

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

19 May 2017, 15:00

## Minutes

### A. Participants

#### Attendees:

- Mr. Francisco de la Flor Garcia (Spain), Chair
- Mr. Torstein Indrebø (Norway), Vice-chair
- Mr. Alexandre Chachine, on behalf of Vice-chair Alexander Karasevich (Russian Federation)
- Mr. Boris Maksijan (Croatia), Vice-chair
- Mr. Dan Hooper (United States)
- Mr. Rafael Huarte, IGU
- Mr. Branko Milicevic, UNECE secretariat

#### Regrets:

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

### B. Summary of discussions and decisions

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with no changes.

#### 2. Update on collaboration with IGU and other international organizations and associations

On 18 and 19 May the Chair and the secretary visited IGU secretariat in Barcelona to discuss collaboration and on-going activities. The secretariat updated the Bureau on the outcomes of these discussions and the prospects for a deepen collaboration between IGU and UNECE Group of Experts on Gas.

Many IGU working groups and committees cover the entire work of the Group of Experts. IGU is committed to providing all materials developed by its working groups, including various position papers and other documents. Vice-chair Huarte will continue to liaise with IGU expert bodies, which are now in a process of transformation as Korea is taking the chair from the US.

The secretariat informed the Bureau on the collaboration with the Gas Exporting Countries Forum, Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI) and IPIECA, in the field of methane emissions, climate change, gas and SDGs.

Vice-chair Hooper shared with the Bureau the news on the US EPA-funded extra-budgetary project on methane emissions. He invited the Group to participate in the 12 June meeting of the Global Methane Initiative's oil and gas subcommittee. He also informed the Bureau on the initiative discussed with the secretariat to hold the next oil and gas subcommittee meeting in Geneva on 21 March 2018, the day before the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the Group of Experts on Gas.

Vice-chair Indrebo urged the Bureau to use the momentum created by the collaboration with IGU and US EPA and approach other organizations, companies and associations. With such level of engagement, this process could be very effective.

#### 3. Finalization of the work plan for 2018-2019

Using the approach and some elements of the comments provided in written by Vice-chair Karasevich, the Chair de la Flor presented the need to streamline the current version of the work plan. The Bureau agreed that for the Group of Experts to succeed in implementing its work plan, it must identify ‘champions’ who will lead activities. As already mentioned, IGU is committed to providing all materials prepared by its working groups, including various position papers and other documents, in order to contribute to the development of the list of priorities. The Bureau discussed the Chair’s list of proposed priorities and agreed to focus on the following:

- (1) Role of gas in attaining Sustainable Development Goals. IGU will lead this work and prepare evidence and materials supporting the contribution of gas to achieving SDGs. This high-political priority core activity will continue throughout the whole SDG period (2015-2030).
- (2) Methane emissions. US EPA volunteered to lead this work, including through an extra-budgetary project on methane emissions from the extractive industries. In addition, there are also a lot of ongoing activities involving many global organizations, which could provide the appropriate momentum to get good deliverables. A good coordination among them needs to be ensured.
- (3) Urban air quality. Again, significant amount of work has already been prepared by IGU. Several cases could be presented in the next GEG meeting. A set of conclusions and recommendations can be taken from IGU.
- (4) Interaction between renewable energy sources and natural gas as the best combination to enhance the energy efficiency and decrease emissions in the whole energy system. This activity will also facilitate energy access and stress the role of gas as enabler of renewables. The result of the ongoing collaboration between Enagas and the Sustainable Gas Institute could be taken as a starting point for this activity.
- (5) Role of biogas/biomethane, synthetic gas (power to gas), hydrogen and other emerging concepts on the role of gas in the future energy system. This is a forward looking activity involving many contributors (IGU, European Biogas Association, hydrogen community, companies such as Audi, etc). Focus on the scientific approach and the outlook.
- (6) Policy dialogue on promoting sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas in the ECE region. The activity will also deliver a number of roundtables on developments and trends in natural gas and LNG markets.

The Bureau noted that topics 1 and 6 are cross-cutting themes that provide enough flexibility, while topics 2, 3, 4 and 5 contain concrete deliverables supported by committed champions. The re-organized work plan includes most of the activities from the previous drafts of the work plan. The Bureau instructed the secretariat to re-draft the 2018-2019 work plan based on the above and recirculated it as soon as possible. The Bureau also requested the secretariat to prepare an annex to the work plan that would list the actors and other stakeholders engaged in the activities.

#### **4. Progress in implementation of the current work plan**

The Chair reviewed the progress in the four activities of the current work plan, emphasizing the need to finalize them by the end of the year and produce documents UNECE committed to in various UN progress tracking tools. This in practice means to publish documents on methane emissions, on removing barriers to the use of gas in transport, and on good practices in LNG.

Activity A – methane emissions. The Chair reviewed the introductory document prepared by the secretariat: Model Framework for Reducing Methane Emissions along the Gas Value Chain. This document could be used as a chapeau or introduction to a number of case studies. In this regard, the Bureau asked the secretariat to prepare a template for case studies and share it with all willing to prepare case studies, such as Gazprom, Statoil, and other companies and organizations that participated in the methane emissions workshop held in Geneva in March 2017. The Bureau was invited to participate in the methane emissions industry meeting, organized on 13 July in Enagás’ premises (Madrid) by GIE and Marcogás, where more case studies will be

presented and discussed. The secretariat will offer to the participants the possibility of providing their case studies in the template.

Activity B – gas and renewable energy. Not much progress, primarily because of decreasing interest among some early supporters, such as Total and Shell. Such lack of enthusiasm drives the need to re-focus and re-formulate this activity in the next work cycle, as previously described. The Chair also noted that, in spite of efforts made, the renewable energy community demonstrated very low level of enthusiasm for collaboration with the natural gas stakeholders. Based on IGU publications, a case study could be prepared. In addition, the Spanish case could be also prepared by the end of the year.

Activity C – LNG. Two case studies on trucks and gas quality developed by Enagas. A presentation prepared by Vice-chair Karasevich is also very useful. Mr Chachine suggested to approach Ben Slesinger and ask him to provide an overview of US LNG activities. Some chapeau language for LNG to provide context for case studies might be needed.

Activity D – removing barriers to the use of gas in transport. One good report already developed by DNV GL. The secretariat informed the Bureau that some copyright issues need to be resolved before this document is issued as UN publications. NGVA presented already a case study, which also need to be adapted to be issued as UN publication. In addition, Balearia, a ferry company, may provide an interesting case study. Chair de la Flor will contact NGVA and Balearia in an event taken place in Barcelona on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

## **5. Participation of the Group of Experts on Gas in the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (11-14 June 2017, Astana, Kazakhstan)**

The Group of Experts on Gas will be represented by Vice-chairs Indrebo and Huarte. On 12 June, the Group will host in collaboration with IGU and possibly with GECF a roundtable discussion on the role of gas in achieving SDGs. Vice-chair Indrebo will represent the Group in the cross-cutting discussions on 14 June.

## **6. Date of the next Bureau call**

The next conference call will be held around 19 June 2017.

## **7. Any other business**

The Bureau decided to discuss at its next call ideas and preparation for a workshop on gas that would be held later this year. The expenses for the workshop will be partly covered by the regional advisory budget.

---