SECRETARY GENERAL’S ACTIVITIES

International Energy Charter contributes to the EU Conference on Central Asia

On 12 April 2019, the European Commission hosted the Sustainable Energy in Central Asia Conference. It discussed clean energy policies, technologies and projects in the region, and the mutual interests of both the EU and Central Asian countries in advancing the clean energy transition.

Energy Charter Secretary-General Dr Urban Rusnák addressed the conference with opening remarks along with Mr Dominique Ristori, Director General for Energy of the European Commission, and Mr Luc Devigne, Director for Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia of the European External Action Service. In his speech, Dr Rusnák stressed the importance of energy cooperation between the EU and Central Asia and highlighted the role of the International Energy Charter to facilitate this cooperation.

The Energy Charter Secretariat also contributed to the session on Regional Cooperation in the field of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources. The Secretariat’s officials underlined the challenges which Central Asian power systems face, such as ageing infrastructure, under-investment and performance inefficiencies of public monopolies. The role of Afghanistan in facilitating energy cooperation in Central Asia was also discussed.

ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Brainstorming Session on Preventing Investment Disputes Organised at the UN Headquarters


The event was organised with the support of the UNCITRAL, the World Bank, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It generated an interactive discussion among representatives of different international organisations, government officials and non-governmental organisations. Dialogues that took place during the meeting centered around establishing synergies among International organisations working...
In 2018, the ECS produced the Model Instrument on Management of Investment Disputes, which deals with practical issues to facilitate a framework for managing investment disputes. This instrument is a result of cooperation between the ECS, government representatives and international organisations such as the World Bank, International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes, and International Mediation Institute. The ECS continues to work on development of complementary tools to the Model Instrument for effective prevention of investment disputes.

Students from the Erasmus University Rotterdam visit the Secretariat

On 17 April 2019, the ECS hosted a group of students from the Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands. Students enrolled in Masters in International and European Public Law programme came to learn more about the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), the Secretariat’s activities and the global energy environment. Targeted presentations delivered by legal and policy experts of the Secretariat focused on dispute settlement, energy efficiency, energy investment and energy transit. In addition, the Expansion Unit presented the Energy Charter’s growing international cooperation with observer and outreach countries in Africa and Asia. In order to share country specific challenges in the energy sector and the role of ECT in local context, seconded officials from Azerbaijan and Yemen joined the discussions. This covered Azerbaijan’s main priorities during its 2020 Chairmanship in the Energy Charter Conference, which include rapid deployment of renewable energy sources, improved energy efficiency and enhanced supply security. How the ECT could help a country like Yemen, a post-conflict country, in attracting energy investments, especially in the area of rural electrification gave some real life examples to the students.
Legal and Expansion Units of the ECS visited the Republic of the Gambia on 23-25 April 2019 to deliver a workshop on the topic of “Better Governance Structure and Improved Investment Outlook”. The event was co-organised with the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy of The Gambia. The workshop was the first event of its kind in the Gambia and aimed to support the country’s accession to the ECT by providing stakeholders with essential information about the Treaty and the process.

During the workshop, ECS experts presented fundamental principles of the Energy Charter Process to relevant Gambian energy stakeholders such as investment promotion, transit facilitation and energy efficiency. The participants included officials from regulatory authorities for electricity and water, the Gambian Investment and Export Promotion Agency, the Ministries of Justice, Trade, and Finance, as well as the private sector, the Delegation of the EU in the Gambia and energy-related NGOs.

The Secretariat’s officials also took the opportunity to hold over ten bilateral meetings with stakeholders relevant for the Gambia’s accession to the ECT. Since signing the International Energy Charter and becoming an Observer to the Energy Charter Conference in 2017, the Gambia made meaningful progress in its accession to the ECT. The Gambia has participated in the Energy Charter Process and has completed one of the three accession reports. The next two reports are expected to be completed this year with an aim to accede to the ECT in 2020.

Senegal hosts a roundtable on the Energy Charter Process

Expansion and Legal Units of the ECS also visited Senegal on 29 April 2019 as part of their mission to West Africa. In Senegal, ECS experts organised a stakeholder roundtable, hosted by the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy of Senegal, with a range of stakeholders relevant to the country’s accession to the ECT.

Senegal signed the International Energy Charter declaration in September 2016 and became an Observer country to the Energy Charter Conference. It has since completed one of the three ECT accession reports. The final two reports are expected to be submitted in 2019. In addition to Gambia and Senegal, Nigeria is also moving towards ECT accession.

Senegal’s energy challenges are substantial. The government is prioritising expansion of energy access in rural areas, acceleration of electrification, reduction of import dependence on fossil fuels and diversification of foreign investment portfolio. The ECT accession could assist Senegal with addressing these challenges, in particular attracting foreign investment and facilitate technology transfer in the energy sector.

and diversification of the foreign investment portfolio. The ECT accession could assist Senegal with foreign investment and technology transfer in the energy sector.
Third EU4Energy Steering Committee Meeting in Paris

On 5 April 2019, Dr Urban Rusnák participated in the third EU4Energy Steering Committee meeting in Paris, France. The meeting was attended by high-level officials from the Energy Ministries of the 11 partner countries, European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) and representatives of the implementing partners - International Energy Agency (IEA), Energy Community Secretariat, EU4Energy Communication project and the ECS.

The morning session was dedicated to discussing results and future plans within components of the EU4Energy Data and the EU4Energy policy, led by the IEA. The main deliverables planned for the last year of the EU4Energy implementation include country Roadmaps and Energy Policy In-Depth Review Reports for all 11 partner countries.

During the afternoon sessions, the meeting focused on the EU4Energy Governance actions over the last twelve months and adopted the work plans for the next year. The EU4Energy country coordinators from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus expressed their appreciation and satisfaction for the ongoing support provided by the ECS in strengthening their national regulatory frameworks on energy and efficiency. All partner countries called for the continuation of the technical assistance programme beyond 2020.

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