

SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH PREPARATORY COMMISSION AND FIRST ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY: 3-5 APRIL 2011

The fifth session of the Preparatory Commission for the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the first session of the IRENA Assembly were held from 3-5 April 2011 at the Abu Dhabi National Convention Center (ADNEC) in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Assembly was the inaugural meeting of IRENA's governing body, and was attended by 950 participants, including one head of state, over 50 ministers, 30 ministerial-level officials, 670 country delegates, 130 observers and officials, and 70 accredited media.

The Preparatory Commission and Assembly focused on issues such as: appointment of the Director-General; election of the Council; work programme and budget for 2011; rules of procedure; transitional arrangements; designation of the permanent seat of the Agency; permanent emblem of IRENA; host country agreements; staff and financial matters; and organization of the second session of the Assembly. The Assembly included a High Level Segment on Monday and Tuesday morning. On Tuesday morning, a Ministerial Round Table was held in parallel to the Assembly to discuss the strategic needs for a clean energy future.

This report summarizes the discussions held under the Preparatory Commission and the first session of the Assembly, and follows the structure of the agenda.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF IRENA

The IRENA statute was adopted on 26 January 2009, and entered into force on 8 July 2010. IRENA's purpose is to promote the widespread and increased adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy. One hundred forty-eight countries and the European Union (EU) are signatories of IRENA, with its statute having been ratified by 68 states and the EU.

PREPARATORY CONFERENCE: The Preparatory Conference for the Foundation of IRENA was held from 10-11 April 2008, in Berlin, Germany. Delegates from 60 countries

expressed support for the creation of an international agency for renewable energies, and discussed issues such as objectives, activities, organizational structure, and financing for the new agency.

PREPARATORY WORKSHOPS: Two preparatory workshops for IRENA met in Berlin, Germany, on 30 June and 1 July 2008, focusing on IRENA's work programme, statutes and finances.

FINAL PREPARATORY CONFERENCE: This meeting took place from 23-24 October 2008, in Madrid, Spain. Delegates concluded discussions on IRENA's statute, resolving issues such as financing, the criteria and procedures for selecting the Interim Director-General and the interim headquarters, and the design of the initial phase of IRENA.

FOUNDING CONFERENCE: IRENA's Founding Conference took place on 26 January 2009, in Bonn, Germany, where 75 countries signed the IRENA statute.

PREPCOM 1: The first Preparatory Commission of IRENA met on 27 January 2009 in Bonn, Germany, following the founding conference. Delegates discussed next steps for IRENA and established a committee for the selection of the Interim Director-General and a committee for the selection of the interim

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headquarters. The Commission also established an administrative committee, chaired by Germany, to facilitate the effectiveness of the Commission's work, including through assisting in organizing regular sessions and contributing to the development of relevant documents.

PREPCOM 2: The second Preparatory Commission of IRENA met from 29-30 June 2009, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to decide on the interim headquarters and interim Director-General for IRENA. Abu Dhabi was designated as the interim headquarters, and Hélène Pelosse (France) was appointed interim Director-General. Delegates also decided that Bonn, Germany, would host IRENA's Centre of Innovation and Technology, and Vienna, Austria, would host IRENA's liaison office for cooperation with other organizations active in the field of renewable energy. Delegates further addressed issues such as the initial work programme, financial regulations, staff regulations and the budget.

PREPCOM 3: The third Preparatory Commission of IRENA met on 17 January 2010, in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Delegates completed IRENA's 2010 budget and work programme, as well as other measures to make IRENA operational.

PREPCOM 4: The fourth Preparatory Commission of IRENA met from 24-25 October 2010, in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The Commission accepted the resignation of Hélène Pelosse as Interim Director-General, and appointed Adnan Amin (Kenya) to the position until the first session of the Assembly.

REPORT OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION

On Sunday, 3 April, the Preparatory Commission for IRENA held its fifth and final session in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The session was opened by Ogunlade Davidson (Sierra Leone). IRENA's Interim Director-General, Adnan Amin, welcomed participants and thanked delegates for their guidance over recent months.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Ogunlade Davidson (Sierra Leone) was elected as Chair for the fifth session of the Preparatory Commission with Rita Mishan (Guatemala), Eva Paaske (Norway), Farhat Ayesha (Pakistan) and 'Akau'ola (Tonga) as Vice-Chairs, and Aldo Flores Quiroga (Mexico) as rapporteur.

PARTICIPATION OF OBSERVERS: The Preparatory Commission considered the participation of observers (PC.5/CRP.1) and forwarded it to the Assembly for its consideration.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE: The Assembly appointed the following members of the Credentials Committee: Alfredo Morelli (Argentina), as Chair; and Evelyn Reyes (Philippines), Øivind Johanson (Norway), Rapture Pagaialii (Samoa), and Mohamed Abushehab (UAE).

REPORT OF THE 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). Chair Lentz introduced the draft decision on the Establishment of Committees (PC.5/DC.10/Rev.1). Further to a proposal by Sudan, delegates 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.

Final Decision: The Preparatory Commission agreed to forward the provisional rules of procedure of the Assembly and the Council to the Assembly at its first session.

STAFF MATTERS

'Akau'ola (Tonga), Chair of the working group on legal issues, recommended the establishment of a new staff provident fund (PC.5/DC.3/Rev.1). Japan recommended that incentives for seconded personnel be increased. Germany and Kenya agreed to serve on the management board for the secondment of staff.

