

## IRENA HIGHLIGHTS: SUNDAY, 3 APRIL 2011

### PREPARATORY COMMISSION

On Sunday, 3 April, the Preparatory Commission for the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) held its fifth and final session. The session was chaired by Ogunlade Davidson, Sierra Leone, who underscored the significance of renewable energy and, therefore, of IRENA. IRENA's Interim Director-General, Adnan Amin, welcomed participants and thanked delegates for their guidance over recent months.

### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Delegates adopted the provisional agenda (PC.5/1). Davidson announced the election of officers for the fifth session of the Commission: Ogunlade Davidson as Chair; Rita Misshan, Guatemala, Eva Paaske, Norway, Farhat Ayesha, Pakistan, and 'Akau'ola, Tonga, as Vice-Chairs; and Mexico as rapporteur. The Preparatory Commission considered the participation of observers (PC.5/CRP.1) and appointed the Credentials Committee to be made up of Alfredo Morelli, Argentina, as Chair, Evelyn Reyes, Philippines, Øivind Johanson, Norway, Rapture Pagaialii, Samoa, and Mohamed Abushehab, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Administrative Committee, Karsten Sach, Germany, reported on the outcome of the Committee's discussions, noting constructive talks on the formal issues discussed, such as IRENA's proposed work programme, budget, and staffing issues. He welcomed moving discussions away from procedural and onto political issues.

### PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE

The Chair of the Governance Committee, Guy Lentz, Luxembourg, said agreement on the provisional rules of procedure of the Assembly and the Council (PC.5/DC.1/Rev.1) had been reached, after resolving the outstanding issue of multilingualism (PC.5/DC.11 rev.1).

JAPAN said that membership continuity of the Council is crucial and suggested that one third of Council members be shuffled annually, and that the Chair serve for two years. Chair Lentz highlighted that current rules are provisional and can be reviewed at a later date.

Chair Lentz introduced the draft decision on the Establishment of Committees (PC.5/DC.10/Rev.1), explaining that it envisages three committees on finance, governance and legal issues, and policy and strategy. SUDAN, supported by SENEGAL, TOGO, BENIN, MOROCCO and GRENADA, proposed the creation of an additional committee on technical and technology issues.

Lentz explained that the current text was flexible and allowed for the creation of any new committee deemed necessary, as well as its dissolution. The UAE, supported by GERMANY, suggested that a decision on a technology committee be considered at a future session. Lentz added that negotiations on the terms of reference of an additional committee could be lengthy and suggested adding language in the preamble of the draft decision inviting the Assembly and Council to consider setting up a technology committee at the appropriate time. A number of countries, including the PHILIPPINES, COLOMBIA and AUSTRALIA underscored the importance of technological aspects for the deployment of renewables. ZIMBABWE called for recognition of all regional blocks on all committees.

Interim Director-General Amin underlined that the programme of work includes addressing technical barriers. The Preparatory Commission agreed to make note of a possible committee on technical and technological issues in the preamble of the decision and for the Council, once formed, to discuss this issue.

### STAFF MATTERS

Staff Matters included agenda items on staff regulations, the staff provident fund, and secondment of personnel.

The chair of the working group on Legal Issues, 'Akau'ola, Tonga, recommended the establishment of a new staff provident fund (PC.5/DC.3/Rev.1), as the current fund will cease to exist at the conclusion of the fifth Preparatory Commission. The working group agreed that appropriate compensation be established for the secondment of staff. JAPAN recommended that incentives for seconded personnel be increased.

Chair Davidson announced that Germany and Kenya had agreed to serve on the management board of the provident fund, and recommended these matters be referred to the Assembly for consideration.

### FINANCIAL MATTERS

'Akau'ola, Chair of the working group on legal issues, highlighted outstanding issues on surplus cash, with the UK noting surpluses should be returned to parties and signatories.

Chair Davidson introduced the matter (PC5/DC.5/Rev.1) and delegates agreed on changes for the Audit in the Financial Regulations, after which the Preparatory Commission agreed to forward the Draft Decision on Financial Regulations to the Assembly.

On audits, the Preparatory Commission took note of report (PC4/DC.9) and forwarded it to the Assembly for consideration.

### 2010 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

Interim Director-General Amin presented the annual report on implementation of the 2010 work programme and budget (PC.5/2). He said the focus had been on institutional and management issues, including implementation of recommendations and audits, with particular attention to human resources, finances and procurement, with the goal to

develop institutional capacity to insure long-term sustainability. He explained that new projects had been initiated, such as collaborations with existing institutions, including the International Energy Agency, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEP), and REN21.

#### HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENTS

The Secretariat announced a finalized Host Country Agreement for the IRENA Innovation & Technology Centre (IITC) office in Bonn, Germany, to be considered by the IRENA Assembly. It was proposed that a technical working group consisting of the UAE, the US, and TONGA, consider the revision of the Host Country Agreement between the UAE and the Preparatory Commission to reflect the transition from the Preparatory Commission to the Agency. It was also proposed that the Director-General be authorized by the Assembly to sign both agreements.

