



## 32nd Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy Opening Remarks by Ms Tatiana Molcean

Date: **Wednesday 13 September 2023, from 10:00 CEST (Geneva time)**

- Distinguished Participants, Dear Colleagues, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 32nd Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
- In my new role as Executive Secretary of UNECE, I am excited to meet you all. I am impressed by all the work that this community of distinguished energy experts has been conducting to help member States **design innovative energy policies and build resilient and carbon neutral energy systems**.
- As you might know at UNECE, our **mission** is to **promote regional economic integration**. The region is one of the **largest producers and consumers of energy**. It has the **most extensive trade flows for energy-related services**. Our region is key when it comes to energy and delivering a sustainable energy future for our world.
- **We are at a critical turning point**. Our region has become the focus of multiple crisis, a war that is raging for over a year and a half, and this year extreme climate events - heatwaves, forest fires and floods. This summer, heatwaves created new temperature records across our region. Alpine glaciers, including in Switzerland, broke records for melting, losing over 6% of their ice volume since 2021. Wildfires in Greece and beyond across Southern Europe have been turning forests into moonscapes.
- Unless we decide on a balanced and integrated approach to solving these multiple crises, we are on a trajectory to jeopardize the well-being of societies and the planet's future. I firmly believe that collectively we can change that trajectory and I rely on you.
- I call upon all the distinguished participants present today to pause and think how to address the **triple planetary crisis**. This refers to the **three main interlinked issues that humanity currently faces: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss**. Each of these issues has its own causes and effects, and each issue needs to be resolved if we are to have a viable future on this planet. How can UNECE and the Committee on

Sustainable Energy be that **instrument of change**? How can we bring us back from the verge of multiple disasters?

- **Energy is critical to supporting peace, cooperation, economic and social development, and quality of life** in our region and beyond. Experts have found clear pathways for policymakers to attain a resilient and carbon-neutral energy system. Energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy deployment, high-efficiency fossil fuel technologies with carbon capture, use, and storage (CCUS), nuclear power (including advanced nuclear power), hydrogen, and integrated and sustainable management of natural resources are all part of the solution to attain carbon neutrality. **Only bold, immediate, and sustained action can develop resilient energy systems that ensure affordable access to energy AND decarbonize our energy systems in time to avoid a climate disaster.**
- **Private and public sector cooperation is essential**. Collaboration with the financial sector to drive low-carbon energy investments is also vital, and that collaboration must be agile.
- The Committee has been at the forefront of dialogue and action to support its member States on the energy transition. Diverse **standards, guidelines and best practices** developed by the Committee through its six expert groups have set the trend. Our tools have been widely adopted in the region and beyond.
- With the UN climate talks (COP28) only a few weeks away, countries and investors in the UNECE region must urgently redouble their commitments to achieve global net zero targets and end fossil fuel dependency. Scaling up investment in low and zero-carbon technologies is crucial to strengthen energy security and affordability.
- I urge this Committee to rise to the new challenges and develop more **breakthrough solutions** to accelerate urgent action on climate and build the needed resiliency of our energy systems.

**I wish you a very successful event, and look forward to hearing about the outcomes.**

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