Final Decision: The Preparatory Commission recommended to the Assembly that it appoints Germany and Kenya to serve on the management board of the Staff Provident Fund.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Chair Davidson introduced financial matters (PC.5/DC.5/Rev.1) and delegates agreed on changes for the Audit in the Financial Regulations. Chair 'Akau'ola highlighted outstanding issues with surplus cash. The UK suggested that surpluses be returned to members and signatories.

Final Decision: The Preparatory Commission decided to submit the draft financial regulations for IRENA for approval by the Assembly at its first session. The Preparatory Commission decides to take note of the report on audits (PC.5/DC.9).

2010 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

Interim Director-General Adnan Amin presented the annual report on implementation of the 2010 Work Programme and Budget (PC.5/2), noting a focus on institutional and management issues. He explained that new projects had been initiated, and highlighted collaboration with existing institutions. The Preparatory Commission took note of the report.

HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENTS

The Secretariat announced a finalized Host Country Agreement for the IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre (ITC) office in Bonn, Germany, to be considered by the IRENA Assembly. It was proposed that a technical working group consisting of 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." Administrative Committee Chair Karsten Sach introduced the draft budget for 2011, highlighting a core budget of US\$13.26 million.

Final Decision: The Preparatory Commission agreed to forward the draft decision to the Assembly with note of the comments made by the Republic of Korea, India, Colombia, Jordan, Sudan and Italy.

PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

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

Final Decision: The Preparatory Commission recommended to the Assembly that a draft agreement on privileges and immunities be drafted at its first session or as soon as possible after, to be submitted to the second session of the Assembly.

TRANSFER OF LIABILITIES

Chair Lentz reported on the transfer of assets, liabilities and contracts from the Preparatory Commission to IRENA. He said the Preparatory Commission must agree to transfer these funds and responsibilities, and thereafter IRENA must agree to accept them.

Final Decision: The Preparatory Commission adopted the decision on the proposed transfers (PC.5/DC.6), and forwarded it to the Assembly for its consideration.

APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The Chair of the Selection Committee, Thani Al-Zeyoudi (UAE), explained that after a thorough selection process, seven candidates were considered eligible for interviews, and 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 the delegates, 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 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 shifting to a more sustainable development path. He stressed his experience with renewable energy policy and with the formation of IRENA. Responding to questions from delegates, Marín recognized the important role renewable energy could play for remote and non-traditional energy producing areas.

In the vote, Adnan Amin obtained 76 out of 112 valid votes, which made him 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.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Rapporteur Flores Quiroga highlighted the main decisions adopted by the Preparatory Committee during the day. Chair Davidson thanked the chairs of the committees, the host country, translators and the Secretariat and closed the fifth Preparatory Commission of IRENA at 8:07 pm.

REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF IRENA

On Monday, 4 April, the IRENA Assembly opened its inaugural session. The first Assembly met on Monday and Tuesday and included, among others, procedural issues, approval of the work programme and budget, election of committees and the Council, a High Level Segment, a Ministerial Round Table, and the designation of the permanent headquarters and emblem of IRENA.

The Assembly elected by acclamation Sultan Al Jaber (UAE) as President of the Assembly. A minute of silence was observed for the victims of natural disasters.

The Assembly then adopted by consensus the provisional agenda (A/1/L.1/Rev.1). Conrod Hunte (Antigua and Barbuda), Stephen Motsa (Swaziland), Benedikt Høskuldsson (Iceland), and Alexander Mikhalevich (Belarus) were elected as vice-presidents, and Abubakar Sani Sambo (Nigeria) as rapporteur.

The Assembly appointed the Credentials Committee, consisting of Bangladesh, Bulgaria, the Dominican Republic, the Gambia, Iceland, Norway, India, Swaziland and UAE.

The Assembly then adopted a list of observer states and observers (A/1/L.2).

PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THE COUNCIL

The Assembly adopted the rules of procedure (A/1/DC/L.1).

Final Decision: The Rules of Procedure of the Assembly provide that the Assembly shall meet annually at the seat of the Agency unless otherwise decided, and contain articles on, *inter alia*: the agenda of the sessions; the representation of members and participation of observers; credentials; the president, vice-presidents, the rapporteur and other officials; the Council and the Secretariat; the conduct of business at sessions of the Assembly; voting; and elections.

The Rules of Procedure of the Council provide that the Council shall meet twice a year at the seat of the Agency unless otherwise decided, and contain articles on, *inter alia*: the agenda of the meetings; representation of members; chair, vice-chair and other officers; Secretariat; subsidiary organs of the Council; conduct of business at meetings of the Council; and voting.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

On Tuesday afternoon, Sultan Al Jaber, the President of the Assembly, introduced the draft decision on the election of the

Council (A/1/DC/L.13), which provides that the 21 members of the Council will be elected for a term of two years. He explained that Luxembourg would resign the position after the first year and that Sweden would fill that vacant seat. Bosnia and Herzegovina noted that the Eastern Europe region is under-represented.

Final Decision: The preamble of the decision recognizes that: the membership of IRENA is likely to evolve since not all signatories to its statute have ratified it, and emphasizes that the composition of the Council should be determined with a view to ensure the effective participation of developing and developed countries and achieving equitable geographical distribution.

