

Meeting of Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum

Minutes

19 December 2017, Vienna, Austria

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by Mr Janez Kopač, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat, and Ms Sala Berisha-Shala, Member of Parliament of Kosovo* on behalf of the Energy Community Presidency in Office. Ms Berisha-Shala welcomed the participants and thanked the Secretariat for organizing the meeting and the Members of Parliament for their participation. She underlined that Mr Kakhaber Kuchava, the Chairman of the Committee on Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of the Parliament of Georgia, participated in the Parliamentary Plenum meeting for the first time, following Georgia's full-fledged membership in the Energy Community since July 2017.

Ms Berisha-Shala stressed that the meeting, which was dedicated to security of energy supply, was highly important given the fact that most of the countries of the Energy Community were net energy importers. She underlined that the Parliamentary Plenum was the ideal platform for the strengthening of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the field of energy security as the issue remained critical for all Energy Community Contracting Parties and was truly a common challenge. She thanked the two rapporteurs – Mr Lev Pidlisetskyi, Member of the Ukrainian Parliament, and Mr Claude Turmes, Member of the European Parliament, for drafting the first ever report of the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum, the focus of which was security of energy supply. Mr Turmes addressed the Plenum via video message.

2. Parliamentary Plenum Report on Security of Energy Supply

The draft Parliamentary Plenum Report on Security of Energy Supply was presented by Mr Lev Pidlisetskyi. Mr Pidlisetskyi underlined the pan-European and global nature of security of energy supply issues, which were particularly relevant for the countries of the Energy Community given their dependence on energy imports and, in the case of gas, on one single country. Thus, diversification of supply and efficient usage of energy resources should constitute indispensable parts of security of energy supply policies. Moreover, he highlighted the need to enhance the common regulatory environment, as different regulatory approaches pose barriers to effective cooperation, which results in inefficiencies in the use of energy resources and infrastructure. A paradigm shift from self-sufficiency within national borders and independence from imports to a policy of market integration at the regional and European level is also necessary.

Having analysed the current problems and risks of energy supply security in the Energy Community Region, Mr Pidlisetskyi outlined the key recommendations of the report, including: full implementation of Third Energy Package rules; putting in place joint EU-Energy Community cooperation mechanisms to face security of supply crises and improve risk preparedness; the Energy Community keeping pace with EU in terms of adopting legislation on security of energy supply; developing new infrastructure and improving the use of existing infrastructure based on Regulation (EU) 347/2013; uptaking energy efficiency measures and achieving the renewable energy targets to 2020.

The draft report was subsequently discussed by the Plenum. A number of amendments proposed by the Serbian delegation was incorporated in the final report adopted by the Parliamentary Plenum. The final version of the report is available on the Energy Community's website¹.

As instructed by the Plenum, the Secretariat will forward the report to the Energy Community Ministerial Council and to participants to the Energy Community Civil Society Day.

3. Rules of Procedure

Members of the Parliamentary Plenum proposed a number of amendments to the draft rules of procedure. It was agreed that the European Parliament may appoint an "equal number" of representatives as members from the Energy Community Contracting Parties (instead of 16 Members) and that "any member" (instead of a delegation) may submit one written question a year in total to the Ministerial Council or other bodies. A proposal, put forward by several plenum members, for parliamentary staff to be eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses under the rules of procedure was rejected on the basis of the adopted Energy Community Ministerial Council Procedural Act PA/2015/05/MC-EnC on the establishment of an Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum² and the existing budget framework of the Energy Community. However, the Plenum Members instructed the Secretariat to send a letter to all Presidents of Energy Community Contracting Party Parliaments asking for the allocation of financial resources for this purpose. Mr Kopač also clarified that the Energy Community is unable to cover the costs of interpretation at the Plenum meetings.

Mr Kopač explained that following the Procedural Act PA/2015/05/MC-EnC on the establishment of an Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum, the Ministerial Council must approve the Plenum's rules of procedure. In January 2018, the Secretariat will propose to the Energy Community Presidency in Office that the approval of the rules would take place by correspondence in order not to delay the adoption of the rules. Subject to endorsement of the rules of procedure, the next meeting of the Plenum will be conducted under the adopted rules.

4. Presentation of Energy Community Work Programme 2018

The Members heard a presentation by Mr Kopač on the state of play of implementation of the Energy Community acquis and priorities for the upcoming year. The presentation is available on the Energy Community website³.

5. Activities in 2018

The next meeting of the Plenum will take place in the spring in the European Parliament in Brussels (24 April 2018). The following meeting will take place on 17 October 2018 in Skopje, back-to-back to the Energy Community Ministerial Council, which is scheduled to take place on 19 October 2018 in Skopje.

¹ https://www.energy-community.org/dam/jcr:c7a8d46e-34bc-49e4-ada0-cfb03fd3ad7f/PARL_report_SOS_122017.pdf.

² https://www.energy-community.org/dam/jcr:db8a2dff-5757-4dd4-8ccd-a4b71803747b/PA_2015_05_MC_parliamentary.pdf.

³ https://www.energy-community.org/dam/jcr:6b50146e-7f0f-4d33-8ac0-78aa6212c7fc/ECPA_ECS_122017.pdf.

The Members endorsed representatives of the upcoming Energy Community Presidency 2018 - former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to act as rapporteur on the next Plenum report, the subject of which is to be decided by written procedure.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Members: Edward Shalsi (Albania), Kakhaber Kutchava (Georgia), Sala Berisha-Shala (Kosovo*), Hykmete Bajrami (Kosovo*), Hari Lokvenec (FYR of Macedonia), Goran Milevski (FYR of Macedonia), Snežana R. Petrović (Serbia), Filip Vuković (Montenegro)

Alternative Members: Predrag Kožul (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ljilja Zovko (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Žarko Mićin (Serbia), Lev Pidlesetsky (Ukraine)

Energy Community Secretariat: Predrag Grujicic, Violeta Kogalniceanu, Janez Kopač, Barbora Poyner, Simon Uzunov

Parliamentary Secretariats: Muhamet Morina, Dejan Milivojevic, Tijana Knežević, Nenad Pandurević, Xhilda Pinci, Dragan Pulevski