Natiq Aliyev:

Mr Aliyev was a long-time member of the International Energy Charter family having visited the Secretariat in Brussels as recently as 2015. Mr Aliyev was deeply involved in the 25th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference in 2014 and he was visited by Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák in October 2016 to discuss transit issues for the region. Minister Aliyev was a genuine leader and a trustful partner in all endeavours. He was a veteran of the energy sector and a wise mentor. He will be sadly missed.”

12 June 2017
Dr Urban Rusnák

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Kairat Abdrakhmanov and Vice-Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan Mr Bakhytzhan Jaxaliyev

Mr Natiq Aliyev
Ukraine, Mr Azamat Omorov, Deputy Chairman of the State Committee of Industry, Energy and Subsoil of the Kyrgyz Republic to discuss bilateral cooperation issues. JSC “KazTransOil” hosted a meeting with the Energy Charter team to learn more about the ECT and its instrument such as dispute settlement and conciliation mechanisms as well as on ongoing work on a multilateral transit instrument. Mr Dimash Dossanov, the Director General of KazTransOil expressed interest for the Kazakhstan’s biggest oil transporting company for closer involvement in Energy Charter activities.

ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

The Energy Charter Secretariat concludes the tenth Executive Training Programme

The Energy Charter Secretariat Knowledge Centre delivered the tenth edition of its series of Executive Training Programmes for Young Professionals in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan during 1-2 June, 2017. This two-day long programme brought together more than one hundred participants, including 60 officials from Turkmenistan’s oil, gas and electricity sectors. Dozens of students from the International Oil and Gas University of Turkmenistan also joined the event in order to benefit from the very extensive knowledge transfer made available under the program. The key theme of the training program was the role of natural gas, oil and electricity in Eurasian energy security.

High level information workshop on the Energy Charter Treaty held for the first time in Islamabad, Pakistan

Energy transit, dispute resolution and investment protection under the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) were the key themes addressed during a workshop jointly organized by the Energy Charter Secretariat and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources of Pakistan and held in Islamabad on June 5, 2017. The panel discussion was attended by almost forty representatives of various state sector stakeholder agencies and private sector entities. The workshop generated an intensive and professional exchange of opinions centred on energy transit, resolution of disputes and investment protection standards.

First Investment Mediator accreditation training

On 12-14 June 2017, the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR), the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), the International Mediation Institute (IMI) and the International Energy Charter successfully conducted the first mediator accreditation training for investment disputes at the ICSID’s facilities in Washington, D.C. The training covered the context and framework of investor-State dispute settlement, considerations specific to investor-State mediation, inter-cultural competency, process design and conduct of an effective investor-State mediation, and ethical challenges, among other topics.
Energy Charter Secretariat participates at a Conference hosted by the World Trade Institute

In Bern, Switzerland on 19-20 June, the Energy Charter Secretariat took part in a conference hosted by the World Trade Institute (WTI). The event titled; ‘Is a Multilateral Investment Treaty Needed?’ and was attended by more than 80 people. Ms Iryna De Meyer, the Secretariat’s representative presented the Energy Charter Treaty as an existing sectoral multilateral investment agreement. Particular emphasis was made on the modernization and expansion efforts of the Energy Charter Process.

Secretariat addresses annual high level Russian Gas Society Conference in Berlin

On 15 June, 2017, Energy Charter Secretariat Official, Dr Marat Terterov, addressed the annual Russian Gas Society conference: ‘Prospects for Russia-EU energy cooperation – gas aspects’ in Berlin, Germany. This event represents an ongoing effort by key Russian gas industry stakeholders to promote an energy dialogue with EU counterparts. The conference is one of the important European-level platforms where Russia and the EU can address their areas of common concern in the gas trade.


On 26 June 2017, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences hosted the Global Forum on Energy Security in Beijing, China. Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák delivered a keynote speech devoted to the topic “Energy in transition: Toward collective energy security”. The topic highlighted the particular importance of cooperation among countries which may have diverging interests regarding energy security, and that countries can still strive for “win-win” situations without sacrificing their own energy security matters.

On the margin of the Forum, Dr Rusnák spoke with Ms Robin Dunnigan, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Bureau of Energy Resources, who welcomed the Energy Charter Diplomatic Dialogues initiative, which is an initiative that brings together energy diplomats from producing, consuming, transit, and energy deprived countries. The Secretary General also met the President of the Electric Power Planning & Engineering Institute (EPPEI), Mr Xie Qiuye. In September the EPPEI will host a meeting of the Energy Charter Industrial Advisory Panel, paving the way for further industrial engagement in the region.

The United Arab Emirates becomes the 86th country to sign the International Energy Charter

On June 29, 2017 the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed the International Energy Charter political declaration, becoming the 86th country to take this significant step within the context of its energy policy development. The signing ceremony took place
in Paris and was attended by high level state officials. The UAE becomes the first country of the Gulf Cooperation Council to sign the Declaration, joining the International Energy Charter family.

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INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CHARTER FOR EU4ENERGY*


From May 29 to June 2 Belarus received a delegation from the Energy Charter Secretariat to assess the investment climate in the country’s energy sector and support the country in developing its energy efficiency policy. As the aim was two-fold this took the form of a fact-finding mission in the run-up to ECS’s upcoming publication—the Energy Investment Risk Assessment (EIRA) - as well as a first meeting of the EU4Energy Task-force for Scaling up Energy Efficiency Investment in Belarus.

Over the course of the week, the ECS interviewed representatives from government, industry and other stakeholders in order to spot potential risks discouraging investment in the Belarusian energy sector. The findings will be elaborated in the EIRA pilot publication, which will evaluate investment risks and propose mitigating measures. For the 2017 report, a total of ten countries will be analysed and compared, Belarus being the third after Armenia and Mongolia. The final report’s results will be presented at the 28th Energy Charter Conference in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. From there, the EIRA is expected to serve as a guide for countries seeking to enhance their own investment climates.

*The EU4Energy Programme is implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union

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"(...) The ECT could become an appropriate institutional “umbrella” providing for such regional “rules of the game”. It is the global, multilateral framework with a significant membership having relevant institutional mechanisms and a successful record of unbiased cooperation in the area of energy transit and investment protection. This would be particularly relevant for infrastructure projects in the trans-Afgan energy corridor."