The Assembly decides to approve the following membership of the Council: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Denmark, Ecuador, Eritrea, France, Germany, India, Japan, Luxembourg, Mali, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Tonga, the UAE, and the US.

The Assembly also requests that the Governance/Legal Committee of the Council determine the appropriate mechanism for electing members of the Council on a rotating basis and to report back at the second meeting of the Assembly.

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly took note of the report on the activities of the Preparatory Commission (A/1/L.3).

TRANSFER OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES FROM THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION TO IRENA AND OTHER TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the transfer of assets and liabilities from the Preparatory Commission to IRENA and recommendations on transitional arrangements (A/1/DC/L.2).

Final Decision: The Assembly accepted the transfer of assets and liabilities of the Preparatory Commission of the IRENA to the IRENA at the first session of the Assembly and to implement transitional arrangements.

DESIGNATION OF THE PERMANENT SEAT OF THE AGENCY

On Monday morning, Germany put forward the designation of Abu Dhabi, UAE, as the permanent seat of IRENA (A/1/DC/L.11), which was adopted by acclamation.

PERMANENT EMBLEM OF IRENA

On Tuesday afternoon, Adnan Amin, Director-General of IRENA, explained that the Preparatory Commission engaged a professional designer to create a logo for the Agency. He said the proposed logo aimed to represent the infinite nature of renewable energy and its worldwide scope. He also noted that a new blue color was proposed. The Assembly approved the new logo and color by consensus.

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

The High Level Segment was held throughout the day on Monday and on Tuesday morning. The sessions were attended by one head of state, over 50 ministers, 30 ministerial-level

representatives, and heads of UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations. Participants addressed, among others, issues such as: national initiatives for the deployment of renewable energy; development and energy; energy access and energy poverty; climate change; the mandate of IRENA; and governance.

Lord Tu'ivakanō, Prime Minister, Tonga, said IRENA must be innovative and take a leading role in a multilateral approach to deal with renewable energy, and should not follow the example of international financial and donor institutions, which have not often positively impacted development.

Most delegates thanked the UAE for hosting the meeting, noting its generous hospitality. Many delegations expressed their condolences to Japan regarding the recent natural and nuclear disasters.

Numerous countries, including India, Tonga, Germany, Iraq and UAE, outlined national efforts to promote the use of renewable energy. Afghanistan stressed national efforts to provide electricity to its population. The Republic of Korea highlighted the Global Green Growth Initiative. Ecuador mentioned the foregoing of oil exploration in the Yasuní National Park. Malaysia highlighted initiatives for the scaling up of solar energy and the promotion of biodiesel. Bosnia and Herzegovina congratulated UAE on the development of Masdar City and called for the exchange of best practices.

The Marshall Islands encouraged IRENA to use his country to conduct research on energy access and efficiency in vulnerable areas. Turkey and Australia indicated their willingness to share their experiences and best practices with the international community. Brazil indicated her country's willingness to forge new partnerships and expressed the hope to see results soon.

On obstacles to the deployment of renewable energy, Bangladesh, Samoa and others identified high investment costs and lack of access to technology as significant barriers to renewable energy uptake in their countries. Sierra Leone underscored his country's hopes that renewable energy will help hasten economic development and welcomed IRENA as a facilitator. Spain stressed technology transfer for development, and the need to involve industry.

On development and energy issues, South Africa said the international community needs IRENA's support to illustrate the role renewables can play in providing baseload energy capacity, as well as in eradicating energy poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Chad highlighted that the MDGs cannot be achieved without advancement on energy issues, and, in developing countries, energy issues cannot be addressed without assistance from organizations such as IRENA. The African Union (AU) said energy is one of Africa's largest infrastructural problems, and described the AU's efforts to address this challenge through the development of renewables. Kuwait expressed hope that IRENA would help bridge the gap between developed and developing countries by working to enable investment, improve the price competitiveness of renewables, and support small- and medium-sized enterprises. Sweden said IRENA should work as a link between developing

and developed countries. Cyprus highlighted the importance of renewable energy to achieve sustainable development, and IRENA's role to that end.

Many countries underscored the importance of energy access. Sri Lanka indicated the goal to provide electricity access to 100% of its population by 2012. The UN Industrial Development Organization, for UN-ENERGY, and the UN Environment Programme underscored the social and health aspects of energy poverty. France said IRENA must participate in formulating and developing models to address energy access and energy poverty challenges, and invited IRENA to participate in the Paris-Nairobi Climate Initiative. In a video message, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underscored the importance of IRENA for the UN's 2012 International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. Mali noted his country's difficulty in meeting the energy needs of its people and welcomed intense cooperation with IRENA to address energy poverty.

On the focus of IRENA, Japan said IRENA should: be a center of excellence for innovation, not a development assistance body; have a lean and efficient secretariat; and work on outreach. Germany called on IRENA to highlight the advantages of renewable energy for sustainable development, meet rising energy demands, and reduce energy dependency. Sweden and Spain underscored the importance of practical work and action. The UAE looked forward to IRENA becoming an international center for renewable energy excellence and to identifying suitable markets.

Angola called on IRENA to contribute to the reduction of the costs of renewable energy technologies. Uruguay, Albania and the International Energy Agency (IEA) said IRENA should be a clearinghouse for knowledge and lessons learned on the deployment of renewable energy. Albania also called on IRENA to promote the development of cost efficient technologies. Indonesia urged IRENA to focus on alleviating the suffering of developing countries. Nigeria stressed the need for IRENA to fulfill the role of advisor, enable capacity building and technology transfer.

