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Geneva, 16-18 November 2011

Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its twentieth session

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I. Attendance

1. The twentieth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy was held from 16 to 18 November 2011 with the participation of over 150 representatives from the following 35 ECE member States: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uzbekistan. Representatives of China, India, Japan also participated.
2. Representatives of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), World Trade Organization (WTO). Representative of the European Commission also participated.
3. The following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were in attendance: Energy Charter Secretariat, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Energy Agency (IEA), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), World Trade Institute (WTI), Clean Air Foundation, Energy Programs Consortium, International Council of Environmental Law (ICEL), International Gas Union (IGU), International Sustainable Energy Organization (ISEO), Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnerships (REEP), UN Foundation (UNF).
4. The Executive Secretary, Mr. Jan Kubis, introduced the Committee meeting with opening remarks on securing affordable and sustainable energy. He referred to the visit of UN Secretary Ban-Ki Moon with the Executive Committee of the UNECE on the 18th of October. Global warming, pollution, depletion and degradation of natural capital, reduced biodiversity and vulnerability of populations in the face of natural disasters are some of the current sustainability challenges. On the one hand, the ECE region has been a large emitter of greenhouse gases that cause global warming -- it accounts for about one-half of global greenhouse gas emissions. On the other hand, it is a leader in efforts to improve the environment.
5. The Executive Secretary outlined that the energy sector is at the nexus of economic and environmental sustainability. The world is changing rapidly in terms of environmental considerations, technological progress, and globalization, and the pace of change is accelerating. The economic challenge is to secure affordable and sustainable energy services. However, because the world is changing so rapidly, governments cannot afford to bet on specific technologies. It is investors who should be putting their capital at risk. Governments should focus on providing a long-term, stable framework for all energy chains from the source to final use to ensure "proper" investment and consumption decisions.
6. The Committee on Sustainable Energy focussed its 20th Jubilee Meeting on the full dimensions of the challenges faced to secure affordable and sustainable energy with rational, effective policies. Today's imperatives are clear: promulgate sensible economic, energy, transport and environmental policies, address market failures, build capacity for technology transfer, and develop financial instruments that are appropriate for local circumstances.
7. The secretariat briefed the Committee on the cooperation and coordination with other relevant international organizations, the review of activities of the subsidiary bodies of the Committee, the cooperation and coordination with other sectoral committees of the

Commission, the regional advisory services programme in the field of energy, the programme of work in the field of energy for 2012–2013 and the assessment of the programme performance of the sustainable energy sub-programme.

8. The secretariat presented specific UNECE activities within the context of the Year for Sustainable Energy for All in 2012. The UN's Millennium Development Goals are supported by alleviating energy poverty, improving the energy intensities of national economies, and encouraging renewable energy technology as an instrument for reducing the carbon intensity of the energy sector.

9. Preliminary draft Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee had been distributed by the Bureau before the Committee session. Written comments were submitted by certain Member States, while others provided remarks during the Committee session. Revised Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee will form the basis for future work of the Committee. They are to be finalized in an engaged, consensus procedure in the context of the ongoing UNECE review process and will be presented for endorsement to the Executive Committee at the first phase of the review process.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/86

10. The agenda was adopted with modifications on specific items as reflected in Annex I.

III. Securing affordable and sustainable energy (agenda item 2)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/1, ECE/ENERGY/2011/2

11. A special high-level panel presented the energy reality updates with a key-note presentation made by Dr. Fatih Birol, Chief Economist of the International Energy Agency (IEA), who presented the World Energy Outlook 2011 in a UN context.

12. This IEA Outlook assesses the threats and opportunities facing the global energy system based on a rigorous quantitative analysis of energy and climate trends. The analysis includes three global scenarios and multiple case studies. The wide difference in outcomes between these scenarios underlines the critical role of governments to define the objectives and implement the policies necessary to shape our energy future. The presentation of the outlook was followed by critical presentations reviewing the situation in the Russian Federation, the developments in the Middle East and North Africa and the consequences of accidents in one region of the world (Japan) on activities in another (Germany).

