



**Bruxelles, le 24 juin 2022**  
**(OR. fr, en)**

**10259/22**

**ENER 305**  
**RELEX 813**

## **NOTE D'INFORMATION**

Origine:	Secrétariat général du Conseil
Destinataire:	Council
Objet:	Divers Développements récents dans le domaine des relations extérieures énergétiques - Informations communiquées par la Commission

Les délégations trouveront en annexe une note d'information de la Commission relative au point «Développements récents dans le domaine des relations extérieures énergétiques» figurant à l'ordre du jour de la session du Conseil TTE (Énergie) du 27 juin 2022.

## **Background note**

**This note aims to inform Member States on the recent main developments in the field of external energy relations which is listed at the agenda of the TTE-Energy Council on 27 June 2022 under any other business.**

### **Introduction**

The EU and the world are facing the existential threat of climate change and a burgeoning energy crisis. Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine has massively disrupted the global energy system. It has exacerbated existing trends of tightening energy markets, triggering increased price volatility and energy security risks across the globe.

EU's external energy relations of the last six months are characterised by our immediate help to Ukraine and Republic of Moldova (hereafter 'Moldova') and by work to diversify our energy sources in order to rapidly reduce the EU's dependency on Russian fossil fuels, respond to soaring energy prices, and replenish the EU's gas stocks for next winter. In cooperation with international partners, the EU has secured record levels of LNG imports and higher pipeline gas deliveries.

The EU External Energy Engagement Strategy published on 18 May as part of the REPowerEU package sets out how the EU will reinforce engagement with partners to strengthen energy security, accelerate the green and just energy transition across the globe and support all partners that are directly and indirectly affected by Russia's aggression.

## **I. EU response to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine**

### **a) Immediate assistance to Ukraine and Moldova**

Since the beginning of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, the European Commission has been actively working on ensuring that Ukraine and Moldova can maintain stable electricity and gas supply.

On 16 March, Ukraine and Moldova's electricity grids were synchronised with the Continental European Network. This historic achievement increases the stability of the network, hence contributing to energy security in the region. Work towards electricity trading is ongoing with the support of the Transmission System Operators from Continental Europe. With the support of the Commission, the Energy Community established the Ukraine Energy Support Fund to enable receiving donations from EU Member States, International Financial Organisations, and other sovereign governments to provide emergency support to Ukraine in the energy sector. Offers from Member States, including emergency supplies for energy fuels, are being coordinated by the Energy Community Secretariat – following direct help from the EU civil protection mechanism.

Since May, Moldova is purchasing electricity from Ukraine on a monthly basis to diversify its supply from the Russian-controlled power plant in Cuciurgan (MGRES). This has been possible thanks to technical support by the EU and the Energy Community Secretariat, as well as the entry into force of the new electricity market rules requesting the selection of at least two suppliers of electricity.

In line with the REPowerEU Plan, the Commission facilitated talks to enable long-term reverse flows capacities of gas from West to East, including from Romania to Moldova thanks to the completion of the Iași-Chișinău pipeline last year. The Commission together with the gas TSOs in neighbouring Member States managed to secure increased firm capacity for gas flows between the EU and Ukraine until end of the year. The first physical gas flows from Hungary that do not depend on the availability of transit from Russia have been successfully enabled last winter. Also, the physical reverse flow capacity between Slovakia and Ukraine, as well as between Poland and Ukraine have been increased.

Ukraine and Moldova are invited to the EU Energy Platform and are included in the broader plan to reduce fossil fuels dependency on Russia as designed under REPowerEU. The regional EU Energy Platform for South-East Europe is now operational and it includes Ukraine and Moldova in its work.

The EU-Ukraine High-Level Working Group on energy market reforms that has been set up in 2021 will further accelerate the necessary reforms while ensuring regional security of supply and paving the way for future electricity and renewable hydrogen trade, as well as rebuilding the energy system under the REPowerUkraine initiative. The Commission will continue to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency through the renovation of local public infrastructures across the country.