Mongolia welcomed IRENA's role as a knowledge facilitator to assist countries in realizing their renewable energy goals. Finland indicated that it expects fast and concrete results from IRENA's work, and movement towards being recognized as a center of excellence. Poland welcomed IRENA as a platform for sharing experiences and knowledge, and said IRENA's 2011 Work Programme will ensure IRENA's successful institutional growth. Uganda hoped IRENA would be a vehicle for the dissemination of information and best practices. Morocco, Tunisia and Pakistan said IRENA should become an effective dialogue instrument and promote partnerships.

Portugal lauded the broad membership of IRENA, which he said gives it a strong mandate to aggressively move forward on its objectives, especially in assisting developing countries. Mexico said IRENA should facilitate dialogues to lower barriers to renewable energy uptake, and work with international organizations and funds to enable universal access. Algeria called for IRENA to facilitate access to finance.

Belarus called for a focus on technology cooperation, innovation and capacity building. Maldives said IRENA should facilitate access to existing and contextually appropriate renewable energy technologies. Sao Tome and Principe suggested that IRENA partner with industry to encourage the development of technologies appropriate for developing countries. Algeria, Uganda and others called on IRENA to promote technology transfer. Pakistan and Grenada added that IRENA should strive to bring down the costs of renewable energy technologies. Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Togo and others reiterated their support for the creation of a technical committee to provide assistance to developing countries.

Kiribati called for IRENA to facilitate access to practical forms of renewable energy technologies. Fiji welcomed the focus on the Pacific region in IRENA's work programme. Grenada said IRENA should not become a "bazaar" for developed countries to sell expensive and inappropriate technology. Zimbabwe stressed the need for capacity building.

Various speakers addressed issues related to climate change. The Republic of Korea underlined that fossil fuel depletion and climate change underscore the need for a paradigm shift towards green growth and renewable energy. Samoa, Grenada, Kiribati and Fiji said addressing climate change is a matter of survival for small island developing states, and stressed the need for access to affordable renewable energy. Benin and Bhutan underscored their vulnerability to climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stressed renewables for climate change mitigation, calling for the dissemination of the findings of its upcoming Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation. Algeria underscored the vulnerability of Africa to climate change and, together with Peru, identified the deployment of renewable energies as one solution. Bhutan indicated her country's commitment to reduce greenhouse gases, particularly with the development of hydropower through the Clean Development Mechanism. Myanmar emphasized the importance of the deployment of renewables in the face of the depletion of fossil fuels and climate change.

Spain called for a focus on renewable energy in the transport sector, noting its importance for energy independence.

On governance issues, Turkey announced that its parliament had ratified IRENA. Ecuador, with Nicaragua, called for representation of three Latin American and Caribbean countries on IRENA's Council. Romania urged a quick shift from solving institutional issues to forming a strategic plan to achieve practical aims. The Gambia, Marshall Islands, and Sao Tome and Principe supported the granting of IRENA observer status to Taiwan. Benin proposed the creation of a fund with low-interest rates for the dissemination of renewable technologies. Benin and Cape Verde underlined the importance of the decision on multilingualism.

The Gambia said IRENA's success will be a measure of its members' active participation. Israel said renewable energy is not a luxury, stressing that renewable energy can free societies from the dependencies associated with fossil fuels. Armenia emphasized the importance of international cooperation for

harnessing renewable energy potential. Iran encouraged countries that have not yet fully acceded to IRENA to do so to foster full participation of all members.

The US applauded the precedent set by IRENA in using merit to select its staff, and underscored the importance of IRENA working across technologies and sectors, and taking a “non-top-down approach.” Underscoring the depletion of biomass resources in his country due to booming energy demand and a growing population, Tanzania said that renewable energy requires careful management.

On IRENA’s relationship with other international organizations, Kenya called on IRENA and the UN to join forces to promote the use of renewable energy on a global scale. Japan called on IRENA to create synergies with other international institutions. UN-Energy pledged to act as a link between the UN System and IRENA. The League of Arab States expressed the hope to collaborate with IRENA to realize the League’s objectives. The IEA underscored the challenge of making renewable energy fully competitive and expanding the geographical scope of renewable energy use, stressing the need to invest in new infrastructure, such as smart grids. The UN Development Programme expressed willingness to share its expertise and knowledge with IRENA and disseminate IRENA’s policy advice. The International Network for Sustainable Energy underscored the need to adapt existing technologies to local conditions.

HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENTS

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the Host Country Agreements.

Final Decision: The Assembly: authorizes the Director-General to sign on behalf of the Agency the updated draft Headquarters Agreement upon its finalization and approval by the technical group; agrees on the application of the Interim Headquarters Agreement until the final Headquarters Agreement enters into force; and authorizes the Director-General to sign on behalf of the Agency the draft Host Country Agreement between the Agency and Germany relating to the establishment of the IITC.

STAFF REGULATIONS

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on staff regulations (A/1/DC/L.3).

Final Decision: The Assembly approved the Staff Regulations annexed to the decision, which contain articles on, *inter alia*: duties, obligations, rights and privileges; classification of posts and staff; salaries and related allowances; appointment and promotion; attendance and leave; and separation from service.