13. On the first day, participants explored the energy and climate challenges that the world faces and the imperatives for the UN to enable those policies and investments that place us on a path to a sustainable energy future. The UN Secretary General's High Level Initiative on Sustainable Energy for All represents an effective tool for the promotion of environmentally sustainable and affordable access to energy and energy services.

14. The Executive Secretary, Mr. Jan Kubis, outlined that the world faces a tri-lemma to secure supply, reduce environmental impacts and render energy affordable and accessible. In this direction, the role of the UN is essential to create a suitable environment where security, affordability and sustainability are addressed together. The UNECE contributes to the global effort also through UN-Energy to promote system-wide collaboration in the area of energy with a coherent and consistent approach.

15. The second day focussed on how to activate the public and private sectors to act at the scale needed to deal with the energy challenges. The Committee concentrated its discussion on needed framework conditions for investment in primary energy resources, and policies to ensure efficient mid- and downstream energy markets.

16. Background information and room documents were made available on a series of issues and activities, including: (i) the development of countries indicators of Energy Vulnerability within the context of a cooperation between the UNECE and the World Energy Council; and (ii) the Review of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the filed of energy efficiency which was presented at the 19th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum held in Prague on 14-16 September 2011.

IV. 2012: International Year for Sustainable Energy for All (agenda item 3)

17. In December 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2012 as the "International Year for Sustainable Energy for All" (Resolution 65/151). United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for a "a global clean energy revolution – a revolution that makes energy available and affordable for all", adding that this must be done while minimizing climate risks, reducing poverty, improving global health, empowering women and in short meeting the Millennium Development Goals for global economic growth, peace and security, and the health of the planet.

18. The secretariat briefed the Committee on different initiatives scheduled in 2012 within the context of the International Year for Sustainable Energy for All. As a first event, an exhibition on the Energy Revolution will take place in the Salle des Pas Perdus of the Palais des Nations, Geneva from 12 to 30 November 2012 in conjunction with the annual session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and will accompany all guests in a step by step path towards securing affordable and sustainable energy through three main phases of the energy contribution to the human being evolution: (i) from the discovery of fire to the industrial revolution, (ii) from the start of the industrial revolution to today, and (iii) forward to the needed energy revolution

V. Activities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/1, ECE/ENERGY/2011/6, ECE/ENERGY/2011/7, ECE/ENERGY/WP.4/2011/2, ECE/ENERGY/GE.3//2011/2, ECE/ENERGY/GE.4/2011/2, ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2011/2,

19. The Committee received a succinct briefing on the activities and future programme of work of each of its subsidiary bodies with reference to the supporting documentation.

VI. Cooperation and coordination with other Sectoral Committees of the Commission (agenda item 5)

20. The Committee was briefed on the activities of common interest of other Sectoral Committees and on cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, industry associations and the business community.

VII. Cooperation and coordination with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (agenda item 6)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/3

21. The Committee was briefed on the activities of common interest on cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, industry associations and the business community.

VIII. Review of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies after the 2005 ECE Reform (agenda item 7)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/1

22. The Chairman of the UNECE Executive Committee briefed the Committee on the review of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies after the 2005 ECE Reform.

IX. Programme of work in the field of energy for 2012–2013 (agenda item 8)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/5 and ECE/ENERGY/2011/6

23. The Committee was informed on the Programme of work in the field of energy through parliamentary documents.

24. Within the context of the programme of work of the subprogramme on sustainable energy, the publication plan, the biennial evaluation plan and the correlation between the ECE strategic framework and the cluster framework used for subprogramme biennial evaluation for 2012-2013 were also presented.

25. A questionnaire for the Programme Performance Assessment 2010–2011 was distributed during the session. The questionnaire has been also posted on the ECE website during the Committee session.

