

To: Members of the Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

From: Iva Brkic, Dario Liguti

Call of the Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

Via Teams – 13:00 CEST, 19 June 2023

MINUTES

I. ATTENDANCE:

- **Bureau Members in attendance:** Chokan Laumulin (Kazakhstan, Chair), Admir Softic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Margalita Arabidze for Romeo Mikautadze (Georgia), Jana Bernhardt for Juergen Keinhorst (Germany), Stefan Buettner (Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency – GEEE), Francisco de la Flor Garcia (Group of Experts on Gas – GEG), Karen Hanghoj (Expert Group on Resource Management), and Jim Robb (Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems – GECES).
- **UNECE Secretariat staff in attendance:** Iva Brkic (Secretary), Michal Jacek Drabik, Oleg Dzioubinski, Charlotte Griffiths, Dario Liguti (Division Director), Igor Litvinyuk, Branko Milicevic, Gianluca Sambucini, Slavko Vekoslav Solar, Harikrishnan Tulsidas
- **Unable to attend:** Emir Farhadzada (Azerbaijan), Pawel Pikus (Poland), Farhod Bilolzoda (Tajikistan), Jean-Christophe Fueeg (Switzerland), Yaroslav Demchenkov (Ukraine), Emily Grubert (United States).

II. PROPOSED AGENDA:

1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Update on the follow up activities from the last Bureau call
3. Planning the 32nd session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy
4. Update on substantive documents for the 32nd Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy
5. Update on the recent and upcoming UNECE events
6. Update on the international planned events in 2023
7. AoB

Documents shared:

- Agenda for the 32nd session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy
- Publication plan for 2023-2025
- Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy
- Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems for 2024–2025
- Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency for 2024–2025
- Securing Access to Critical Raw Materials in the UNECE Region: Challenges and Opportunities
- Update on the Hydrogen Task Force and the next steps

Notes

Item 2. Update on the follow up activities from the last Bureau call

Dario Liguti

Hydrogen Task Force (H2TF):

- H2TF will be launched on June 30. The EU Commission and UNECE member states have nominated participants. The Bureau has reached out to academia and private sector stakeholders to nominate experts as well.
- The UNECE Task Force on Hydrogen will focus on the following three workstreams: i) hydrogen classification and application of UNFC; ii) addressing hydrogen value chain; iii) technology interplay and synergies for sustainable hydrogen production pathways

Update on XB Projects tabled for the next EXCOM planned on 6 July:

- XB project on H2 classification is still under discussion
- Preparing two additional XB projects on methane management:
 - Dissemination of best practices in coal mine methane monitoring, reporting, capture, abatement, and use for the purpose of strengthening national capacities for safe and environmentally responsible management of methane from state owned coal mines
 - Strengthening national capacities to reduce coal mine methane emissions from active (CMM) and abandoned (AMM) coal mines and to measure and manage methane emissions across the natural gas value chain

Item 3: Planning the 32nd session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

The Bureau members discussed the structure and the objectives of the *next session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy*

3 main points were addressed:

1. Structure of the UNECE Sustainable Energy Week

- **Wednesday, September 13, 2023: Launch of the UNECE Platform on Resilient Energy Systems**
 - The concept of the platform has been shared with other organizations such as the WMO, IEA, IAEA, OSCE, EIB, who all endorsed the concept and want to participate in it.
 - AI experts have been consulted. One promising lead is the developers of [ChatClimate](#), who built a sophisticated search engine to search through the IPCC Report which shares summarized information from it based on the user's question. The Secretariat is exploring a joint project with them.
 - An advanced copy of the UNECE Platform on Building Resilient Energy Systems will be shared with Bureau for review early July. The concept needs to be finalized by 15 August to be submitted to the next Committee session.
- **Wednesday, September 13, 2023: Securing Access to CRMs**