STAFF PROVIDENT FUND

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the establishment of a Staff Provident Fund for IRENA (A/1/DC/L.4).

Final Decision: The Assembly established a Staff Provident Fund for the staff of IRENA and appoints Germany and Kenya to serve on the Management Board of the Fund.

SECONDMENT OF PERSONNEL

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the secondment of personnel to IRENA (A/1/DC/L.5).

Final Decision: The Assembly: requested the Director-General to review the issues requiring clarification before a new approach on the secondment of staff, ensuring equal treatment for all staff members, and to present options and recommendations to the Council and the Assembly; and decided to maintain in force the secondment regulations adopted by the Commission at its second session until a final decision is taken by the Assembly.

INTERIM FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the interim financial regulations for IRENA (A/1/DC/L.6).

Final Decision: The Assembly approved the interim financial regulations for IRENA. These regulations include sections on, *inter alia*: the financial period; budget; appropriations; contributions; voluntary contributions; custody of funds; internal control; and financial statements and accounts.

PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES FOR IRENA

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the agreement on privileges and immunities for IRENA (A/1/DC/L.7).

Final Decision: The Assembly requested the Director-General to submit a draft agreement on privileges and immunities for IRENA to the Council for its consideration and requests the Council to submit to the second session of the Assembly a draft agreement on privileges and immunities for approval.

WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2011

On Tuesday morning, Gauri Singh, Director of Knowledge Management and Technology Cooperation, IRENA, presented the programme of work and budget for 2011. She underlined the need for IRENA to be a lean and nimble organization, and complement what other players in the field of renewable energy can offer. The Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on the programme of work and budget for 2011 (A/1/DC/L.8).

Final Decision: The Assembly adopted the work programme and budget of the organization. On budgetary issues, the programme of work and budget for 2011 stipulates, *inter alia*, that: the core budget will amount to US\$13.26 million in addition to US\$4.5 million operation costs, workshops and conferences funded by UAE, and a US\$3.1 million contribution from Germany for costs of the IITC in Bonn; and to facilitate the transition from Preparatory Commission to Agency, both members and signatories will contribute in 2011, with signatories contributing on a voluntary basis.

On the work programme, the programme of work and budget for 2011, *inter alia*: urges the Director-General and Council to prepare a strategic framework for 2012-2015 clearly defining a vision, strategic direction, objectives, and activities; and states a robust communications and outreach strategy will be articulated and implemented, including presence at renewable

energy events, the creation of strategic partnerships, and a variety of written outputs. It also explains that: global knowledge on relevant renewable energy information will be systematized through Sub-Programme 1 on Knowledge Management and Technical Cooperation; cooperative stakeholder approaches will be initiated through Sub-Programme 2 on Policy Advisory Services and Capacity Building; and a framework for technology policy support to governments will be designed through Sub-Programme 3 on Innovation and Technology.

APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

On Monday morning, Adnan Amin was sworn in as Director-General for a term of four years (A/1/DC/L.12). Amin accepted the post “with humility and a great sense of responsibility,” highlighting his trust that IRENA will meet the expectations of the international community.

MULTILINGUALISM

On Tuesday morning, the Assembly adopted by consensus the decision on multilingualism (A/1/DC/L.9).

Final Decision: The Assembly decided to: stress the value of multilingualism in its governance processes and in its outreach; request the Director-General of IRENA to submit to the Assembly options aimed at a progressive integration of official UN languages to advance the work of the Agency; and review progress made in the implementation of the decision no later than at the sixth session of the Assembly.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES

On Tuesday afternoon, Chair of the Governance Committee Guy Lentz (Luxembourg) presented the draft decision on the establishment of committees (A/1/DC/L.10), noting that the Governance Committee had not had time to determine the membership of the proposed Committee on Finance, the Governance and Legal Committee, and the Policy and Strategy Committee. He therefore proposed that the Assembly authorize the President of the Assembly to determine the composition of the Committees. To that effect, the Secretariat distributed forms for all delegations to fill in to indicate their interest in participating in each of the three committees. The President of the Assembly was requested to determine the membership of the committees based on the results of consultations after the conclusion of the Assembly’s first meeting.

Iran suggested adding reference to the need to take into account geographical distribution and the balance between signatories and full members of IRENA.

The Assembly adopted the decision by consensus with the proposed amendments by Lentz and Iran.

Final Decision: The Assembly decided to: adopt the draft rules of procedure of committees; request that the Council review the draft rules of procedure of committees; recommend that the Committee on Finance, the Governance and Legal Committee, and the Policy and Strategy Committee be established for a term to last through the third meeting of the Council; and authorize the President of the Assembly at its first session to determine the

membership of the three committees according to the interest expressed by signatories and members, and taking into account geographical distribution.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

On Tuesday afternoon, the Assembly agreed by consensus to hold the second session of the Assembly on 14-15 January 2012.

The Assembly also designated by consensus Louis Seck, Minister of Renewable Energy (Senegal), as President, and Mona Thamer Al Maadeed (Qatar), Ikuo Yamahana (Japan) and Guy Lentz (Luxembourg) as Vice-Presidents of the Assembly at its second session.

MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE ON THE STRATEGIC NEEDS FOR A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

This session held on Tuesday morning, was chaired by President Al Jaber and facilitated by Jose Rene Almendras, Secretary of Energy, the Philippines, and Maud Olofsson, Minister for Enterprise and Energy, Sweden. The aim of the session was for ministers and other high-level representatives to exchange views on, *inter alia*: the role of IRENA; the relationship of IRENA with other institutions; and the creation of markets and policies for renewables. The fast-paced discussions were highly interactive.

On IRENA’s role as an institution, India, Nicaragua and Australia said IRENA should concentrate on facilitating technology transfer to assist in energy poverty reduction, with Chad also emphasizing the importance of national contexts. Morocco stressed improvement of institutional capacities, and ensuring renewables become part of human development. Senegal underscored the importance of disseminating knowledge and enabling local production, and urged that development assistance be incorporated into IRENA’s work. Thailand stressed the need to provide funding for pilot projects.

Germany called for a global matrix of renewable energy policies, with a focus on costs, sustainability and effectiveness; proposing policies based on this global analysis of best practices; and increasing global awareness. Indonesia further stressed awareness through public education.

Malta hoped IRENA would focus not only on high-tech but also on low-tech renewables. The Gambia emphasized that IRENA should not try “to reinvent the wheel.” Noting the challenges of technology transfer, the Republic of Korea said IRENA should encourage collective responsibility through policy advice and capacity-building services. Australia said IRENA is about the spread of technology and assisting developing countries to acquire that technology. Maldives underscored removing barriers to using renewables.

Poland called for a flagship element, such as an annual report or conference. He also stressed the need for further developing the concept of energy for all. Oman said IRENA needs an action plan, not a strategy. Israel proposed that IRENA play the practical role of a matchmaker at the bilateral level, and create a country matrix to facilitate national partnerships. Sierra Leone underlined the importance of screening information. Ethiopia said special attention should be given to Africa, particularly

in establishing regional excellence centers, with the Gambia underscoring the need for IRENA's representation at regional levels. The AU, Brazil, Greece, Malta, Morocco and Nicaragua said IRENA should facilitate regional networks. Cameroon said IRENA's work should be tailored to the specificities of each region. Benin asked for IRENA to facilitate contact with technical and financial partners.

France called on IRENA to evaluate social implications of renewables, such as biofuels, biomass and hydropower. Brazil encouraged IRENA's role in knowledge dissemination and called for countries interested in working on biofuels to network with Brazil. Mali highlighted the importance of ensuring that renewables, such as biofuels, provide benefits and not threats. Malaysia underscored the need for assistance in scaling up biomass, especially by overcoming allegations of non-sustainability.

On ways in which IRENA could interact with other institutions, Belarus said IRENA should learn from institutions such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on networking with national organizations. The US said IRENA should avoid redundancy by engaging international organizations where IRENA members are already represented. The IEA said the simplest way to approach cooperation with international organizations is to be a good neighbor, noting IRENA and IEA have had a great start. Senegal suggested IRENA sign framework agreements with organizations active in the field. Germany said IRENA should ensure the inclusion of renewable energy in the UN Rio+20 discussions. Peru called for drafting a list of activities carried out by other organizations in the field of renewable energy to avoid overlap. Bosnia and Herzegovina said IRENA needs to work with international financial institutions.

On methods to facilitate renewable energy uptake, Belarus called for addressing commercial viability of renewables. Nicaragua said IRENA should provide an overview of the real costs of developing renewables. Greece expressed the wish that IRENA advise on issues such as feed-in tariffs, smart grid promotion and renewables in islands. Mexico said IRENA should help ensure regulation and tariffication to incentivize the private sector. India offered to provide renewables training and host international meetings on renewables. Greece stressed renewable project bonds as a source of financing. Malta underscored the need for regional and national dialogue. Angola and Swaziland underlined the importance of standards. Malta said that work on standards is needed not only for governments and industry, but also for customers.

Morocco said successful markets need trained human resources. The AU said centers of excellence on renewables are needed in Africa. Bangladesh highlighted the need for best practices on changing the mindsets of policymakers regarding the viability gap, and on popularizing renewables. Spain said policy frameworks need to be stable and coherent with longer-term objectives, and also flexible. He stressed the integration of policies with neighboring countries. Armenia expressed interest in learning how to introduce renewables in developing

countries without subsidies. The US highlighted the importance of IRENA's analytical role in terms of evaluating policies and stressed the need to make this information easily accessible.

Sierra Leone highlighted that worst practices must also be evaluated and analyzed to avoid repeating their mistakes. He stressed the private sector use of developing countries' high-risk investment environments to inflate prices of technology. Tanzania lamented that current renewables research and development is geared towards developed country interests and needs.

Colombia said generating markets creates competition, noting this brings prices down. Senegal highlighted the gap between potential demand and effective demand, and noted technical barriers such as regional grid integration. Fiji underscored public-private partnerships. The IEA said the key element for policy success is stability and predictability. Noting English as a barrier, he said IRENA should publish in other languages.

CLOSING SESSION

On Tuesday afternoon, Director-General Amin addressed the Assembly, thanking the members of the Secretariat and others who assisted him with advice and tireless work over the last four months. President Sultan Al Jaber concluded the session by commending the Secretariat for organizing a successful meeting. He declared the first session of the Assembly closed at 5:22 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

IRENA is the latest intergovernmental organization to join the already well-populated arena of global environmental and energy governance. The first session of the Assembly, marking the official birth of IRENA, attracted significant attention, as evidenced by its high attendance, with nearly 1000 participants, including over 80 ministerial level representatives and delegations from most countries in the world.

