On 1-4 June 2021, the Fifth Negotiation Round on the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) was held by videoconference. The Modernisation Group discussed the topics of Transit, Sustainable development and corporate social responsibility, Dispute settlement and Definition of Economic Activities in the Energy Sector on the basis of the progress made in the previous negotiation rounds, as well as submissions and comments provided by the delegations before and during the Fifth Round of Negotiations.

The Sixth Round of negotiations will take place on 6-9 July 2021 by videoconference.

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

**Quote**

“The Yerevan International Energy Charter Forum is the first public event under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Armenia in the Energy Charter Conference. The theme of today’s forum - “Facilitating Energy Infrastructure for Sustainable Development” - is fully aligned with the priorities of the Chairmanship in 2021. Recognizing the global energy challenges, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure strongly believes that enhanced connectivity, energy bridges and corridors, and open and competitive energy markets are crucial in attaining the objectives of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and facilitating energy transition."

Mr. Hakob Vardanyan, Vice-Chair of the Energy Charter Conference, Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia

Yerevan International Energy Charter Forum

On Wednesday, 16 June 2021 the high-level Yerevan International Energy Charter Forum took place online discussing the topic “Facilitating Energy Infrastructure for Sustainable Development”. The Forum was jointly organized and hosted by the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia and the International Energy Charter. The Forum was the first public event under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Armenia in the Energy Charter Conference. Recognizing global energy challenges, trusting in enhanced connectivity, believing in open and competitive energy markets are crucial steps in attaining the objectives of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals and facilitating energy transition. Almost 100 participants, including high-level officials and leading experts from 35 countries, international organisations, energy industry and academia participated in the discussions that highlighted the importance of continuing political dialogue to facilitate regional cooperation, energy trade and investments in cross-border infrastructure based on the Energy Charter Process.
SECRETARY GENERAL’S ACTIVITIES

Newly designated Kazakhstan’s Ambassador to the EU visited the Energy Charter Secretariat

Today, the 20 May 2021 the Secretary-General of the International Energy Charter, Mr. Urban Rusnák, received the newly appointed Head of the Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the European Union, H.E. Mr. Margulan Baimukhan.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Secretary-General Rusnák, congratulated the Ambassador Baimukhan on his assumption and wished him fruitful work.

During the meeting, partners discussed the most pressing issues of international cooperation in the energy sector and the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty.

Ambassador Baimukhan stressed that Kazakhstan is interested in deepening further international energy cooperation and underlined the importance of modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). He pointed out that for the ECT modernisation the consensus is necessary and the sovereignty of all Contracting Parties shall be respected. Kazakhstan is actively participating in negotiations and is committed to the success of the process.

ENERGY CHARTER SECRETARIAT’S ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Energy Charter Secretariat contributes to the European Union Visitors Programme (EUVP)

On Monday 29 March 2021 the Energy Charter Secretariat participated in the European Union Visitors Programme (EUVP). The programme aims to offer visiting experts from a range of targeted countries access to first-hand information about the EU, including its founding values, the way it functions, as well as some of its core activities, policies and perspectives.

It also provides external international experts and scientists the possibility of discussing topics of interest with specific EU institutions and agencies in order to further develop and strengthen cooperation between the EU and a range of targeted countries. The programme is currently implemented virtually (online) and managed by the European Parliament.

The Secretariat was the first in line of a number of EU-related agencies and institutions requested by the European Parliament to provide visiting Lebanese expert, Ms Jessica Obeid, with an overview of the Energy Charter Process. Lebanon has a good history of relations with the Energy Charter process, long being slated within the context of the policy of Consolidation, Expansion and Outreach (CONEXO) as a country of interest. This briefing provided the Lebanese visiting expert with an opportunity to learn more about the members and observers of the Energy Charter Treaty, the Treaty accession process, and relations between the Energy Charter Conference and the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).
Uzbekistan is using the International Energy Charter on its way to carbon neutrality

The Energy Charter Secretariat (ECS) participated in a hybrid event jointly organized by the Mission of Uzbekistan to the EU and the ECS on “Fostering ground breaking European investment in Uzbekistan as a means of powering economic growth and creating jobs galore”

