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Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its twenty-first session

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I. Attendance

1. The twenty-first session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy was held on 28 and 29 November 2012 with the participation of over 120 representatives from the following UNECE member States: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

2. Representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) took part. Representatives of the European Union also participated.

3. The following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were in attendance: Energy Charter Secretariat (ECS), International Energy Agency (IEA), International Organization for Standardization - Central Secretariat (ISO), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Association of Mining Towns of Donbass, Centre for Socio-Economic Development (CSEND), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Committee for Coal and Organic Petrology (ICCP), International Ecoenergy Academy, International Gas Union (IGU), International Sustainable Energy Organization (ISEO), Institution of Mediterranean Energy Regulators (MEDREG), United Nations Foundation (UNF).

4. The Director of the Sustainable Energy Division introduced the Committee meeting with opening remarks on managing changes to enable the shift towards a sustainable energy future. He referred to the informal consultations among member States regarding the energy sub-programme and the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All as setting the framework for the future activities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

5. The Committee on Sustainable Energy focussed its 21st session on the need to manage properly the process of change in order to attain the objectives of the United Nations Secretary General's initiative on Sustainable Energy for All and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), as applicable to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/88/rev.1

6. The agenda was adopted.

III. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

7. The elected officers were as follows: Mr. Gunnar Gjerde (Chairperson, Norway), Mr. Jürgen Keinhorst (Vice-Chairperson, Germany), Mr. Sergio Garribba (Vice-Chairperson, Italy), Mr. Talyat Aliev (Vice-Chairperson, Russian Federation), Mr. Jean-Christophe Füg (Vice-Chairperson, Switzerland), Mr. Yagshyeldi Kakayev (Vice-Chairperson, Turkmenistan), Mrs. Nataliia Boitsun (Vice-Chairperson, Ukraine), Mrs. Barbara McKee (Vice-Chairperson, United States).

IV. Managing Change: Enabling the Shift to Sustainable Energy (agenda item 3)

8. The Committee focused its dialogue this year on Managing Change: Enabling the Shift to Sustainable Energy.

9. On the first day, the substantive discussion opened with presentations on the United Nations Secretary General's initiative on Sustainable Energy for All, the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and Managing Change, as applicable to the UNECE region.

10. In line with the objectives of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, the discussion considered the situation in the UNECE region in relation to access to energy for all, doubling the rate in energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewables in the energy mix.

11. On the second day, the dialogue continued on the role of the UN Regional Commissions and the actions by countries.

V. Cooperation and coordination with other Sectoral Committees of the Commission (agenda item 4)

Documentation: Background information was distributed at the session.

12. The Committee was briefed on the activities of common interest of other Sectoral Committees.

VI. Cooperation and coordination with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (agenda item 5)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2012/2

13. 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.

VII. Review of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies after the 2005 UNECE Reform (agenda item 6)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2011/6, ECE/ENERGY/WP.4/2012/2, ECE/ENERGY/WP.4/GE.1/2012/2, ECE/ENERGY/WP.4/GE.2/2012/2, ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2012/2, ECE/ENERGY/GE.4/2011/2, ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2011/5

14. The Vice-Chairperson of the UNECE Executive Committee briefed the Committee on the informal consultations on the energy sub-programme.

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

16. On behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the EU representative expressed his gratitude to the regional adviser and the experts who contribute their time, energy and ideas to the subsidiary bodies, and form the backbone of the UNECE. He noted that the informal consultations had resulted in an outcome document that covered all the areas mentioned under agenda items 6 and 7. The EU representative invited the CSE to

recommend inclusion of this outcome in the overall outcome of the Reform Review, and he invited the subsidiary bodies and regional adviser to take into account the objectives, areas of work and concrete activities mentioned in the outcome document and to organise their activities accordingly.

VIII. Regional advisory services in the field of energy (agenda item 7)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2012/1

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

IX. Programme of work, biennial evaluation, strategic framework (agenda item 8)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2012/4, ECE/ENERGY/2011/4, ECE/ENERGY/2012/3, ECE/ENERGY/2012/5

18. The Committee was informed on the draft programme of work for 2012-2013 in the field of energy by the secretariat. The programme of work will be revised in light of the outcome of the informal consultations on sustainable energy. Further consultations are required and will be conducted by the Bureau within three months in accordance with the EXCOM guidelines on procedures and practices for UNECE bodies¹.

19. Within the context of the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme, the biennial evaluation report for 2010-2011 and Draft Strategic Framework for 2014-2015 were also presented. Further consultations on the strategic framework and biennial evaluation will be required and will be conducted by the Bureau in accordance with the EXCOM guidelines on procedures and practices for UNECE bodies¹.

20. The Committee approved the provisional Calendar of Meetings 2013 with the understanding that the dates and the duration of the planned meetings may be finalised on the basis of possible programmatic changes, and in the light of meeting needs and cost considerations.