The session was the first meeting of IRENA's supreme governing body. Although it was largely procedural, the political issues on the Assembly's agenda, namely the election of the Director-General and the Council's membership, constituted the highlights of the meeting. While not on the agenda, however, substantive issues, particularly the future focus of the Agency, constituted the bulk of discussions among participants.

This brief analysis places the first session of IRENA's Assembly within the larger context of IRENA's history and prospects.

THE BIRTH OF A 21ST CENTURY ORGANIZATION

IRENA is the first major intergovernmental organization to be born in the 21st century, conceived as a post-Rio, non-UN institution. The original idea for IRENA is attributed by many to the late German politician Herman Scheer. The first concrete proposals for IRENA were formally presented by Germany at the Washington International Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC) in 2008, and at the time IRENA was only supported by a handful of countries. However, in the short period (by international negotiation standards) between WIREC and IRENA's inaugural Assembly, the fledgling idea managed

to evolve into a fully-formed International Agency with near-universal participation. This is a remarkable achievement, especially considering that IRENA did not have an easy start, with lack of transparency and reported mismanagement under the controversial tenure of its first Interim Director-General, Hélène Pelosse, referred to by the newly elected Director-General as a “year and a half of missed opportunities.”

The rapid establishment of IRENA reflects the interest of the international community in renewable energy. IRENA has momentum and its birth comes at an opportune moment, when rising oil prices and a recent nuclear disaster in Japan have brought renewed and increased pressure on decision makers and industry to bring about rapid deployment of renewable energy.

As publicly acknowledged by its conveners, the preparatory process for IRENA took place outside the UN to allow for its swift establishment as an international body. The UN-ization of IRENA, however, was a recurring theme in informal discussions among delegates. These were reinforced by the appointment of a well-respected and well-connected UN insider, Adnan Amin, as Director-General, and the choosing of a UN-blue emblem. “Could this be the first sign of IRENA leaning towards joining the UN family?” mused one participant. A seasoned observer further noted “I’m not sure it is possible to establish an international organization with close to universal participation without resembling a UN body, particularly when many of the players are the same.” “We will see,” said one delegate. “But for now, Amin is what IRENA needed,” referring to the widely praised stability and good management practices brought by the interim and newly elected Director-General.

IRENA AT A CROSSROADS

While there is no doubt about the global interest in renewable energies and in the need for the existence of an international agency dedicated to them, IRENA remains a blank slate, since its focus has yet to be determined. Decisions taken over the next year or two will likely shape the Agency for a decade or more. The newly established Council, which meets biannually, as well as the three committees on finance, governance and strategy established by the Assembly, will play a key role in defining IRENA’s focus. The Council, in particular, has the power to “consider and submit to the Assembly the draft work programme and budget,” “substantiate the work programme as adopted by the Assembly,” and “establish subsidiary organs.” This explains that, while the meeting went remarkably smoothly overall, the election of the Council became a difficult issue and negotiations and tradeoffs between countries took place behind closed doors for long hours while the plenary was waiting to resume.

While the decisions adopted during the first session of the Assembly focused mostly on procedural matters, delegates spent significant time discussing IRENA’s future during the high level segments and in the corridors. Four currents seemed to emerge over the course of the Assembly, each flowing towards a different vision on how to weigh the various core functions of IRENA.

Development: Under this vision, the main focus of IRENA would be about using renewables as a tool for development in developing countries. Various elements of this vision include promoting human development, economic growth and/or green growth, such as addressing energy poverty and energy access.

Knowledge and Technology: Under this vision, IRENA’s main function would be to promote the development, demonstration and deployment of renewable energy technologies. This would include facilitating knowledge dissemination on the development and transfer of technologies, the exchange of best practices, know-how, and technical data, and establishing technical and scientific networks.

Policy: Under this vision, IRENA’s main function would be to facilitate the adoption of policies to promote the deployment of renewable energy. IRENA’s role could include policy advice at the international, regional, national and subnational levels, capacity building, and acting as a clearinghouse on renewable energy policy and best practice.

Finance: Under this vision, the focus of IRENA would be to act as a catalyst for the financing of renewables by creating partnerships involving relevant stakeholders, and facilitating access to available international financing. Some countries also discussed that IRENA could become a source of funding itself.

The challenge before IRENA is to not see these options as crossroads, where one of these visions must be chosen, but to understand the development of IRENA as a journey, one which has just begun. The thread that seems to hold all of these perspectives together, however, is that IRENA must be understood as a modern institution addressing a specific sector, renewable energy, which happens to address all three pillars of sustainable development—economic, environmental and social.

CONCLUSION

Looking forward, the future of IRENA holds great promise. It represents a vision of sustainable development, as well as a possible enabler for an industry with the potential to realize this vision. IRENA also faces great challenges, such as being conceived within political and economic systems long dominated by a fossil fuel energy supply. Many look forward to the success of IRENA, although for different reasons. Some hope for development, some for new markets for their technologies, some for a greener world where climate change is no longer a threat, and some for energy access and a way out of poverty.