The ECS was physically represented by Dr. Marat Tertorev, the Head of Expansion of the ECS as moderator, Dr. Antonenko, the Head of Energy Efficiency and Secretary General Dr. Rusnák, who gave a key-note speech on the importance of the current Siemens Gas-Power-Plant investment in Uzbekistan leading the way to carbon neutrality by 2050 and clean energy transition, as well as the importance of technology transfer and Foreign Direct Investments. Uzbekistan is one of the founding members of the Energy Charter Treaty and this Foreign Direct Investment by Siemens once again shows the importance of the Energy Charter Treaty and its voluntary instruments aimed at investment facilitation and assessment of investment risks.

National Energy Summit: Nigeria retains interest in joining the Energy Charter Treaty

The National Energy Summit of Nigeria, postponed by over a year due to the Corona virus pandemic, took place in Abuja, Nigeria, over two long days on April 13-14, 2021. The Summit was organized by the government of Nigeria, namely by the Energy Commission of Nigeria, with the support of the Energy Charter Secretariat.

It took place within the bilateral cooperation between Nigeria and the International Energy Charter, supported by Abuja’s voluntary contributions to the Secretariat. The Summit, now in its second edition, is fast becoming one of Nigeria’s most important gatherings in the national energy calendar of pending events. The Summit was hosted by the Honorable Federal Minister of Science and Technology of Nigeria, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu, and included key note addresses by Prof. E.J. Bala, Director General/Chief Executive Officer, Energy Commission of Nigeria, and Dr. Urban Rusnak, Secretary General, Energy Charter Secretariat. The event also included many goodwill messages from a range of Nigerian Ministers and other high level dignitaries, as well as from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission.

Energy Charter Secretariat contributes to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific’s (ESCAP) Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable and Clean Energy in North and Central Asia

On 9-10 June 2021, the Energy Charter Secretariat’s Knowledge Centre participated in the Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable and Clean Energy in North and Central Asia under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

The expert group meeting brought together experts and relevant stakeholders from North and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) to discuss the key determinants of clean energy in the region as well as the relationship between clean energy and the Sustainable Development Agenda. The Secretariat contributed to the discussion to highlight the importance of promoting regional energy cooperation and market integration to attain the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goal 7 “Affordable and Clean Energy”, and facilitate the energy transition.
Energy Charter contributes to the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) High-Level Experts Group Meeting

On 22-23 June 2021, the Energy Charter Secretariat took part in the 4th ECO High-Level Experts Group Meeting. The meeting was virtually hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan and attended by the delegates from Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. As part of the discussion on the Roadmap on the realisation of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO REM), the Secretariat’s Knowledge Centre shared the Energy Charter expertise and experience in promoting regional energy cooperation and integrating power markets. The presentation highlighted the fragmented developments of energy cooperation in the ECO region, summarised best practices and lessons learnt, and stressed the need for a common and comprehensive approach to gain multiple benefits of the integration process.

Milli Mejlis, the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan, adopted the Draft Energy Efficiency (EE) Law in the first reading

On 22 June 2021, at the Milli Mejlis, the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan, discussed the Draft Law 'On the Rational Use of Energy Resources and Energy Efficiency' that was developed with the technical assistance of the Energy Charter Secretariat within the EU4Energy project. The Draft Law defines the state policy's legal, organisational and economic foundations in the energy efficiency field and regulates efficient production, storage, transmission, distribution, sale and consumption of energy. After the thorough discussions, the draft Law was put to the vote and adopted in the first reading.

Secretariat contributes to the workshop on 'Strengthening national capacities in applying sustainable energy policy and practices' organised by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

On 30 June 2021, the Secretariat contributed to the online workshop "Strengthening national capacity in applying sustainable energy policies and practices based on the recommendations of the Environmental Performance Reviews" that was jointly organised by the Environment and Sustainable Energy Divisions of UNECE. The workshop's goal was to foster the dialogue, share and exchange successful experiences in addressing energy issues, identify and discuss solutions to overcome challenges and barriers for sustainable development. The Secretariat was represented by the Energy Efficiency Unit.