21. A questionnaire for the Programme Performance Assessment 2012-2013 was distributed during the session. The questionnaire has been also posted in the UNECE website during the Committee session.

X. Presentation of the Chairperson's summary of the discussions (agenda item 9)

22. The Chairperson presented his summary of the discussions during the substantive segment under item 3. The text of the summary will be posted on the UNECE website.

¹ The EXCOM guidelines on procedures and practices for UNECE bodies are provisional pending their adoption at the Commission session 2013

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

23. The Members of the Committee on Sustainable Energy endorsed the Outcome Document from the EXCOM Informal Consultations on Sustainable Energy (Annex) and recommended that it be incorporated into the outcome document of the 2005 UNECE Reform Review. Further consultations to render the document operational will be conducted as foreseen in paragraph 18.

XII. Other business (agenda item 11)

24. There was no other business.

XIII. Closure of the meeting (agenda item 12)

25. The report was adopted as distributed and agreed during the Committee session.

26. The meeting was closed at 17:00 on Thursday, 29 November 2012.

Annex

The EXCOM Informal Consultations, facilitated by Ambassador Marinela Ciobanu, Vice-chair of EXCOM, in the framework of the review of the 2005 Reform process, resulted in the outcome document below. It was endorsed by the Committee on Sustainable Energy and is expected to be incorporated by EXCOM in its final review outcome document to be approved by the Commission session in April 2013.

Outcome from the Informal Consultations on Sustainable Energy

This document is written by the facilitator in the framework of the review of the 2005 Reform process and reflects the consensus reached between UNECE member States.

I. General

The Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE) is an intergovernmental body that provides member States with a platform for international dialogue and cooperation and is mandated to carry out a programme of work in the field of sustainable energy with a view to providing access to affordable and clean energy to all, in line with the “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative of the Secretary-General, and to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint of the energy sector. The Committee and its subsidiary bodies will carry out concrete and results-oriented activities with the aim to achieve the specific objectives identified for each priority area and they will work in accordance with the EXCOM guidelines on procedures and practices for UNECE bodies.

The objectives, areas of work and concrete results-oriented activities indicated under each topic will orient the work of experts, who may suggest additional areas of work and activities within agreed mandates. All activities should have a clear demonstrable value added, be coordinated with and complementary to the work of other relevant international actors without duplicating their work or mandates². Specific activities to be carried out within the overall framework of the objectives and areas of work mentioned in this document shall be decided in a member States driven process and be carried out in an efficient and transparent way.

The CSE and its subsidiary bodies will focus on issues related to: energy efficiency, cleaner electricity production from fossil fuels, renewable energy, coal mine methane, UN framework classifications and natural gas. The CSE will continue its energy security dialogue.

II. Energy Efficiency

Objective

1. In line with the “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative of the UN Secretary-General, UNECE should focus on activities that help significantly improve energy efficiency in the region, thus contributing to climate change mitigation efforts.

² See document on modalities of the 2011-2012 Review of the 2005 ECE Reform (ECE/EX/6), para 11.

2. Strengthening regional cooperation in energy efficiency, with a view to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Areas of Work

- Regulatory and policy dialogue addressing financial, technical and policy barriers to improve energy efficiency;
- Sharing experience and best practices in the field of energy efficiency in the UNECE region, including on strengthening institutional capacity in energy efficiency to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Concrete Activities

- Improving efficiency of distribution by raising awareness on smart grids;
- Encouraging the exchange of know-how and best practices between relevant experts of all member States, in order to help attract investments into energy efficiency;
- Help share the experience of the UNECE and its members in the area of energy efficiency, with member States of other regions, through the Special Representative for the “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative.

In addition, UNECE member States could decide to develop other concrete and results-oriented activities within agreed mandates, including specific projects at regional level, aimed at improving regulatory and institutional frameworks for energy efficiency.

III. Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels

Objective

The UNECE should focus on activities that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from electricity production from fossil fuels. Activities aimed at cleaner electricity production from fossil fuels should be developed and implemented with the active participation of UNECE member States, representatives from the energy and financial sectors and civil society, independent experts and academia.

Areas of Work

- Regulatory and policy dialogue;
- Sharing best practices in the field of Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels in the UNECE region;
- Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage (CCUS);
- Enhanced oil recovery with CO₂;
- Advanced fossil fuels technologies for power generation.

