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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Committee on Sustainable Energy

#### Group of Experts on Renewable Energy

##### Ninth session

Geneva, 6-7 October 2022

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

##### Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

## Report of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy at its Ninth Session<sup>1</sup>

### The Group of Experts on Renewable Energy:

#### I. Introduction

1. The ninth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable energy (the Group of Experts) was held from 6 to 7 October 2022. Due to continued impediments associated with COVID-19, the session was conducted in a hybrid format.
2. This report summarizes the proceedings of the Group of Experts at its ninth session. All the documents related to the session are available on the website of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).<sup>2</sup>

#### II. Attendance

3. The meeting of the Group of Experts was attended by 135 participants. Of these, 80 were participating virtually and 55 in-person.
4. Experts from the following ECE member States participated: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, and Uzbekistan.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft conclusions and recommendations were reviewed and agreed by the Group of Experts after each agenda item and updated as needed.

<sup>2</sup> Official documents, room documents, and presentations delivered at the meeting are available on the ECE website (see <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Renewable-Energy/events/368766>). Official documents of the session are also available at Official Document System of the United Nations (see <http://documents.un.org/>).



5. Experts from Cameroon, and Islamic Republic of Iran participated under Article 11 of the Terms of Reference of the Commission (E/ECE/778/Rev.5).
6. The following United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes were in attendance: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
7. The meeting was also attended by representatives of non-governmental organizations, academia, and private sector, as well as by independent experts.

### **III. Adoption of the agenda” (agenda item 1)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/1 – Annotated provisional agenda.

8. In accordance with the Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission (E/ECE/778/Rev.5), the first item of the provisional agenda was the adoption of the agenda. The provisional agenda as contained in document ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/1 was adopted without amendment.

### **IV. Election of officers (agenda item 2)**

9. The secretariat received the following nominations from the member States to stand for election at the ninth session of the Group of Experts: Mr. Kostiantyn Gura (Ukraine) as Chair; and Mr. Adrian Bylyku (Albania), Mr. Kamran Huseynov (Azerbaijan), Mr. Andrei Miniankou (Belarus), Ms. Sanja Kapetina (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ms. Margalita Arabidze (Georgia), Mr. Tibor Fisher (Germany), Mr. Akhat Omiralin (Kazakhstan), Mr. Aleksei Zhiharev (Russian Federation), Ms. Olena Lenska (Ukraine), and Ms. Suriya Jayanti (United States), as Vice-Chairs.

10. The Bureau of the Group of Experts (the Bureau) also invited Mr. Paolo Frankl (International Energy Agency), Mr. Binu Parthan (International Renewable Energy Agency), Ms. Rana Adib (Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century), Ms. Michela Morese (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Global Bioenergy Partnership), and Ms. Naida Taso (Energy Community) to join the Bureau (without the right to vote) as Vice-Chairs

11. The Group of Experts elected Mr. Kostiantyn Gura (Ukraine) as Chair and Mr. Adrian Bylyku (Albania), Mr. Kamran Huseynov (Azerbaijan), Ms. Sanja Kapetina (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ms. Margalita Arabidze (Georgia), Mr. Akhat Omiralin (Kazakhstan), Mr. Tibor Fischer (Germany), Ms. Olena Lenska (Ukraine), Ms. Suriya Jayanti (United States) as Vice-Chairs. The term of office for the elected members of the Bureau is from the close of the ninth session until the close of the eleventh session. The Chair of the Group of Experts is *ex officio* also a Vice-Chair of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. The term of office for the elected members of the Bureau is two years.

12. The Group of Experts has the following members to serve on the Bureau:

- (a) Until the conclusion of its tenth session: Ms. Nurzat Abdyrasulova (Kyrgyzstan) and Ms. Aida Sitdikova (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development);

- (b) Until the conclusion of its eleventh session: Mr. Kostiantyn Gura (Ukraine) as Chair; Mr. Adrian Bylyku (Albania), Mr. Kamran Huseynov (Azerbaijan), Ms. Sanja Kapetina (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ms. Margalita Arabidze (Georgia), Mr. Akhat Omiralin (Kazakhstan), Mr. Tibor Fischer (Germany), Ms. Olena Lenska (Ukraine), Ms. Suriya Jayanti (United States) as Vice-Chairs. Also as Vice-Chair (without the right to vote): Mr. Paolo Frankl (International Energy Agency), Mr. Binu Parthan (International Renewable Energy Agency), Ms. Rana Adib (The Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century), Ms. Maria Michela Morese (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Global Bioenergy Partnership), and Ms. Naida Taso (Energy Community).

## V. Opening remarks (agenda item 3)

13. In his opening remarks, the Chair shared his reflections on the challenging moment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the invasion of Ukraine, the subsequent energy crisis in the ECE region and the impact that those have on the activities of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (Group of Experts). The Chair highlighted the main activities of the Group of Experts in line with its Work Plan for 2022–2023 (the Work Plan 2022–2023, ECE/ENERGY/2021/12) and with activities and priorities of the ECE Committee on Sustainable Energy.

