Implementation Group sets up transit subgroup and discusses modernisation of the ECT

On 1 February 2018, the Energy Charter Secretariat hosted its first meeting of the Implementation Group for 2018. The Implementation Group had substantial discussions on soft law instruments and agreed that a Technical subgroup on transit could best address these issues. The Group approved the nomination of Ms Klara Rakhmetova from the Republic of Kazakhstan as the Chair of the subgroup and invited the delegations to submit their nominations for a Vice-chair. The Technical subgroup will convene in May 2018 to address the topics of access to infrastructure, transit tariffs and update of Model Agreements.

Delegates’ discussions also focused on the provisions of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) with attention to their treatment of sustainable energy resources. Delegates considered the need for introducing updates or changes to the ECT or the Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects (PEEREA) and discussions continue.

First Meeting of the Subgroup on Modernisation Takes Place in Brussels

At the 28th Energy Charter Conference meeting held on 28-29 November 2017, in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, the Conference approved the timeline for discussions on the modernisation process. (see Conference Decision CCDEC201723).

On 2 February 2018, the Subgroup on Modernisation met for the first time to examine issues related to the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). The meeting was held at the Energy Charter Secretariat in Brussels and attracted over 70 interested attendees, representing Members and Observers of the Conference.

Afghanistan and the International Energy Charter agree to enhance cooperation efforts

On 9 February 2018, Energy Charter Secretary-General Dr Urban Rusnák met with the Minister of Finance of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, H.E. Mr Eklil Ahmad Hakimi. The Secretary-General took the opportunity to update the Minister on the latest developments in the Energy Charter Process and on other
ongoing projects involving Afghanistan.

The Energy Charter Secretariat is currently developing a report addressing Afghanistan’s Investment Climate and Market Structure (ICMS) in cooperation with the government, while the country is also participating in the Energy Investment Risk Assessment (EIRA) project. The EIRA project aims to provide policy and legal recommendations to improve the energy investment climate.

ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

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Nigeria and the International Energy Charter Deepening Cooperation in 2018

On 2 February 2018, the Energy Charter Secretariat hosted the first subgroup meeting on Modernisation that attracted a host of representatives from all around the world to discuss the next steps forward in the Energy Charter Process. On the margins of the meeting, Energy Charter Secretary General Dr Urban Rusnák met with the Nigerian delegation to confirm ongoing joint cooperation and activities. The Nigerian delegation was represented by the Director General of the Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN), Professor Bala Eli Jidere and Director Joseph Olayande, Director of Energy Planning and Analysis at the Commission.

The joint collaboration efforts centre on Nigeria’s participation in the public and extended version of the Energy Investment Risk Assessment (EIRA) project which Nigeria is part of, as it is a strategic and useful instrument that can help the Nigerian government monitor the performance of the energy sector and areas of necessary improvement based on the specified indicators.

The East African Community invites participation from the International Energy Charter


The Secretary-General of the East African Community, Ambassador Libérat Mfumukeko, requested the participation of the International Energy Charter at the Donor’s Round Table. The Donor Round Table, which was at ministerial level, looked to generate refined outcomes to be subsequently presented to EAC Heads of State of Infrastructure and Health, Financing and Development.


International Energy Charter Publications


China Investment Report

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In memoriam: Ruud Lubbers, founder of the Energy Charter Process

The Energy Charter Secretariat is very saddened to learn of the passing away of the man unanimously acknowledged to be the ‘Founding Father’ of the Energy Charter, Ruud Lubbers.

Ruud Lubbers was one of the most prominent European and international political figures of the 1970s, 80s and 90s. He was Prime Minister of the Netherlands between 1982 and 1994, also being the youngest man in the country’s history to hold the position. He led the Netherlands during some of the momentous events of the late 20th Century, including the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. It was against this backdrop that the ‘Lubbers Plan’ first came to prominence, when this statesman developed an initiative to connect ‘East and West’ through cooperation in the field of energy. His vision and political drive soon led to the founding ‘bricks and mortar’ of the Energy Charter Process, eventually leading to nearly 50 countries signing the Energy Charter Treaty in December 1994. The Energy Charter Process was going from strength to strength.

Ruud Lubbers remained a great friend of the Energy Charter long after his departure from big politics in Europe. He actively lent his stature to the process during the ensuing years of his life, making multiple VIP speaker appearances on various occasions upon the request of the Energy Charter Secretariat. He also gave time to the ‘future generations’ of energy specialists working within the Charter Process, occasionally reflecting on the early years of the Energy Charter with participants in the Secretariat’s training events for young professionals. During the 24th Annual Ministerial Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference held in Nicosia in 2013, Ruud Lubbers became the honored recipient of the First Energy Charter Award for service to the Energy Charter Process.

He lived long enough to witness some of his core legacies for the Energy Charter as the process continued to evolve further, including the inauguration of the International Energy Charter as the gateway to the full globalisation of the energy convergence process which he started. The International Energy Charter, a political declaration which modernised the European Energy Charter declaration of 1991, opened the door to dozens of new countries from Africa, Asia and the Americas to join the Energy Charter family, endorsing its core values and principles.

Ruud Lubbers was a guest of honor at the Ministerial Conference on the International Energy Charter held in The Hague, capital city of the Netherlands, in May 2015, where he received a standing ovation from high level national delegations from all around the world following his key note speech, which can be accessed here.

The Secretariat expresses its most sincere condolences to his family and to all associated persons in the Netherlands and his many friends around the world.
Belarus looks to expand Electricity Market Rules

On 28 February and 1 March 2018, the Energy Charter Secretariat conducted the first of three capacity-building workshops on electricity market rules in Minsk, Belarus. Staff from the Ministry of Energy and state energy companies, including Belenergo, participated in the interactive training sessions.

Belarus is currently considering reforms to develop its electricity market including defining the roles and responsibilities of market actors. The Secretariat has been working with representatives of the Belarusian electricity sector to help refine the market rules in line with the EU best practices.

The roundtable discussions addressed topics such as the delineation of wholesale and retail markets for generators and suppliers, cost-reflective tariff structures, grid codes for connecting to networks and real-time operations such as dispatching electricity to the market. The fundamental issue is how to efficiently organise Belarus’s electricity sector in light of the anticipated over-capacity in the near future.

“We highly value the support provided by the Energy Charter Secretariat in the context of EU4Energy, which is based on best international and European practices,” said Ms Olga Matsko, consultant to the Department of Strategic Development and Internal Investment Cooperation of the Ministry of Energy. “Today’s training seminar on support for preparing secondary legislation in the context of the Law on Electricity is very relevant and timely concerning planned measures for improving the organisational structure of the electricity sector, tariff-structuring systems, establishing electricity markets and so forth.”

*Funded under the EU4Energy Initiative of the European Union