Will IRENA live up to the expectations and hopes? Surely attention will focus on the intensity and pace of IRENA’s activities over the next nine months, until the next session of the Assembly, in an attempt to answer this question.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

2011 Energy Efficiency Global Forum: This meeting will bring together high-level officials from government, business and NGOs to discuss energy efficiency. It will showcase the latest innovations in energy efficiency and the people behind their implementation. **dates:** 10-14 April 2011 **location:**

Brussels, Belgium **contact:** Pam Turner **phone:** +1-408-395-0059 **email:** pturner@firstoptionevents.com **www:** <http://eglobalforum.org>

Second Meeting of the Group of Experts on Global Energy Efficiency: This meeting will examine a draft of the Global Strategy for Energy Efficiency Market Formation. **date:** 18 April 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Viktor Badaker, Project Manager GEE21 **email:** viktor.badaker@unece.org **www:** http://www.unece.org/energy/se/enef_gee21.html

22nd Session of the Steering Committee of the UNECE Energy Efficiency 21 Project: This meeting will discuss financing energy efficiency and renewable energy investments for climate change mitigation. It will also address, *inter alia:* developing the renewable energy sector in the Russian Federation and in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States; increasing energy efficiency for secure energy supplies; forming the energy efficiency market in South-Eastern Europe; and removing barriers to energy efficiency improvements in the state sector in Belarus. **date:** 21 April 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** UNECE **phone:** +41-22-917-4444 **fax:** +41-22-917-0505 **email:** info.ece@unece.org **www:** http://www.unece.org/energy/se/docs/eneff_sc22.html

First Meeting of the Transitional Committee for the Design of the Green Climate Fund: The first meeting of the Transitional Committee for the design of the Green Climate Fund (decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 110) will be held the latter part of April 2011. **dates:** 28-29 April 2011 **location:** Mexico City, Mexico **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228 815-1000 **fax:** +49-228 815-1999 **e-mail:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://unfccc.int/>

GFSE - Regional Global Forum on Sustainable Energy: Energy between Danube and Caucasus: This regional Global Forum for Sustainable Energy (GFSE) Meeting aims at bringing together national stakeholders, international experts and economic actors in South-Eastern Europe, the Danube Region, the Black Sea Region and the Caucasus Region. The focus of the meeting will be on activities for increasing Energy Efficiency (EE) and the share of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) in these regions. **dates:** 28-29 April 2011 **location:** Vienna, Austria **contact:** Karen Reiss **phone:** +43-158-615-24-144 **email:** karin.reiss@energyagency.at **www:** <http://www.gfse.at/>

11th Session of IPCC Working Group III: This meeting of WGIII is scheduled to take place immediately prior to the 33rd session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 33). WGIII is due to sign off on the Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation (SRREN) for IPCC Plenary approval. **dates:** 5-8 May 2011 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** IPCC Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-730-8208/54/84 **fax:** +41-22-730-8025/13 **email:** ipccsec@wmo.int **www:** http://www.ipcc.ch/scripts/_calendar_template.php?wg=8

UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies June 2011: The 34th sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Implementation and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice will take place in June 2011, along with meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Working Groups. **dates:** 6-17 June 2011 **location:** Bonn,

Germany **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://www.unfccc.int>

Vienna Energy Conference 2011 (VEC 2011): The Conference, organized by the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), will facilitate an international dialogue on providing universal energy access and on the multiple co-benefits of increasing energy efficiency, under the banner "Energy for All: Time for Action." **dates:** 21-23 June 2011 **location:** Vienna, Austria **contact:** Vanessa Massegg, UNIDO; **phone:** +43-1-26026 3773 **email:** v.massegg@unido.org **www:** <http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=1001185>

Third Meeting of the Group of Experts on Global Energy Efficiency: The Group of Experts will continue work on the Global Strategy for Energy Efficiency Market Formation. **dates:** 17-18 October 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Viktor Badaker, Project Manager GEE21 **email:** viktor.badaker@unece.org **www:** http://www.unece.org/energy/welcome/Calendar_Meeting.html

Caribbean Renewable Energy Forum 2011: This annual event, co-sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank, CARICOM, and the Organization of American States, will look at policy and regulatory issues and the forces driving finance and investment in renewable energy sources in the Caribbean context, and the scope for a regional approach. **dates:** 12-14 October 2011 **location:** Bridgetown, Barbados **contact:** Matthew Perks **phone:** +1-845-440-7800 **email:** mperks@caribbeanenergyforum.com **www:** <http://www.caribbeanenergyforum.com>

UNFCCC COP 17 and COP/MOP 7: The 17th session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 17) and the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP 7) to the Kyoto Protocol will take place in Durban, South Africa. **dates:** 28 November-9 December 2011 **location:** Durban, South Africa **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://unfccc.int/>

World Future Energy Summit 2012: The fifth World Future Energy Summit is scheduled to take place in January 2012 in Abu Dhabi, UAE. **dates:** 16-19 January 2012 **location:** Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center, Abu Dhabi, UAE **contact:** WFES Director Ara Fernezian; **phone:** +971-2-4446113 **fax:** +971-2-4443768 **email:** ara.fernezian@reedexpo.ae **www:** <http://www.worldfutureenergysummit.com>

Second Session of the IRENA Assembly: The second IRENA Assembly is scheduled to take place in January 2012. **dates:** 14-15 January 2012 **location:** Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center, Abu Dhabi, UAE **contact:** Adnan Amin, Executive Director **phone:** +971-2-4179001 **email:** secretariat@irena.org **www:** <http://www.irena.org>