Energy transition is highlighted at the Baku International Energy Charter Forum

Transition to renewables in power generation, transport, heating and cooling: modern challenges and trends was discussed at the Baku International Energy Charter Forum which was held on 28 October 2020 by the means of a videoconference. Over 180 participants, including high-level government officials and leading experts from 40 countries, international organisations, energy companies, academia as well as mass media, took part in the event.

The Forum participants were welcomed by the Chair of the Energy Charter Conference HE Parviz Shahbazov, Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Dr. Urban Rusnák, the Secretary-General of the International Energy Charter, and Ms. Cristina Lobillo Borrero, Director of Energy Policy, Directorate-General for Energy of the European Commission. High-level officials from Albania, Romania, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Iran, Economic Cooperation Organization and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation further elaborated on the common benefits of accelerating energy transition worldwide.

The Forum addressed the topics of clean energy transition and sustainable energy in two main sessions. Reputable experts from Austria, Azerbaijan, Japan, IRENA, SolarPower Europe, Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency and the International Energy Charter shared best practices and lessons learnt on integration of renewable energy sources and promotion of energy efficiency measures. The event was concluded by the remarks from the Vice-Chair of the Energy Charter Conference Mr. Samir Valiyev, Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Even more renewable energy investors rely on treaty protection: updated statistics of investment arbitration cases under the Energy Charter Treaty

Following the recent initiation of arbitral proceedings in Fin.Doc S.r.l. and others v. Romania and Encavis and others v. Italy, the total number of investment disputes under the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) that concern renewable energy sources is now 80 (approx. 60%). Majority of all investment disputes under the Treaty are brought by small or medium enterprises (approx. 60%).

Information about the claims has been compiled on the basis of public sources, including specialised reporting. Statistics of the ECT cases is available here.
Public communication on the third negotiation round on the modernisation of the ECT

On 3-6 November 2020, the Third Negotiation Round on the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) was held by videoconference. Taking into account the list of agreed topics for modernisation of the ECT and the suggested policy options, during the Third Negotiation Round held by the Modernisation Group, the following topics were addressed:

- Pre-investment;
- REIO;
- Obsolete provisions;
- Remaining topics from the previous negotiation rounds.

The Modernisation Group discussed the aforementioned topics on the basis of submissions and comments provided by the delegations before and during the negotiation round. The goal of this round was to explain and clarify the positions and find common ground for the discussion without prejudice to any delegation’s final decision.

Full text of public communication is available on the International Energy Charter web-site in English and Russian.

SECRETARY GENERAL’S ACTIVITIES

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College of Europe: Talk with Dr Urban Rusnák, Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat

On 7 December 2020, the College of Europe “Energy Group”, supported by the European Energy Policy Chair, invited Dr Urban Rusnák, the Secretary-General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, to talk about the ongoing negotiations on the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty. The Secretary-General delivered a presentation on the Treaty’s modernisation process which was followed by a Q&A session.

The event was open for all College of Europe students, as well as for the wider public.

Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq in Brussels visited the Secretariat

On 30th September, Ambassador. Urban Rusnák, the Secretary-General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, received in his office, H.E. Mr. Sadiq Al-RIKABI, the Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq in Brussels. The Secretary-General briefed Mr. Al-RIKABI on the Energy Charter Process and the relations between the Secretariat and the Republic of Iraq which is an Observer country to the Energy Charter Conference since 2016.

The Secretary-General also informed the Ambassador Al-RIKABI about the Modernisation process, the Energy Investment Risks Assessment, and the provided an overview of the work of the Secretariat.

Ambassador Al-RIKABI thanked the Secretary-General for the meeting and the information provided and welcomed to strengthen further the cooperation between the Secretariat, the Contracting Parties and the Republic of Iraq, Mr. A-RIKABI also assured the Secretary-General of embassy’s facilitation of different initiatives in this direction between the Secretariat and related Iraqi authorities.
**Vacancies**

Position of Deputy Secretary-General of the Energy Charter Secretariat

**Call for Internships**

Please visit the web-site of the Energy Charter Secretariat (www.energycharter.org) for additional information.