The Commission is working closely with the Energy Community Secretariat to integrate the Energy Community Contracting Parties into the European electricity market to allow so-called market coupling (or “implicit trading”) and to adopt the 2030 energy and climate targets needed for the finalisation of the National Energy and Climate Plans both at the end of 2022.

Russia’s military actions at, and in the vicinity of, nuclear power plants, including the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, raise obvious concerns for nuclear safety. Since the beginning of the war, the EU and its Member States have been supporting Ukraine in particular in the area of nuclear safety and radiation protection. Thanks to the existing cooperation channels, radiological and nuclear safety items were promptly delivered, including more than 3 million potassium iodide tablets, personal dosimeters, radiometers, spectrometers, and personal protective equipment. In addition, the EU will continue to support the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) nuclear safety, security and safeguards activities in Ukraine through direct (financial) and indirect support. A regular channel of communication between the Commission and the IAEA has been established to share information on Ukraine’s needs for material assistance in the area of nuclear safety. The EU will also continue its assistance to the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and the Exclusion Zone where the estimated damage caused by the Russian troops, including to the laboratory originally provided by the EU, amounts to €80 million.

In addition to providing assistance to Ukraine, the European Union responded to Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine by imposing an unprecedented set of sanctions on the Russian Federation, including highly targeted and effective measures in the energy sector.

## **b) The external dimension of REPowerEU**

As part of the REPowerEU Plan and in line with the mandate given by the European Council, the Commission together with Member States set up the EU Energy Platform. It aims to pool EU gas demand, optimize infrastructure use and support international outreach for the voluntary common purchase of gas, LNG and hydrogen. The Platform is open for the Energy Community Contracting Parties (Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia) and will also work through Regional Task Forces, which will identify needs and diversification of supply options and coordinate on contractual issues.

The Commission intends to develop a voluntary operational ‘joint purchasing mechanism’. Our dependence on Russia also concerns the nuclear sector, in particular nuclear fuel and conversion and enrichment services as well as radioisotope production. The Commission is ready to facilitate respective mitigating efforts by the Member States and to support a full assessment of the capacity for nuclear fuel services necessary to phase out the Union’s dependency on Russian suppliers in the nuclear fuel cycle.

To define the external dimension of the REPowerEU Plan, the Commission and the European External Action Service presented the EU external energy engagement strategy on 18 May 2022.

It builds on work ongoing with third countries and suppliers to diversify energy supplies and build long-term partnerships. The strategy prioritises the EU's commitment to a global green and just energy transition, increasing energy savings and efficiency to reduce the pressure on prices, boosting renewables and the direct use of renewable electricity as well as the production of renewable hydrogen and its derivatives for sustainable growth and possible export to the EU.

A good example of this cooperation with international partners is the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation on trade, transport and export of LNG to the EU that the EU, Egypt and Israel signed on 15 June. Engagement also continues with the United States (see under bilateral relations with the U.S.), Norway and has started with Canada under the Working Group on Energy Security, where the sides explore the possibility to deepen cooperation on energy.

The overarching message of the strategy is that, despite a short-term need for alternative fossil fuel supplies, in the medium and long-term the green energy transition is the chief remedy to ensure sustainable, secure and affordable energy worldwide. Clean energy transition and notably its external dimension is no longer just the EU’s growth strategy but also its security strategy.

## II. Bilateral relations

### a) USA

Cooperation with the United States intensified well before the Russian aggression of Ukraine. To reinforce the energy security in the EU and in Ukraine before the outbreak of the war, a [Joint Statement between President Biden and President von der Leyen](#) was signed on 28 January 2022. On 7 February, the ninth meeting of the EU-U.S. Energy Council took place in Washington. It was co-chaired by Secretary of State Blinken and Energy Secretary Granholm on the U.S. side, and by High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President Borrell Fontelles and Energy Commissioner Simson on the EU side. Ambassador of France to the U.S. Étienne represented the Presidency of the Council of the EU. The Council passed strong messages of unity on issues of strategic importance to both sides – highlighted in the [Joint Statement](#) released on this occasion. The Council meeting was preceded by working groups meeting on energy security and energy policy that took place at senior official level in October and December of last year respectively.