Concrete Activities

- Examples of specific CCUS international activities for UNECE member States to consider are opportunities to collaborate and actively participate in several upcoming Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum (CSLF) Working Groups on the following topics:
 - (a) Technical Working Group Activities in CO₂ Utilization Options;
 - (b) CCUS Technology Gaps Closure;

- (c) Carbon Capture Energy Penalty Reduction;
 - (d) CCS with Industrial Emissions Sources;
 - (e) Technical Challenges for Conversion of CO₂ EOR to CCS;
 - (f) Identifying and Assessing links between technology-related risks and liability;
 - (g) Competition of CCS with Other Resources;
 - (h) Stimulating introduction of innovative technologies, notably on electricity with a focus on controlling emissions.
- The International Energy Agency (IEA), Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute (GCCSI) and CSLF each conduct a wide range of activities related to CCUS, many of which should be of interest to various UNECE member States. Rather than propose a specific set of projects at this time, non-duplicative projects that are of the most value could be developed through dialogue between these organizations and the UNECE;
 - Encourage the exchange of know-how and best practices between relevant experts of all member States in order to attract investments in advanced fossil fuels technologies for electricity generation with a view to supporting industrial and economic competitiveness and achieving low-carbon sustainable development;
 - Work on cleaner electricity production is not limited to CCUS. UNECE member States could decide to develop other concrete and results-oriented activities within agreed mandates.

IV. Renewable Energy

Objective

In line with the “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the UNECE should focus on activities that help significantly increase the uptake of renewable energy in the region and that help achieve the objective of access to energy for all in the UNECE region.

Areas of Work

Regulatory and policy dialogue and sharing best practices on various renewable energy sources, including biomass, with a view to increasing the share of renewables in the global energy mix.

Concrete Activities

- The CSE will help member States, at their request, to identify those communities in the UNECE region that, at present, have no access to energy, and it will help suggest ways to ensure that these communities have access to renewable or alternative sources of energy as soon as possible. Energy companies could be asked to help to achieve that objective.
- In view of existing UNECE expertise, the CSE will work:
 - (a) on increasing energy production from renewable sources throughout the region;
 - (b) on activities that will increase access to heat from renewable energy sources throughout the region by means of activities that will improve access to heat and power

from renewable energy sources in the UNECE region, including for communities referred to in the first bullet under this heading;

- (c) on sustainable development of non-forest based biomass production.
- Encourage the exchange of know-how and best practices between relevant experts of all member States in order to attract investments in energy production from renewable sources, such as in wind, solar and hydro power projects as a means of sustainable development and climate change mitigation.

In addition, UNECE member States could decide to develop other concrete and results-oriented activities of CSE within agreed mandates. The activities of the sustainable energy subprogramme are complementary to and implemented in cooperation and coordination with other UNECE subprogrammes, in particular with the ECE-FAO Forestry and Timber subprogramme.

V. Coal Mine Methane

Objective

To promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from coal mines by means of activities that may help the recovery and use of methane in order to reduce the risks of explosions in coal mines.

Areas of Work

Best practice guidance for Effective Methane Drainage development and dissemination

Concrete Activities

- Electronically disseminate Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Recovery in Coal Mines to all major stakeholders in the UNECE region and beyond as recommended by ECOSOC (Decision 2011/222) before August 2013;
- Prepare suggestions, by August 2013, on how to develop, as appropriate, similar best practices guidance for aspects of CMM management that are not covered in detail by the current document such as best practice drilling or low-concentration methane drainage;
- Prepare proposals, by August 2013, for case studies, where appropriate and financed by extrabudgetary resources, on the application of best practice guidance in specific coal mines in different regions of the world.

If the activities carried out by ECE coal mine methane experts reveal broader safety issues, they may communicate these to the ILO for consideration in its coal mine safety guidelines.

VI. UN Framework Classification for Fossil Energy & Mineral Reserves & Resources (UNFC)

Objective

Classification of energy and mineral reserves and resources

Areas of Work

UN Framework Classifications

Concrete Activities

- Electronically disseminate UNFC to all major stakeholders by August 2013;
- Finalizing the generic specifications by December 2013 to make UNFC operational;
- Develop ideas on how the UNFC could apply to and integrate renewable energy by December 2013;
- Develop proposals on how to conduct ongoing maintenance, technical advice, guidance and periodic updates to UNFC in order to ensure the system remains relevant, useful, and operates efficiently in light of ongoing technological developments including in the field of carbon capture and storage.

VII. Natural Gas

Objective

Provide a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on ways to promote the sustainable and clean production, distribution and consumption of gas in the UNECE region

Areas of Work

Policy dialogue and exchange of information and experience among UNECE member countries on:

- (a) Gas-related issues of regional relevance, including the role of gas in the global energy mix;
- (b) The relation between natural gas and the environment.

Concrete Activities

- Studies, delivered in a timely way, on the sustainable and clean production, transport, and use of gas, including on:
 - (a) Issues that emerge from natural gas market studies carried out in the past;
 - (b) Methods of preventing gas losses and leakages during production and distribution.
 - Maintain a transparent dialogue between governments and the gas industry through the extrabudgetary Gas Centre programme.
-