**Energy Charter Secretariat publishes Energy Investment Risk Assessment 2020**


EIRA assesses risks to energy investment that can be mitigated by adjusting legal and regulatory frameworks. The publication benchmarks the performance of countries against international best practices and guides them on improving the investment climate. It highlights the key strengths and areas for improvement in each country, gives recommendations to improve results, and assists policymakers in designing risk mitigation plans. Thirty countries spanning Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe, including 4 new entrants, participated in the 2020 edition of the report.

#EIRA2020 was launched with the participation of high-level representatives of governments, diplomatic missions, international organisations, financial institutions, industry, professional associations and mass media.

**COGEN Europe becomes the 67th member of the Industry Advisory Panel**

On 8 December 2020, the International Energy Charter Industry Advisory Panel (IAP) welcomed COGEN Europe as its 67th member.

COGEN Europe represents 13 national associations and 50 organisations in the entire value chain of the cogeneration industry. The vision of the organisation includes creation of a resilient, decentralised and carbon-neutral European energy system by 2050 with cogeneration as its backbone, empowering European citizens and industry to generate their own efficient, reliable and affordable clean heat and power locally.

**Energy Charter Secretariat contributes to the UN ESCAP capacity building activities in Mongolia**

On 7 October 2020 the Energy Charter Secretariat’s Knowledge Centre delivered a virtual training on energy transit for the government officials of Mongolia to support UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific activities to strengthen sub-regional connectivity in East and North-East Asia through effective economic corridor management.

Prior to the training, the Secretariat developed a training module comprising of learning materials, reference reading and case studies on energy security and the role of transit as well as organisational and regulatory aspects of natural gas transit. An interactive session brought together over fifty participants from the government of Mongolia involved in the implementation of the Economic Corridor Programme, including representatives of the Investment Research Centre under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Energy and other related agencies and policy institutes working on energy.

**Promoting integration of power markets in the ECO Region**

On 14 October 2020, the Energy Charter Secretariat in cooperation with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Secretariat organised a technical workshop on the topic of “Perspectives and Challenges of Regional Electricity Markets: Harnessing Trade and Investment Opportunities”. The event brought together over forty government officials and energy experts from eight ECO Member States, international and regional organisations. The representatives of the European Commission, Eurasian Economic Commission, World Bank and Asian Development Bank shared best practices and lessons learnt on power market integration and implementation of infrastructure projects.
Second Joint OPEC-ECS-OPEC FUND Annual Legal Workshop

On 13 October 2020, OPEC, Energy Charter Secretariat and OPEC Fund jointly organized a legal workshop titled “Law of the Energy Transition”. This year, the workshop focused on legal and regulatory aspects of energy transition and was composed of three principal sessions. Seventeen speakers representing industry, prominent international law firms and think tanks, international organizations and academia, have delivered their presentations in an engaging and interactive fashion for a large audience and sparked very enthusiastic and insightful discussions and Q&A sessions.

16th Regional Energy Cooperation Taskforce Meeting Takes Place

On 2 November 2020, the Energy Charter Secretariat and the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Uzbekistan acting as host and co-organizer this year, held in virtual fashion the 16th Meeting of the Taskforce on Regional Energy Cooperation in Central and South Asia. The meeting has focused on its traditional objectives and new projects and initiatives in the power sector. Thirty participants representing national energy agencies and ministries as well as companies engaged in generation, transmission and distribution of electricity from five Central Asian states, Afghanistan, Mongolia and CIS Power Council have listened to updates, reports and presentations.

Beijing Research Centre holds its annual meeting

On 12 November 2020, China Electricity Council (CEC)-International Energy Charter Joint Research Centre held its annual meeting via videoconference. The event brought together the members of the Steering Committee, Academic Board, representatives of CEC along with its member organisations and the Energy Charter Secretariat. Vice-President and Secretary General of CEC Mr. Yu Chongde and Secretary-General of the International Energy Charter Dr. Urban Rusnák opened the meeting by stressing the importance of continued cooperation despite the challenges related to COVID-19. Representatives of CEC and its member organisations presented the outcomes of two studies on “Electrification Development and Outlook in China” and “Development of Low-carbon Energy and the Mechanism of Market’. The presentations from the Energy Charter Secretariat on Energy Investment Risk Assessment (EIRA) and The Role of Cross-border and Regional Cooperation in the Energy Transition complemented the discussions.