

Bureau Meeting Report – GERE BMR N. 2018/1

UNECE Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (GERE)

Geneva, 19 June 2018

Report of the Bureau Meeting

Present:

Mr. Nazir Ramazanov (Azerbaijan), Chair

Mr. Taras Shevchenko on behalf of Mr. Valeriy Pysarenko (Ukraine), Vice-Chair

Mr. Paulo Partidário on behalf of Ms. Isabel Cabrita (Portugal), Vice-Chair

Mr. Berik Erbassanov (?) on behalf of Ms. Ainur Sospanova (Kazakhstan), Candidate Vice-Chair

Mr. Gurbuz Gonul (IRENA), Vice-Chair and Mr. Marcin Scigan and Mr. Prasoon Agarwal

Mr. Michela Morese (FAO), Vice-Chair

Secretariat:

Ms. Stefanie Held, Chief of the Sustainable Energy Section, SED

Mr. Gianluca Sambucini, GERE Secretary, SED

Ms. Lisa Tinschert, Junior Professional Officer, SED

Mr. Ryan Brown, Intern, SED

Item 1. Chair's welcome

1. The Chair of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, Mr. Ramazanov, conveyed welcome remarks to the call's participants.

Item 2. Approval of the agenda

2. The agenda was adopted as proposed and reflected in the current report.

Item 3. Outcome of the CSE Bureau meeting, Geneva, 18 June 2018/ GERE input to the 27th Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, Geneva, 26-27 September

3. The Chair participated the meeting of the Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy in Geneva the day before the call and presented key outcome to the GERE Bureau members. First of all, the CSE Bureau thought that the current structure of the subsidiary bodies can still properly serve the deep transformation of the energy system and the support provided by the UNECE Sustainable Energy sub-programme in this direction. On the

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programme, the Chair proposed to have a more prominent discussion on renewable energy within the session on “Deep transformation of the Energy System through Electricity on 27 September, during the annual session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. Bureau members have been invited to provide suggestions by Friday 22 June. The secretariat provided more detailed information on the overall agenda and how the work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the other bodies will be aligned to the outcome of the current UN Reform process which could require to do more with less resources.

Item 4. Fifth GERE Session and 9th International Forum on Energy for SD, Kiev, 12-15 November 2018: relevant agenda items and key renewable energy sessions

4. The Secretariat informed Bureau members on the on-going preparations related to the Fifth session of the Group of Experts which is organized within the context of the 9th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development. The Chair and the secretariat provided information on the overall draft programme, underlining that the various sessions will consider the main areas of the GERE Work Plan 2018-2019, namely (i) Tracking progress in the uptake of renewable energy sources and exchange of experiences and good practices on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy; (ii) Hard Talks and matchmaking activities to support renewable energy investments and (iii) cross-cutting cooperation to strengthen integration of renewable energy in future sustainable energy systems.

5. The Chair invited all members to actively contribute to the annual GERE meeting and the Kiev Forum by leading key sessions. IRENA will jointly organize two sessions: (i) one within the Matchmaking event presenting various IRENA’s tools to promote renewable energy investments; (ii) another session on RE prospects in Central and South-East Europe.

6. IEA will lead a session on the role of bioenergy in light of changes to the energy landscape. Within the Forum, the IEA will present the publication launched few weeks before “Renewables 2018. IEA, IRENA and REN21 are invited to contribute to dedicated discussions on the progress made in the renewable energy development in the UNECE region with particular attention to the issues related to investments.

7. The Forum will also host the Workshop on Regulatory and policy dialogue addressing barriers to improve renewable energy and energy efficiency which will be a joint session of GERE and the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency (GEEE).

8. The secretariat pointed out the valuable key findings from the “Renewable Energy Policies in a Time of Transition” jointly prepared by IRENA, IEA and REN21 and offers policy makers with a comprehensive understanding of the options available to support the development of renewables. It aims to provide a global reference for policy instruments. The report benefited from the UNECE feedback.

Item 5. Election of officers at the annual GERE session

9. Election of officers is foreseen with the GERE annual session and the Chair invited all those who are interested to continue to work on the Bureau and need a renewal of their mandate to solicit the sending of their candidacy, if fine their country, which needs to be communicated to the secretariat through a Verbal Note from the respective permanent missions. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan have sent the Verbal Note with the indication of their candidates. Other countries may be interested to propose candidates to the GERE Bureau in view of the strengthening of activities on renewable energy investments. Following expression of interest from representatives of the international organizations, continuation of participation of representatives of IEA, IRENA, REN21 and FAO has been supported by the Bureau.

