Energy Investment Risk Assessment publication launch

The International Energy Charter is pleased to announce the launch of the Energy Investment Risk Assessment publication - #EIRA2018. The launch of this flagship publication is open to the public and will take place on the 3rd of October 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. The event will open with a keynote speech from the European Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič. For more information including registration please click here or visit our website.

ENERGY CHARTER CONFERENCE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Implementation group and Subgroup on Modernisation meets in Brussels

On 6 September 2018 the sub-group on Modernisation meeting took place in Brussels. The Sub-Group adopted the list of topics to be discussed during the Modernisation process which will be proposed to the Conference for approval.

On 7 September 2017 the 5th Implementation Group meeting took place. Delegations were actively engaged in discussions on model dispute management instrument and standardisation of provisions in LNG sale/purchase agreements.

SECRETARY GENERAL’S ACTIVITIES

The ONS Summit 2018 takes place in Norway

At the end of August 2018, high-level energy executives from around the world gathered in Stavanger, Norway for two biennial events - the Offshore Northern Seas (ONS) Summit in cooperation with the Munich Security Conference. On 26-27 August, followed by the ONS Conference and Exhibition 27-31 August. Both events involved high-level government officials, top industry representatives and academics. The International Energy Charter was represented by Secretary-General Dr Urban Rusnák who took part in the Summit which explored the challenges facing the global energy market and current energy security issues.

The International Energy Charter and Visegrád countries share common aims

On 7 September 2018, Energy Charter Secretary-General Dr Urban Rusnák was invited to participate in a working breakfast with the Deputy Permanent
Representatives of the Visegrád countries; Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary. The breakfast took place at the Perm. Representation to European Union of Slovakia, which is fitting since Slovakia currently holds the Visegrád rotating presidency.

The cordial discussions revolved around a number of topics that are currently being perused within the framework of the Energy Charter Process. Dr Rusnák updated on the current stage of the Modernisation process which is of significant importance to all Contracting Parties of the Energy Charter Treaty.

ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

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Panama Ambassador pays courtesy visit to the Energy Charter Secretariat

On 1 August 2018, the new Ambassador of Panama in Brussels H.E. Miguel Verzbolovskis paid a courtesy visit to meet with Energy Charter Secretary-General Dr Urban Rusnák. The meeting allowed the resumption of the positive collaboration between Panama and the International Energy Charter since it acquired observer status in 2017. Panama is interested in sharing common standards on investment promotion, trade and transit. The Panama Canal is an essential link in the global LNG supply chain, and the country has inaugurated this year the first LNG terminal in Central America. In the electricity sector, Panama is part of the Regional Electricity Market composed of six Central American countries.

Investment Promotion Centre assists countries with improving the investment climate

In 2017 the Investment Promotion Centre was established within the Energy Charter Secretariat to assist countries in developing their investment promotion activities in the energy sector. The Investment Promotion Centre assists in knowledge exchange and sharing best practices on energy investments. It aims at increasing the overall investment climate of States and provides a platform for building long-term relationships between host countries and investors.

Governments can approach the Investment Promotion Centre:

- to engage in policy discussions with the energy industry on how to stimulate new business and investment opportunities. The Investment Promotion Centre constitutes a multilateral platform for facilitating dialogue and matching industry organisations or individual investors and governments;
- to take part in the flagship publication of the Energy Charter Secretariat, the Energy Investment Risk Assessment (EIRA). EIRA evaluates specific risks affecting energy investment that can be mitigated through adjustments to policy, legal and regulatory frameworks. It aims to identify policy gaps, provide learning opportunities, and stimulate reforms which make the investment climate of countries more robust and reduce the risk of investor-State disputes;
- to gain assistance in implementing the non-binding guidelines of the
Investment Facilitation Toolbox. The Investment Facilitation Toolbox serves as an instrument to improve countries’ administrative and institutional capability to ensure that investors have favourable investment conditions. The Toolbox contains a checklist of policy options for removing non-discriminatory and de facto barriers to the establishment (entry) of energy investments. Typical barriers relate to excessive bureaucracy, burdensome investment approval procedures, low transparency, unpredictability, complex institutional governance and inefficient judiciary.

The Investment Promotion Centre can be contacted by email to investment@encharter.org.

Ambassador of Turkmenistan visits the Energy Charter Secretariat

On the 5 September 2018, His Excellency Mr Chary Atayev, the recently appointed ambassador of Turkmenistan to the Kingdom of Belgium, paid a courtesy visit to the Energy Charter Secretariat and met with Secretary-General Dr Urban Rusnák.

Turkmenistan is one of the original signatories of the Energy Charter Treaty and was hosting the 27th Energy Charter Conference as a chair country in 2017. The country is also among the key producers of hydrocarbons in the region and has been actively advancing and promoting international initiatives aimed at the creation of multilateral transit and transport corridors.

2018 Energy Charter Treaty Forum discusses “Key Issues in International Arbitration”

On September 11, 2018, the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) hosted the Energy Charter Treaty Forum in Paris. The event was jointly organised by the Energy Charter Secretariat, ICSID, the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce (SCC) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA).

The forum examined key issues in international dispute settlement through the lens of energy-sector arbitration and mediation. Leading arbitration practitioners, legal experts, academics and representatives from arbitral institutions explored:

- Advocacy in international arbitration involving energy disputes
- Settling investment disputes without tribunal rulings
- Damage calculations in international arbitration
- Cybersecurity in international arbitration and mediation
Fostering Stakeholder Engagement in Law- and Policy-Making Armenia’s Energy Sector

On 13 September 2018 in Yerevan, Armenia, the Energy Charter Secretariat together with the Ministry of Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resources of the Republic of Armenia and the EU Delegation to Armenia convened a communication workshop on developing a code of good practices for stakeholder consultations and inter-ministerial coordination.

Considering constructive commentary from several societal actors throughout the legislative process is an essential ingredient for creating more accountable, open and transparent governance. It also fosters a less risky and more predictable legal and regulatory environment for attracting investments in the energy sector, including in energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, which are two areas the Government of Armenia has previously considered as priorities for development.

In some respects, Armenia already has a forward-thinking culture when it comes to stakeholder participation in the policymaking process. Recent events have propelled a sense of civic engagement among citizens who consider themselves co-creators of the country they live in.

However, there is still more that can be done to improve stakeholder consultation in Armenia. For instance, one recommendation is for the Ministry to coordinate regular sessions to discuss designated topics as opposed to Ministry officials relying on excerpts of external expertise. Another recommendation is to include stakeholders in the process of drafting of new policies and legislation from the beginning.

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