14. The Chair noted that this year's session of the Group of Experts was delivered within the Sustainable Energy Expert Week, which included also the ninth session of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency. The joint session is part of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.

## VI. Activities and priorities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and matters for consideration by the Group of Experts (agenda item 4)

15. The secretariat provided an overview of recent activities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy following its thirty-first session, 21-23 September 2022, as well as decisions taken related to the work of the Group of the Experts.

## VII. Tracking progress in the uptake of renewable energy (agenda item 5)

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/3 – Renewable Energy Status Report 2022 - Key findings

16. Participants observed that the region has seen an unprecedented growth in renewable electricity since 2018. It was also noted that the transport and the heating and cooling sectors have not seen such increases, and that public and private investment in renewables across the focus countries remains modest compared to global growth trends. The Group of Experts stressed that the countries of the region need significant investment in renewables.

Between 2017 and 2021, the 17 ECE countries considered in the REN21 ECE Status Report saw an unprecedented growth in renewable power capacity. Participants discussed the relevance of quality of data to monitor and assess progress made in the renewable energy uptake in the ECE region.

17. The Group of Experts:

(a) Noted with appreciation publication of the REN21 ECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2022, which was prepared by REN21 in close collaboration with the ECE secretariat and members of the Group of Experts. The report provides the latest update on the status of energy efficiency and the uptake of the renewable energy in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan;

(b) Noted with appreciation the progress made in the uptake of renewable energy in the ECE region and the development of the necessary policy options to facilitate uptake;

(c) Encouraged ECE member States to continue improving the quality of data so that progress made in the uptake of renewable energy can be accurately monitored and assessed;

(d) Highlighted the importance of the historical and potential data and trends for formulating an evidence-based development pathway for sound decision-making and sector development;

(e) Recognized the need to build resilient energy systems in the ECE region that ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all and that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint of the energy sector in the region and the role of renewable energy in this process.

## **VIII. Exchange of experiences on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy (agenda item 6)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/4 – Status and Perspectives for Renewable Energy in the ECE region

18. Countries of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Europe and North America are united in their goal of accelerating the development and implementation of renewable energy projects. However, the status and progress of market development is not homogenous across the region.

19. The Group of Experts promotes the exchange of experiences between countries that helps them to acquire knowledge and information on policies and tools for increasing the uptake of renewable energy. ECE has been driving change on renewables through multi-stakeholder dialogues at national level. The multistakeholder dialogues in the form of “ECE Renewable Energy Hard Talks” held in the member States facilitate a better understanding of the relevant issues and help to identify bottlenecks slowing down the advancement of renewable energy in those countries. The Hard Talks also lead to identification of suitable solutions and offer concrete recommendations to speed up the processes of renewable energy development.

20. The Group of Experts:

(a) Noted with appreciation the outcome activities of the RE-Uptake project, which was implemented jointly by the German Energy Agency (dena) and REN21, in cooperation with the ECE secretariat, and with the support of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany (BMWK);

(b) Noted with appreciation the recent update of the paper on the Status and Perspectives for Renewable Energy in the ECE Region issued by dena within the framework of the RE-Uptake project. The Group underlined the importance of that work to be able to properly understand the status of renewable energy in ECE member States, and to accurately identify key factors that determine the pace of the uptake of renewable energy in each member State;

(c) Recognized the value of the ECE Renewable Energy Hard Talks organized recently within the framework of the RE-Uptake Project in Albania, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Serbia. The key recommendations resulting from these activities, including ways to attract investment and thus speed up the uptake of renewable energy in the beneficiary States, were presented to the Group and put forward for discussion;

(d) Encouraged the governments of ECE member States to indicate to the secretariat an interest to host a Renewable Energy Hard Talk;

(e) Invited ECE member States to be more active in requesting the secretariat to conduct studies and capacity-building activities in the field of renewable energy, especially those that qualify for the support of the Regional Advisory Services;

(f) Requested the secretariat to assist, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, interested countries in identifying obstacles and bottlenecks to renewable energy investments through organization of Renewable Energy Hard Talks;

(g) Welcomed the general support provided to its work by the Regional Advisory Services.

## **IX. Cross-cutting and inter-sectoral cooperation to integrate renewable energy into energy systems (agenda item 7)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/5 – Energy Transition and the Post-COVID-19 Socioeconomic recovery: Role of women and impact on them

21. Renewable energy and energy efficiency urgently need to be scaled up if the world is to deliver on the Paris Agreement and achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Group of Experts has been at the forefront of promoting renewable energy with numerous and concrete activities.

22. Participants concluded that scaling up renewable energy investments is crucial to strengthening energy security and affordability, particularly considering the energy and the economic challenges related to the conflict in Ukraine and the energy crisis effecting many ECE countries.

