

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

From: Dario Liguti and Iva Brkic

Call of the Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

Via Teams – 14:30 CET, 1 February 2024

MINUTES

I. ATTENDANCE:

- **Bureau Members in attendance:** Juergen Keinhorst (Germany, Chair), Tofiq Hasanzada (Azerbaijan), Chokan Laumulin (Kazakhstan), Morten Evjenth Lindbaeck (Norway), Denise Mulholland (United States), Stefan Buettner (Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency – GEEE), Francisco de la Flor Garcia (Group of Experts on Gas – GEG), Raymond Pilcher (Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition), Sylvain Clermont for Jim Robb (Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems – GECES), Karen Hanghøj (Expert Group on Resource Management) and Kostiantyn Gura (Group of Experts on Renewable Energy).
- **UNECE Secretariat staff in attendance:** Iva Brkic (Secretary), Michal Drabik, Oleg Dzioubinski, Charlotte Griffiths, Nadejda Khamrakulova, Igor Litvinyuk, Branko Milicevic, Gianluca Sambucini, Slavko Vekoslav Solar, Harikrishnan Tulsidas
- **Apologies:** Admir Softic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Romeo Mikautadze (Georgia), Farhod Bilolzoda (Tajikistan), Yaroslav Demchenkov (Ukraine)

II. PROPOSED AGENDA:

1. Update on the UN Liquidity crisis
2. Planning the 33rd Committee Session
3. Update on recent and upcoming events
4. AoB

Item 1. Update on the UN Liquidity crisis

Dario Liguti

- The Director provided an update on the ongoing UN liquidity crisis and its impact on implementation of the current 2024 CSE Work Programme.
- The UN Secretariat started 2023 with a positive cash balance of nearly \$340 million. However, only 82.3% of assessments were collected which was the lowest since 2018. Only 142 member States paid in full their contributions by 31 December 2023. Thus, by 31 December 2023 the UN on the accounts had \$860 million in arrears and \$407 million of cash deficit. As a result of this financial situation in 2023, the UN started 2024 with about \$60 million on its accounts. This means that even if all Member States pay in full by 31 December 2024, collections will be below

the 2024 approved budget. As a result of this situation, the UN has had to implement some measures to save cash: i) hiring freeze of staff throughout 2024 (hiring freeze started in August 2023); ii) severe curtailment of official travel only to what is strictly necessary; iii) hiring of consultants minimized; iv) energy conservation measures, non-essential security and renovation expenses cuts.

- The implications for the Sustainable Energy subprogramme include:
 - **Hiring freeze:** two P-4 positions (including the recently approved PBI) and one P-5 position cannot be filled, recruitment processes have been frozen and no extension of temporary staff contracts (TJOs) – 2 positions at risk, 1 P-4 post has been frozen as of 31 January. In addition, no hiring of consultants on the regular budget.
 - **Limited meetings services:** no virtual participation nor hospitality allowed.
 - **Missions and capacity-building:** regular budget travel funds have been frozen and there are limited consultancies or travel under RPTC – RPTC is a regular budget fund that is supporting our activities in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.
- This all implies significant impact on the 2024 Programme of Work approved by CSE. The Secretariat is analyzing the impact on the 2024 Programme of Work. The most impaired activity is the capacity of SED to service CSE-33 and one or two Groups of Experts meetings during 2024.

Item 2. Planning the 33rd Committee Session

Jürgen Keinhorst

- The Bureau discussed the theme and the format of the upcoming 33rd Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE-33) and the 2024 Sustainable Energy Week. Following on the discussions from the 32nd Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy in September 2023, the Bureau proposed the following theme for the Week: *Building resilient energy systems for a just energy transition in the UNECE region*.
- The Bureau highlighted the need for a **call to action on a Just Transition** across the member States. While shaping the session we need to consider the following:
 - **Build on the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems** → to ease the path of a just energy transition it needs to be incorporated in the resilient and carbon neutral energy systems of the future. How can resilient and carbon neutral energy systems create favourable conditions for a just energy transition? It is not possible to attain resilient energy systems without just transition and vice versa.
 - **Mobilize all Groups of Experts** → receive a mandate and define concrete activities for the Expert Groups to work together on accelerating *Just Transition* across the UNECE region. What is a concrete activity on which the Expert Groups will work together towards the 34th session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy?
 - **Engage with the Capitals** → what would attract representatives from the Capitals? Would it be timely to prepare a declaration or action points for the region on how to build resilient and carbon neutral energy systems for a just energy transition?
- Documents: to deliver on six mandatory documents and one substantive document
 - Proposal for the substantive document: Informal summary of practices for representation of and the use of titles within the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its Subsidiary Bodies.

Item 3 – Update on recent and upcoming events

Recent events:

- 4-10 December 2023, the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division delivered on a number of events in Dubai: [SED events at COP28](#), including on Transition Finance with DZ Bank and High-Level Climate Champions; NDCs and NECPs as the new financial roadmaps for facilitating the transition towards renewable energy in South-East Europe with IRENA; Regional Platforms for Climate Finance: unlocking climate finance flows through project acceleration with High-Level Climate Champions and UN Regional Commissions; Accelerating the Just Energy Transition: decarbonizing industrial value chains with clean hydrogen; Global Energy Interconnection: Advancing Just and Inclusive Energy Transition; Responsible and inclusive management of critical energy transition minerals organized by UN Regional Commissions, UNDP, and UNEP.
- 7 December 2023 [Dialogue on Safe Operations and Closure of Coal Mines](#) led by the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just transition
- 11-13 December 2023: [Workshop on Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas](#) and a fact-finding mission to Albania, Tirana, Albania, led by the GE on Coal Mine Methane and Just transition
- 13 December 2023: [Dialogue on Just Transition](#), online, led by the GE on Coal Mine Methane and Just transition
- 19 December 2023: [Industrial Energy Efficiency: bi-monthly open discussion forum](#), online led by the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency
- 24 January 2024: [Launch of the UNECE and ESCAP Programme on Energy Connectivity in Central Asia](#). In 2024, the Programme will focus on the following activities:
 - development of scenarios and a roadmap for a regionally interconnected energy system in Central Asia.
 - development of a subregional roadmap to inform multilateral power trading linked to sustainable cross-border trade of renewable energy resources.
 - development of tools and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships for a resilient and interconnected power systems.

Upcoming events:

- [Global Methane Forum](#): 18-21 March 2024
- [UNECE Resource Management Week 2024](#): 22-26 April 2024

Item 4 – Any other business

The next Bureau call will take place on Wednesday, 20 March 2024 at 13.30 – 15.00 CET.