- Bureau discussed how they would like the session to be shaped and agreed that this session will directly build on findings from the UNECE Resource Management Week held in April 2023.
- The focus on the session will be on the role of UNFC in the EU CRM Act as well as role of UNFC to help countries in Central Asia to unlock their critical raw materials potential. Case studies should be brought in to discuss technical challenges and policy suggestions.
- This session will also address how UNFC and UNRMS can help advancing SDGs
- **Thursday, September 14, 2023: Energy Connectivity – Technology Interplay and Regional Cooperation**
 - This session will discuss to what extent the phase out of fossil fuels, known for their dispatchability properties, can expose the vulnerability of the energy systems resilience and how to integrate renewable energy more effectively to enhance the resiliency of the electricity grid. The session will also from the demand side assess to what extent grids can impede deep electrification of transport sector and how to address these challenges.
 - This session will also take into consideration discussion with country representatives. Georgia requested to include a case study, highlighting their Black Sea submarine cable flagship project, which aims to connect Georgia’s energy grid to Romania and the wider EU.
- **Thursday, September 14, 2023: Systemic efficiencies and digitization**
 - Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency and the Task Force on Digitalization will lead this session building on the findings from the 70th session of the Economic Commission for Europe.
 - At its seventieth session, the Commission emphasized the need to further strengthen the work of the Commission in support of digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the ECE region within its existing mandate as appropriate and subject to available resources.
- **Friday, September 15, 2023: Priorities of the Committee**
 - This session will be aimed towards identifying emerging priorities for 2024: i) methane management and ii) just transition
 - Communication → Need to think about what core messages the Committee can stress, which will carry over to other High Level Meetings later this year.

Actions:

- Committee Bureau members to work in groups to develop concept notes for their respective session
- Expert Groups to promote UNECE Sustainable Energy Week within their communities

2. Progress on the Launch of the UNECE Platform on Resilient Energy Systems

The secretariat has provided an update on development of the advanced concept note for the UNECE Platform on Resilient Energy Systems. Since the last Committee Bureau call in May two coordination call with the partners that include WMO, IAEA, EIB, OSCE, EIA have been held. The

secretariat has also been in touch with various AI-tool service providers and is analyzing different options.

Actions:

- Advanced concept note of the UNECE Platform on Resilient Energy Systems will be shared with the Bureau for review by mid-July.

3. Substantive documents – update and sign off

The secretariat has informed the Bureau that almost all of the mandated documents are on track to be submitted by July 5. The Bureau will be requested to review the document on High Performance Buildings Initiative in July.

Item 4 & 5. Update on recent and upcoming UNECE events (30min)

Dario Liguti and Chokan Laumulin have updated the Bureau on the recent joint mission to Astana where the UNECE Delegation participate at the Astana International Forum

- **Kazakh-German Hydrogen Diplomacy Symposium** was organized by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Deutsche Energie-Agentur (dena) with contributions from UNECE. This Hydrogen Diplomacy Symposium kickstarted cooperation in the hydrogen field in Kazakhstan and identified regional synergies and cooperation opportunities with Central Asia, as well as provided an overview of the prospects for green hydrogen and its implications for global energy trade and cooperation potentials between Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and Germany. We will be exploring further activities of this initiative on hydrogen, namely in Uzbekistan.
- **Mr. Kenzhebek Ibrashev, General Director, KazEnergy Association** to strengthen the cooperation and work together on the following priorities: 1) Kazakhstan Energy Week in October 2023 to organize a joint event on hydrogen; 2) Almaty Energy Forum to seek Kazenergy support with deliver of the Forum and various sessions; 3) Invitation to the KazEnergy experts to join the UNECE Task Force on Hydrogen; 4) exploring opportunities to adopt UNFC and establish the International Center of Excellence; 5) further dissemination of the UNECE carbon neutrality toolkit; 6) strengthening cooperation on the UNECE activities of methane reduction and the upcoming Global Methane Forum in March 2024.