23. The Group of Experts:

(a) Recognized that to in order achieve a higher share of renewable energy in their future energy mixes, ECE member States should adopt an integrated approach and engage in a multi-stakeholder dialogue with national and international stakeholders. Their efforts should be focused on improving understanding of the renewable energy resource characteristics and availability, as well as on strengthening the policy, institutional, normative, and regulatory frameworks that enable and facilitate the uptake of renewable energy, including through the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) to renewable energy resources and projects;

(b) Encouraged ECE member States to adopt needed policies for a greater energy security and affordability, as well as environmental sustainability, thus providing for more resilient energy systems in the ECE region;

(c) Recognized that in the current conditions the discussion exploring sustainable solutions to increase generation of energy from renewable sources in Ukraine is of interest to other countries of the ECE region, in particular taking into account the current global energy crisis and ongoing efforts of many ECE member States to enhance the resiliency of their energy systems;

(d) Recognized the need to restore infrastructure, including renewable energy facilities, which are out of operation as a consequence of the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine;

(e) Encouraged ECE member States to pay attention to technologies and legislation for the development of clean transportation, including electrical transportation and transportation that uses hydrogen technologies;

(f) Encouraged strengthening the cooperation between the Group and the Renewable Energy Working Group of the Expert Group on Resource Management (EGRM);

(g) Noted with appreciation the cooperation with other sectoral subprogrammes of ECE and the benefits this brings to ECE member States in improving the management of resources, including through increasing the share of renewable energy in their energy mix;

(h) Highlighted the need for member States to adopt a holistic approach, taking into account intersectoral opportunities and effects in the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus, and placing consideration of the post-COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery within the context of the on-going energy transition;

(i) Encouraged the secretariat to continue working, within the scope of its expertise and in cooperation with other subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, on transition of the energy sector in line with the principles and goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the Strategic Review of the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme (ECE/ENERGY/2021/4);

(j) Requested continuation of the cooperation with the ECE Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus in order to further increase the role of renewable energy in promoting the nexus approach, towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and meeting the climate change obligations of the Paris Agreement;

(k) Invited the secretariat to continue its work on the role of women in the energy sector, recognizing that empowering women is likely to have multiple benefits, including in the fields of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

## **X. Status of implementation of the Work Plan of the Group of Experts 2022-2023 (agenda item 8)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2021/12 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2022-2023

24. The secretariat reported on the status of implementation of the Work Plan 2022–2023 (ECE/ENERGY/2021/12), as well on the support of the Regional Advisory Services in the area of renewable energy.

25. The Group of Experts reviewed the activities mandated by the Work Plan for 2022–2023 and implemented over the last intersessional period, as well as other sustainable energy activities and initiatives that the Group of Experts was involved in since the eighth session. The Group also exchanged views on practical aspects of implementation of outstanding activities of the Work Plan 2022–2023.

26. The Group of Experts:

(a) Noted with appreciation the concrete activities that the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy has been implementing since 2014 to help increase the uptake of renewable energy in the ECE region;

(b) Noted with appreciation that it has been successfully delivering on its Work Plan for 2022-2023 and welcomed the key achievements presented at the thirty-first session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and at the ninth session of the Group of Experts;

(c) Requested the Bureau, in cooperation with the secretariat, to continue to oversee implementation of the 2022-2023 Work Plan of the Group of Experts, and to explore opportunities to secure extrabudgetary funding for specific projects focused on activities related to: (a) regulatory and policy dialogue, and (b) sharing best practices in efficient and effective use of various renewable energy sources with a view to increasing the share of renewables in the global energy mix;

## **XI. Other business (agenda item 9)**

27. At the time the draft report was prepared, no issues were raised under this agenda item.

## **XII. Dates of the next meeting (agenda item 10)**

28. The tenth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy is scheduled to take place in Geneva on 11-12 September 2023. The Group of Experts confirmed its proposal from the previous sessions that its meetings may take place in venues outside Geneva.

## **XIII. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting (agenda item 11)**

*Documentation:* GERE-9/2022/INF.1 – Draft conclusions and recommendations arising from the ninth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy

ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/2 – Report of the Group of Experts on  
Renewable Energy on its ninth session

29. Draft conclusions and recommendations arising from the ninth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (GEEE-9/2022/INF.1) were circulated to participants and Geneva Permanent Representations.

30. The Co-Chairs of the Group of Experts, with the assistance of the secretariat, summarized the discussions, reflecting in a concise and factual manner the views expressed by participants.

31. The Group of Experts adopted the draft conclusions and recommendations arising from the ninth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, which are included under the relevant agenda items highlighted in this report.

32. The report of the meeting was adopted, including conclusions and recommendations, subject to any necessary editing and formatting. Following that, the meeting was closed.

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