

Meeting of Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum

Minutes

12 December 2019, Chisinau

1. Chair's welcome on behalf of the Energy Community Presidency in Office and adoption of agenda

The meeting was opened by Vladimir Golovatiuc, Chair of the Committee for Economy, Budget and Finance of the Parliament of Moldova as Presidency-in-Office of the Energy Community. In his welcoming remarks, Mr Golovatiuc thanked the Members for their participation to the Plenum and stressed the importance of inter-parliamentary cooperation, especially on energy issues.

Mr Golovatiuc established that the Parliamentary Plenum did not have the quorum necessary to adopt the Report on the Future of Energy Efficiency in the Energy Community and informed the participants that the Report would thus be adopted at the Plenum's next meeting.

Mr Golovatiuc introduced the agenda and pointed out any changes made to the original version of the agenda distributed. The Secretariat explained that the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) was postponed as the PAM Secretariat was unable to ensure the presence of a high level PAM delegate for the Chisinau meeting. The Secretariat clarified that no Members of the European Parliament could take part in the Chisinau meeting due to the recent European Parliament elections and change of committee chair. However, a meeting in the European Parliament is envisaged to take place in Brussels in the first quarter of 2020.

The participants to the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum meeting adopted the agenda.

2. Report on the Future of Energy Efficiency in the Energy Community

Mr Golovatiuc introduced the topic, emphasizing the importance of energy efficiency. The draft Report on the Future of Energy Efficiency in the Energy Community was presented by its rapporteur, Mr Aleksandar Damjanovic, Member of Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget of the Parliament of Montenegro.

The Report encourages the Contracting Parties of the Energy Community to make additional efforts and apply all available measures and activities with the aim of achieving energy efficiency objectives by 2020. It stresses that, without maximal dedication of national institutions, legislative and executive authorities, civil society, as well as other stakeholders from Energy Community Contracting Parties, it will not be possible to consistently transpose and fully implement European legislation.

Mr Damjanovic thanked the Secretariat and the Open Regional Fund for South East Europe-Energy Efficiency implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH on behalf of the German Government for their support in drafting the Report.

The draft report was subsequently discussed by the Plenum.

3. Energy Community: What lies ahead in 2020?

Janez Kopač, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat, presented the latest developments on setting a new climate and energy framework till 2030 for the Energy Community. Director Kopač explained that the targets to increase the share of energy from renewable sources and improve energy efficiency by 2020 taken by the Energy Community Contracting Parties will soon expire and a new climate and energy framework till 2030 is required to provide certainty to investors and contribute to emission reduction under the global Paris Agreement on climate change.

Members of Parliament were also briefed about the current gas security situation in the region.

4. An Energy Community for the Future – State of play of Energy Community Treaty Reforms

Director Kopač gave an overview of the process of reforming the Energy Community Treaty, the key topic of the 2019 Energy Community Ministerial Council, which took place the following day. Mr Kopač explained that the new reforms will improve the functioning of the Energy Community, including via strengthening the Treaty's enforcement mechanism and introducing new provisions for facilitating energy trade and enhancing market integration between Energy Community Contracting Parties and EU Member States.

Under a new "reciprocity" clause, provisions and/or measures, such as Third Energy Package network codes, will become binding between Contracting Parties and the European Union under certain conditions. However, Mr Kopač warned that the European Union can unilaterally suspend its obligations towards a Contracting Party if a Contracting Party is not implementing or enforcing effectively its Treaty obligations.

5. The Energy Community Secretariat's Dispute Resolution and Negotiation Centre

The Secretariat presented its Dispute Resolution and Negotiation Centre, which has already proved to be a useful tool for legislators. The Centre, attached to the legal unit of the Secretariat, combines technical, legal and political expertise with the independence and standing of an experienced international organization and respected negotiation facilitators and mediators. The Secretariat explained that its facilities were already used by Members of Parliament of several Contracting Parties to resolve disputes, e.g. with investors in renewable energy technologies.

6. Selection of topics and rapporteur for next report and preparation for 2020 activities, including date and place of next meeting

The Plenum appointed Ms Snezana Petrovic, Member of the Committee on the Economy, Regional Development, Trade, Tourism and Energy of the Parliament of Serbia, as the next Parliamentary Plenum rapporteur. The report will focus on empowering energy consumers in the Energy Community. The Plenum also decided to focus on coal regions in transition in the course of 2020.

The next Parliamentary Plenum meeting will take place in Brussels, but the date is not yet known due to the recent European Parliament elections and change of chair of the committee responsible for energy issues in the European Parliament. It is likely to be in the first quarter of 2020. The Secretariat will send invitations two months prior to the meeting.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Members: Niko Peleshi (Albania), Besnik Baraj (Albania), Aleksandar Damjanovic (Montenegro), Vladimir Golovatiuc (Moldova), Oleg Lipskii (Moldova), Snezana R. Petrovic (Serbia), Zarko Micin (Serbia), Viktoriia Gryb (Ukraine)

Alternative Members: Agim Shakjiri (North Macedonia), Zoran Ilioski (North Macedonia)

Energy Community Secretariat: Janez Kopač, Barbora Poyner, Svitlana Karpyshyna, Predrag Grujicic, Smaranda Miron

Parliamentary Secretariats: Aleksandra Balac, Slavica Bojinovic, Xhilda Pinci, Dragan Pulevski, Cristina Malcoci, Tatiana Morari

Civil society: Erjon Tase, Esad Mavrić, Boris Raonić, Edina Hasanaga Čobaj, Zlatko Simonovski, Lidija Radulović, Julia Nagel, Jasna Sekulović, Aida Buljubašić, Olga Mićunović