Item 6. Recent RE Hard Talk in Kazakhstan (26-27 April) and participation in the IRENA's RRA in Azerbaijan (31 May-1 June);

10. The representative of Kazakhstan informed Bureau members on key results of the Renewable Energy Hard Talk organized in Astana on 26-27 April. This high-level policy dialogue on Renewable Energy Investment organized by the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the support of UNECE, the European Commission and USAID. Mr. Kanat Bozumbayev, Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan, was speaking at the opening and presented key elements on the round of RE auctions foreseen in 2018. The event gathered a broad range of stakeholders, including policy-makers, public administrations, private developers and investors, financial institutions, donors, experts and civil society representatives to discuss the opportunities and challenges of renewable energy investment in Kazakhstan. Participants agreed on the multiple benefits of renewable energy in terms of energy security, economic development and protection of the environment. They also identified several barriers that are still faced by investors as well as best practice policies and tools to overcome them. To further foster the deployment of RE in Kazakhstan, a set of priority actions have been proposed as outcome of this two-day Hard Talk.

11. IRENA's representatives informed Bureau members on the recent meeting held in Baku on 31 May-1 June 2018, related to the Renewable Energy Readiness Assessment (RRA) in Azerbaijan. The RRA is a country-specific assessment tool developed by IRENA that constitutes the backbone of the Agency's engagement at the national level. IRENA is conducting this assessment in Azerbaijan in close cooperation with the State Agency for Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources, with the objective of supporting the country's efforts in strengthening the enabling environment for renewable energy deployment. The meeting in Baku was intended to validate the findings of the RRA Discussion Paper with respect to the status of renewable energy development in Azerbaijan and key challenges hindering an accelerated deployment of renewables in the country. In preparation of the Discussion Paper and the Workshop, the research team also benefitted from the key findings and insights from the Renewable Energy Hard Talk in Azerbaijan organized by UNECE on 19-20 October 2017. During the Workshop, stakeholder feedback was collected on possible priority actions to address the challenges, and these will be included as recommended actions in the RRA report. A similar RRA workshop has been conducted in Moldova with particular attention to the round of auctions to be prepared in the coming

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months. It was suggested to IRENA to take into account the experience of Kazakhstan from their on-going process of renewable energy auctions.

Item 7. Foreseen RE Hard Talks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia - focus on the water-energy nexus;

12. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia have agreed to jointly investigate options for formalizing river flow regulation, occurrence of erosion and sedimentation, as well as ways to promote investment into renewable energy through a new project funded by the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea and implemented by UNECE.

13. Cooperation with the UNECE Group of Experts on Renewable Energy in the project will support the creation of a suitable environment for promoting renewable energy investments in the region. Concretely, a series of multi-stakeholder Renewable Energy Hard Talk events are expected to be organized in the three Drina Basin countries in cooperation with national and international actors to identify main barriers and recommend ways to facilitate private sector's investment in sustainable energy and increase the uptake of renewable energy. The first RE Hard Talk in the region is foreseen in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the second half of October 2018. The FAO representative expressed the intention to contribute and participate in the RE Hard Talk in BiH.

Item 8. On-going renewable projects/ activities, new projects

14. In addition to the on-going activities and projects described in previous agenda items, a new project has been recently approved with funding from the Russian Federation on Enhancing transboundary energy cooperation through introduction of wind and solar energy into power systems of the CIS countries to support achievement of SDG 7. The objective of the project is to enhance transboundary cooperation on renewable energy sources in the CIS countries. The project will develop approaches to assess renewable energy sources, to share information, and to develop methodology for regional wind and solar energy development programs. A Vice-Chair, representative from the Russian Federation, is working closely with the secretariat to implement this project.

Item 9. Development of an umbrella programme for possible funding in support of GERE work;

15. The Chair and the secretariat briefed the Bureau members on the possibility of structuring various GERE activities and projects within the context of a medium-term umbrella programme on increasing the uptake of RE deployment in South East Europe, Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Russian Federation by strengthening local capacities, improving policy and regulatory frameworks, and facilitating investments in renewable energy projects. This umbrella programme would include a more integrated UNECE work on renewable energy uptake for sustainable development and presented below in three clusters: (i) policy advice and dialogue, (ii) capacity building and (iii) project development support. Bureau members have been invited, working together with the secretariat, to explore within their respective countries the possibility of participating and contributing to this activity.

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Item 10. AOB

16. There was no other business