Meetings with UN Bodies and other international organizations in Kazakhstan and Central Asia:

- **Ms. Michaela Friberg Storey, Kazakhstan UN RCO Country Representative** and discussion of UNECE work on Building resilient energy systems and Carbon neutrality; Almaty Energy Forum; Energy Connectivity in Central Asia; Access to critical raw materials in Central Asia and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS; Sustainable hydrogen production pathways in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; Just Transition and Kazakh Carbon Neutrality Strategy.
- **Mr. Jenča, ASG for Europe, Central Asia and Americas Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs - Department of Peace Operations** on UNECE work on building resilient energy systems and accelerating energy transition in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; work on enhancing energy connectivity in Central Asia; UNECE toolkit for carbon neutrality.

- Meeting with **Ms. Laura Altinger, Head of Regional Nature, Climate and Energy Team, UNDP Bureau for Europe and Central Asia** and discussion on participation of UNDP in the Almaty Energy Forum, participation of Kazakhstan and UNDP's involvement in the Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings (IKI project).
- Meeting with **Ms. Mathilde Mesnard, Deputy Director and Coordinator for Climate and Green Finance for Environment Directorate, OECD** and discussion on water-energy-land nexus project (IKI project) led by OECD; participation of OECD in the Task Force on Hydrogen; participation in the Almaty Energy Forum.

Meetings with the Government of Kazakhstan:

- Meeting with **Mr. Nurken Sharbiyev, First Vice Minister, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan** and discussion on UNFC and UNRMS as a sustainable natural resource classification system used for accounting resources, including critical mineral resources which can enable Kazakhstan to develop its resources sustainably and strengthen its strategic cooperation on sustainable raw materials with the EU.
- Meeting with **Mr. Marat Karabayev, Minister of Industry and Infrastructure Development of Kazakhstan** and discussion on UNECE Framework for Building Resilient Energy Systems; UNFC and UNRMS; EU Critical Raw materials week; Almaty Energy Forum, and Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings (IKI project).
- Meeting with **Mr. Al-Farabi Ydyryshev, Director General, National Center for Technology Foresight** and discussion on access to critical raw materials and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS.
- Brief meeting with **Mr. Zhandos Nurmaganbetov, Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan** to discuss Kazakhstan's support for the Almaty Energy Forum as a platform for inclusive multistakeholder dialogue to facilitate regional cooperation, provide technical capacity support and build resilient energy systems.

Meetings with IFIs in Central Asia

- Meeting with **Ms. Aida Sitdikova, Director, Head of Energy Eurasia Sustainable Infrastructure Group, EBRD** and discussion on access to critical raw materials in Central Asia and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS; sustainable hydrogen production pathways in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and invitation to EBRD to participate in the Task Force on Hydrogen; Energy Connectivity project in Central Asia; participation of EBRD at the Almaty Energy Forum
- Meeting with **Ms. Wiebke Schloemer, Director for Turkey and Central Asia, International Finance Corporation (IFC)** and discussion on Energy Connectivity project in Central Asia, Almaty Energy Forum, and Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings (IKI project).

- Meeting with **Mr. Andrei Mikhnev, Country Manager Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, World Bank** and discussion on Almaty Energy Forum, Energy Connectivity project in Central Asia, coal mine methane and UNECE activities for Turkmenistan.

The Bureau was also informed that the UNECE delegation will be participating at this year's HLPF in New York and the following will be covered:

- Launch of "Tracking SDG7: The Energy Progress Report" at a special event on 11 July). UNECE contributed to the following policy briefs: (i) Policy Brief on Advancing SDG7 in the UNECE Region; (ii) UN-Energy Policy Brief on Power System Connectivity in Support of SDG7.(iii) UN-Energy Policy Brief on aligning critical raw materials (CRM) development with sustainable development.
- On 13 July UNECE will hold a side-event on Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus amid Climate Change in the UNECE Region – Regional Strategies for a Sustainable Future

Item 6 – Any other business

Next Bureau call in preparation to the next session will be end of August