X. Regional Advisory Services Programme in the field of energy (agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/2

26. The secretariat provided an update on the Regional Advisory Services, including subregional activities, in the field of energy as a written submission.

XI. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations (agenda item 10)

27. Members of the Committee requested the Bureau and the secretariat to produce a communication document setting out the high level strategy of the Committee drawing on the discussions of the Committee session. The chairperson proposed to convene an extraordinary session of the Committee to discuss this, and that in the meantime, the decisions on operational matters would be taken according to normal procedures. All Conclusions and Recommendations, including operational matters, will be enhanced

through a consultation process that takes account of the communication document and the UNECE review.

XII. Election of officers (agenda item 11)

28. The elected officers were as follows: Chairperson: Mr. Sigurd Heiberg (Norway); Vice-Chairpersons: Mr. Renaud Abord-de-Chatillon (France), Mr. Jean-Christophe Füeg (Switzerland), Mr. Sergio Garribba (Italy), Mr. Yagshyeldi Kakayev (Turkmenistan), Ms. Barbara McKee (United States of America), Mr. Talyat Aliev (Russian Federation), Ms. Nataliia Boytsun (Ukraine), Mr. Juergen Keinhorst (Germany)

XIII. Other business (agenda item 12)

29. No issues were tabled for discussion under this item.

XIV. Adoption of the report of the meeting (agenda item 13)

30. As is customary, the report will be drafted in consultation with members of the Bureau, approved by the Bureau and then circulated to countries.

Annex I.

Final agenda

1. Attendance
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Securing affordable and sustainable energy:
 - (a) Energy reality updates.
 - (b) UN Imperatives on path to secure affordable and sustainable energy.
 - (c) Securing affordable and sustainable energy through public private partnerships at scale – Industry view on improving system efficiency from source to service.
 - (i) Framework conditions for resource management;
 - (ii) Industry perspectives on efficient transport and use of energy;
 - (iii) Role of government in primary energy development;
 - (iv) Role of government in mid and downstream markets.
4. 2012: International Year for Sustainable Energy for All.
5. Activities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
6. Cooperation and coordination with other Sectoral Committees of the Commission.
7. Cooperation and coordination with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
8. Review of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies after the 2005 ECE Reform.
9. Programme of work in the field of energy for 2012–2013
10. Regional advisory services programme in the field of energy.
11. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations.
12. Election of officers.
13. Other business.
14. Adoption of the report of the meeting

Annex II

Revised calendar of meetings of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its implementing bodies in 2012

The Committee on Sustainable Energy requests that it be provided at each session with a provisional calendar of meetings for the ensuing calendar year.

Committee on sustainable energy

1. Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane, eighth session, 11–12 April, Geneva
2. Expert Group on Resource Classification, third session, 2–4 May, Geneva
3. Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Coal and Other Fossil Fuels, ninth session, 15–16 May, Geneva
4. Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane, ninth session, 19–20 November, Geneva
5. Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Coal and other Fossil Fuels, tenth session, 26–27 November, Geneva
6. Committee on Sustainable Energy, An extraordinary session in the first Semester of 2012 and the ordinary twenty-first session, 28–30 November, Geneva (including meetings related to Energy Security)

Steering committee of the energy efficiency 21 project

1. Group of Experts on Global Energy Efficiency, third session, 24 April, Geneva
2. Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation, eighteenth session, 26–27 April, Geneva
3. Steering Committee of the Energy Efficiency 21 (EE21) Programme, twenty-third session, 25 April, Geneva
4. Group of Experts on Global Energy Efficiency, fourth session, 1–2 October, Geneva
5. Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation, twentieth session, 3–5 October, Geneva

Working party on gas

1. Working Party on Gas, twenty-second session, 24–25 January, Geneva

Gas centre

1. Executive Board, seventeenth session, 23 January, Geneva
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