

Conference Call of the Bureau of the Group of Experts on Gas

8 February 2017, 15:00

Minutes

A. Participants

Attendees:

- Mr. Francisco de la Flor Garcia (Spain), Chair
- Mr. Torstein Indrebø (Norway), Vice-chair
- Mr. Boris Maksijan (Croatia),
- Mr. Alexandre Chachine, on behalf of Vice-chair Alexander Karasevich (Russian Federation)
- Ms. Charlotte Griffiths, UNECE secretariat
- Mr. Branko Milicevic, UNECE secretariat

Regrets:

- Mr. Tamas Korosi (Hungary), Vice-chair

B. Summary of discussions and decisions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Bureau approved the conference call agenda without changes.

2. Update on the 25th session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

Chair de la Flor updated the Bureau on his participation in the 25th session of Committee. On this occasion, the Committee noted the progress that the Group of Experts on Gas had made on delivering on its mandated activities. At the Committee session the Russian Federation proposed that the Group of Experts on Gas become (again) a Working Party. It is likely that this issue will be raised again at the 4th session of the Group of Experts. After checking the possible way forward with the UNECE Chef de Cabinet and discussing further with the Mission of the Russian Federation, the secretariat will circulate a short note on this, as well as the terms of reference for groups of experts and terms of reference for working parties, so the Bureau members can inform their constituencies, while the Group of Experts could make an informed decision on this at the 4th session in March.

3. Update on preparations for the GEG's fourth session on 27-28 March 2017

The secretariat informed the Bureau on the progress in session registrations – 65 registered participants as of 19 January. The Bureau also discussed the potential speakers and panelists.

The secretariat will send the list of registered to the Bureau for the members to recommend who else should be invited. Several ideas were proposed: to invite utility companies (e.g. RWE), as well as a range of oil and gas companies with strong RE portfolio (Shell, BP, Total, Engie, Statoil), IRENA, the Germany-based, Gazprom-own Wingas, Gas Exporting Country Forum etc. The secretariat is drafting an invitation letter to the Secretary-General of GECF, Ambassador S. M. H. Adeli of Iran. Given that IGU's Executive Committee meets the same week in Oman, the secretariat will explore with Rafael Huarte whether IGU could ask Mats Fredriksson. to represent IGU at the 4th session.

The secretariat will set up a video link on 27 afternoon so that IGU's Secretary-General Luis Bertrán, other participants of the IGU Oman meeting, the US Department of Energy, and possibly others could address the audience via the link.

Below is the tentative programme with thus far confirmed speakers. The secretariat encouraged the Bureau members to propose speakers and/or invitees and to consider sponsorship opportunities (reception, coffee breaks, tabletop exhibition).

Timetable with speakers for the 4th session

Time	Agenda item	Speakers/Panelists
27 March 2017, Salle VII, Palais des Nations		
10:00	Housekeeping	Secretariat
10:05	Item 1: Adoption of the agenda	Chair
10:10	Item 2: Opening remarks	Chair
10:20	Item 3: Election of officers	Chair
10:30	Item 5: Methane emissions: a challenge to the sustainability credentials of gas	Secretariat (survey results); Secretariat (Guiding Principles for Preventing Methane Emissions); Konstantin Romanov, Head of Division, Gazprom; Statoil; IEA; GMI
13:00	Lunch break	
14:30	Coffee in front of Salle VII	Sponsor?
15:00	Item 5: Methane emissions: a challenge to the sustainability credentials of gas (continued)	
16:30	Item 7: Best practice guidance on the role of natural gas in increasing the uptake of renewable energy	Mr. Francois-Regis Mouton, Vice President Oil and Gas Advocacy, E&P, Total
17:00	Item 8: Best practice guidance for liquefied natural gas	Mr Alan Lau, CEO, Anglo Euro Developers Ltd;
17:30	Item 9: Removing barriers to the use of natural gas as a transportation fuel	Ms Radia Sedaoui Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA
18:00	Close of Day One	
18:15	Reception	Sponsor?
28 March 2017, , Salle VII, Palais des Nations		
10:00	Item 4: Round table on gas supply, transit and demand	
11:30	Coffee break	Sponsor?
11:50	Item 6: Activities and priorities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and its Committee on Sustainable Energy	

12:00	Item 10: Recent developments and medium- and long-term prospects and policies in the gas industry – country updates and activities of international organizations	
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13:00	Lunch break	
14:30	Coffee in front of Salle VII	Sponsor?
15:00	Item 10: Recent developments and medium- and long-term prospects and policies in the gas industry – country updates and activities of international organizations (continued)	
16:00	Item 11: Renewal of mandate and work plans for 2014–2017 and 2018–2019	Chair, Secretariat
17:00	Item 12: Preparations for the fifth session	Chair, Secretariat
17:20	Item 13: Other business	Chair, Secretariat
17:40	Item 14: Adoption of conclusions and recommendations	Chair, Secretariat
17:50	Item 15: Adoption of the report and close of the meeting	Chair, Secretariat
18:00	Close of the fourth session	

4. Draft work plan 2018-2019

The Bureau proposed changes to the draft work plan (version 20 January 2017). It was emphasized that the Group of Experts should prioritize its activities and choose only those that could be delivered on. It was stressed that for a successful implementation of the work plan, in the absence of extra-budgetary funds, it is critical to identify ‘champions’ who could provide the needed in-kind contribution. Existence of such champions is an important criterion when selecting activities for the 2018-2019 work plan. The Bureau agreed that the theme of unconventional gas is not that critical for Europe at this time.

The secretariat took note of the changes and will circulate an adjusted work plan before the next Bureau call.

5. Date of the next Bureau call

The next call will take place around 1 March 2017.

6. Any other business

The Bureau expressed interest for the Group of Experts on Gas to be present at the Astana Ministerial and the Forum. A workshop focused on either methane emissions or on interactions of gas and renewables could be held at the Forum. Another possibility is to organize a joint UNECE/IGU roundtable discussion on gas on a relevant topic. The secretariat will follow up on this with IGU and other prospective partners.