

## Meeting of Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum

### Minutes

28 November 2018, Skopje

#### 1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by Member of Parliament Hari Lokvenec, on behalf of former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as Presidency-in-Office of the Energy Community. In his welcoming remarks, Mr Lokvenec thanked the Members for their participation to the Plenum, underlining that the meeting was an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices on issues of common interest. Referring to the theme of the meeting – renewable energy, he reminded the participants that coal was a limited resource and given the expected rise in economic activity, the increased use of energy from renewable sources was not a choice but an obligation. Raising awareness of renewables and their benefits was critically important.

Setting the scene for the discussion, H.E. Mr. Kocho Angjushev, Vice Prime Minister of former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, outlined in his keynote speech the recently adopted reforms his country has undertaken in order to promote renewables and attract renewables investment, including plans to introduce a competitive selection process for supporting renewable energy.

In his keynote address, H.E. Mr. Kreshnik Bekteshi, Minister of Economy of former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, outlined the country's new energy strategy, the focus of which was to increase renewables and meet the country's renewables obligations under the Energy Community Treaty.

#### 2. Report on Strengthening the Promotion of Energy from Renewable Sources in the Energy Community

The draft Report on the Promotion of Energy from Renewable Sources in the Energy Community was presented by the rapporteur, Mr Hari Lokvenec, Member of the Assembly of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Mr Lokvenec highlighted that the potential of renewables in the Energy Community has not been used sufficiently. Members of Parliament can make a significant contribution by transposing EU legislation into the national legal frameworks. He stressed that in order to boost the uptake of renewable energies, it was essential to eliminate administrative barriers, encourage cooperation at national and local levels and increase transparency. Moreover, more efficient cross-border integration was needed between the Contracting Parties and EU Member States. Additional measures were necessary to stimulate citizens and the private sector.

The draft report was subsequently discussed by the Plenum. It was underlined that the Energy Community region shares many common challenges and much has been achieved thanks to regional cooperation and the Energy Community. The goals of the Energy Community contain what is needed for the energy transition, but a lot remains to be done. Increasing renewables has to be done in a sustainable way, using market instruments for the procurement of new renewables capacities.

Wrapping up the debate, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat, Mr Janez Kopač, reminded the participants about the wider energy trends, including electrification and decentralization. The importance of energy efficiency in the energy transition should not be underestimated.

Mr Aleksandar Damjanovic, Member of the Parliament of Montenegro, and Ms Lilja Zovko, Member of the Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, agreed to submit amendments to the report. The amendments will be discussed at the next Plenum meeting, where the report will be put to vote.

### **3. Selection of topics and rapporteur for next report and preparation for 2019 activities, including date and place of next meeting**

The Plenum endorsed a member of the Parliamentary Plenum from the Parliament of Montenegro, Mr Aleksandar Damjanovic, as the rapporteur for the upcoming Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum Report. The subject of the report will focus on sustainable energy, in particular energy efficiency. The topic will be first debated at the next Parliamentary Plenum meeting on 19 February 2019 in Brussels and put to vote at the subsequent meeting in the second half of 2019.

### **4. Rules of Procedure**

Director of the Energy Community Secretariat, Mr Janez 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. The Council was expected to approve the rules the following day, on 29 November 2018<sup>1</sup>.

Mr Kopač explained that before the Rules of Procedure could be tabled for adoption by the Ministerial Council, they had to be slightly adapted to respond to the requests of the Energy Community Permanent High Level Group regarding institutional balance as established under the Energy Community Treaty. The changes implemented to the Rules of Procedure as endorsed by the December 2017 Plenum meeting were largely of a technical nature.

### **5. Legislating Renewables – Joint meeting with Members of Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean**

The second part of the Energy Community Plenum Meeting consisted of a joint meeting with Members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). The PAM delegation was led by Antonios Balomenakis (Greece), and composed of Atay Uslu (Turkey), Hallil Özşavli (Turkey), Ali Öztunç (Turkey), Ali Belakhoua (Tunisia), and Alessandro Ortis (Italy), Co-Chair of the PAM Panel on Trade and Investment.

The meeting was opened by Member of Parliament Agim Shakjiri on behalf of the Energy Community Presidency-in-office of former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, who shared the experience of the country's recently adopted Law on Energy, which includes a strong component on the promotion of renewables. Member of the Hellenic Parliament Antonio Belomenakis, Head of PAM Delegation, gave an insight into PAM's long-term activities linked to energy issues. The debate underlined a number of innovative initiatives, including a common electricity grid that would connect the two shores of the Mediterranean and PAM's resolution on

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<sup>1</sup> The Rules of Procedure were adopted by the Ministerial Council at its meeting on 29 November 2018 in Skopje. The final version is available on the Energy Community website - [https://www.energy-community.org/dam/jcr:50f430ef-5c76-422c-8ec6-cc3c77c05a70/RoP\\_ECPCP\\_112018.pdf](https://www.energy-community.org/dam/jcr:50f430ef-5c76-422c-8ec6-cc3c77c05a70/RoP_ECPCP_112018.pdf).

the establishment of a Carbon Added Tax. Members from the Turkish Parliament shared insights into Turkey's energy policy with respect to renewables.

Members of Parliament exchanged experiences and ideas with respect to legislating a conducive legal framework for renewables. It was underlined that they share many challenges and efforts to overcome these joint challenges together are key. The joint session stressed the key role of parliamentarians in providing an adequate legal, regulatory and institutional framework for the promotion of renewables, but also the need to ensure that these frameworks are harmonized.

The joint session highlighted that cross-border cooperation and collaboration between different institutions was essential. It was agreed to formalize cooperation between the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean in the future through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.

Concluding the debate, Director Janez Kopač outlined the perspectives of European energy policy towards 2030. He called on Members of Parliament to be ambitious and work together to lead the just, low carbon energy transition.

## RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

**Members:** Edward Shalsi (Albania), Besnik Baraj (Albania), Sala Berisha-Shala (Kosovo\*), Hari Lokvenec (FYR of Macedonia), Aleksandar Damjanovic (Montenegro), Filip Vuković (Montenegro)

**Alternative Members:** Kadić Sead (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ljilja Zovko (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Agim Shakjiri (FYR of Macedonia)

**Energy Community Secretariat:** Janez Kopač, Barbora Poyner, Svitlana Karpyshyna, Rozeta Karova

**Parliamentary Secretariats:** Muhamet Morina, Tijana Knežević, Nenad Pandurević, Dubravka Ištuk Pavlović, Dragan Pulevski