#### 2011 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

Interim Director-General Amin introduced the 2011 work programme and budget (PC.5/DC.7/Corr.1/Rev.1), noting IRENA's ambitious mandate and the importance for the organization to be lean, well run and transparent. He provided an overview of IRENA's proposed three sub-programmes on knowledge management and technological cooperation, policy advisory services and capacity building, and innovation and technology. Amin concluded by emphasizing that after "a year and a half of missed opportunities," action cannot be further delayed, and welcomed the current level of engagement seen from all regions.

Administrative Committee Chair Karsten Sach introduced the draft budget for 2011, highlighting a core budget of USD13.26 million, to which both signatories and members are asked to contribute. He also addressed the scale of assessment and provisions in case of surplus.

In the ensuing discussion, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA highlighted the future collaboration among IRENA, the Global Green Growth Institute, and the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology. INDIA proposed the establishment of a center for energy access. COLOMBIA underscored the importance of private sector and civil society involvement. JORDAN expressed the hope that IRENA will be able to establish a dialogue with regional bodies. SUDAN underscored IRENA's role in facilitating the exchange of experience and technologies. ITALY warned against further indecision in the future and politicizing minor issues. He said establishment of sub-committees should be minimized and most of the work should be left to the Secretariat. The Preparatory Commission agreed to forward the draft decision to the Assembly with note of the comments made.

#### PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

Chair 'Akau'ola reported on the draft document on privileges and immunities of IRENA (PC.5/DC.8), which was adopted by the Preparatory Commission.

#### TRANSFER OF LIABILITIES

Chair Lentz reported on the transfer of assets, liabilities and contracts from the Preparatory Commission to IRENA (PC.5/DC.6). He said the Preparatory Commission must agree to transfer these funds and responsibilities, and thereafter IRENA must agree to accept it. The Preparatory Commission then adopted the decision on the proposed transfers.

#### CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

After a suggestion from the GAMBIA, it was agreed that Davidson would evaluate the Draft Report on the activities of the Preparatory Commission (PC.5/3) on behalf of parties. Chair Morella said the committee examined the credentials of 143 countries.

#### PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR ASSEMBLY

Chair Davidson introduced the draft agenda for the Assembly (PC.5/1/Add.1) and suggested adding items on Multilingualism (PC.5/DC.11/Rev.1), the Establishment of Committees (PC.5/DC.10), the Privileges and Immunities of IRENA (PC.5/DC.8), as well as to remove the item of the election of an external auditor.

#### APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF IRENA

On the selection process, the UAE explained that, after a thorough selection process, seven candidates were considered eligible for interviews. After these interviews the selection committee unanimously selected Adnan Amin, Kenya, and Pedro Marín, Spain, as finalists. Each candidate addressed the floor for five minutes, followed by a question and answer session with delegates.

Amin highlighted the institutional progress made since his arrival as Interim Director-General, stressing he would continue to strive to bring IRENA to its full potential if elected. He further highlighted his experience with international organizations. Responding to questions from parties, he said IRENA should act as a high-level facilitator of information exchange on best policy practices, and that in five years he saw IRENA as being the premier global source of information on renewable energy.

Marín underscored the problematic nature of the dominant global energy structure, and the important role IRENA could play in moving towards a more sustainable development path. He stressed his experience with renewable energy policy and with the formation of IRENA. Responding to questions from parties, Marín stressed the important role renewable energy could play for remote and non-traditional energy-producing areas.

After the vote, Chair Davidson announced that Adnan Amin, who obtained 76 out of 112 valid votes, was the Director-General designate.

Marín thanked delegates for their support, congratulated Amin, and wished him the best. Amin said he was humbled by the parties' confidence in him, and thanked Marín for his passion for renewable energy and commitment to IRENA.

#### OTHER ISSUES

GREECE presented on the Isle Pact project for sustainable energy and European Islands. ANTIGUA and BARBUDA requested a list of participants be distributed to all member States.

#### ADOPTION OF THE SESSION REPORT

Mexico highlighted the main decisions adopted by the Preparatory Committee during the day.

#### CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Chair Davidson thanked the chairs of the committees, the host country, translators and the Secretariat, and closed the session at 8:07 pm.

#### IN THE CORRIDORS

The corridors were abuzz on Sunday with rumors and forecasts about the election of the Director-General. Fears by some of an inconclusive vote that would result in the issue resurfacing in the Assembly, (where only members could vote as opposed to signatories during the PrepCom), proved unfounded after Adnan Amin's clear victory and Pedro Marín's gracious acceptance of the result.

A few delegates were heard discussing how Amin's extempore speech on his work to bring IRENA back on track after a year and a half of missed opportunities came across as more relevant to the role of Director-General than did Marín's case for the need for IRENA to exist as an organization and specific examples of projects in small island States.

An experienced delegate noted, however, that most positions were already decided and the speeches probably did not have that much influence. "In any case, it is a relief," said one participant, who noted that IRENA could ill afford a controversial election.

A few delegates also commented on the wisdom of Sudan's proposal to create a technology committee, with some developing country delegates noting that technology transfer should be at the very core of IRENA's activities. As the Agency is about to come into formal existence, a number of delegates underscored the importance of creating a clearing house for successful cases of deployment of renewable energy and facilitating the exchange of information between developing countries, as well as between developed and developing countries.