The meeting of the EU-U.S. Energy Council confirmed the immediate need for intensified cooperation to strengthen security of supply in the EU and its neighbourhood, and demonstrated a transatlantic agreement on accelerating the clean and just energy transition to a net-zero future. Both sides recognised that energy security goes hand in hand with achieving the clean energy transition, notably as it provides a means of supply diversification. Both sides expressed a strong commitment to continue and deepen EU-US energy cooperation.

The Energy Council continues its work at technical level focusing most notably on energy security aspects as well as cooperation on hydrogen global markets, reduction of methane emissions, promotion of offshore wind energy and just transition. One of the immediate outcomes of the energy policy work stream was a [High Level Business Forum on Offshore Wind](#) that took place in Atlantic City on 27 April 2022 with the participation of Commissioner Simson and Secretary Granholm. It was held in conjunction with the International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum (IPF) 2022, the largest U.S. event of this kind.

In the meantime the EU-U.S. cooperation on energy security has been elevated to the highest political level. The European Commission and the United States issued [a joint presidential statement on European energy security](#) in the margins of the [European Council](#), on 25 March 2022 to help ensure the security of supply and to reduce dependence on Russian fossil fuels. Presidents Biden and von der Leyen agreed to establish a joint Task Force on Energy Security to deliver on the U.S. efforts to ensure, including working with international partners, additional liquefied natural gas (LNG) volumes for the EU market of at least 15 bcm in 2022. The agreement additionally foresees U.S. LNG increasing supply to Europe to 50 bcm annually through to 2030. Several agreements between US and EU companies took place since. Regular discussions with interested US companies. The Task Force aims also at the overall reduction of gas consumption and has a strong component with regard to energy efficiency and renewables.

On 28 April, the EU-US [Task Force on Energy Security met in person in Washington](#) to discuss implementation of the 25 March Joint Statement by Presidents Biden and von der Leyen. The meeting, chaired by Amos Hochstein, US Senior Advisor for Energy Security, and Björn Seibert, Head of Cabinet of the European Commission President, reviewed progress on diversifying natural gas supplies to Europe and reducing Europe's demand for natural gas. The discussion followed two recent Task Force convenings that included senior US and European Commission officials, representatives of EU Member States, and industry participants.

A very close cooperation with the U.S. continues also in the context of the reduction of methane emissions, following the launch of the EU-U.S. led Global Methane Pledge. On 17 June 2022, President von der Leyen, together with President Biden and 11 other countries launched a [Global Methane Pledge Energy Pathway](#) at the Major Economies Forum. The Energy Pathway is a critical implementation step of the Global Methane Pledge that will accelerate deployment of the fastest and most cost-effective methane mitigation solutions available today.

As regards next steps, technical cooperation under the EU-U.S. Energy Council as well as in the framework of the Presidential Task Force continue. The Task Force will convene in the second half of June, while the next meeting of the Energy Council is tentatively planned in February 2023 in Brussels.

## **b) South Mediterranean**

Energy contacts with South Mediterranean partner countries have intensified in the wake of the ongoing energy crisis, in particular with countries such as Egypt and Israel, who may have a relevant role for the EU energy security and diversification of gas supply. Following high level meetings since February, a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation Related to Trade, Transport, and Export of Natural Gas to the EU, was signed on 15 June.

The trilateral MoU reflects the strong political willingness and interest on all sides. Commissioner Simson declared that the signature of this MoU is of historic importance for the EU's energy engagement and energy security. The MoU is expected to support ramping up supplies of natural gas from the offshore fields of Israel and of the East Mediterranean region, via Egypt's liquefaction facilities at a crucial time for the EU's security of supply and as a key contribution to fulfil the EU's energy storage requirements ahead of the next winter. LNG deliveries from Egypt's liquefaction facilities may reach up to 7 bcm by the end of the year.

## **c) Azerbaijan**

In the context of the ongoing energy crisis, natural gas supplies from Azerbaijan have become increasingly prominent in terms of diversification and security of supply. The Southern Gas Corridor (SGC) is currently flowing natural gas to the EU at full capacity via the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline, on track to deliver 10.5 bcm in 2022, proving to be a key anchor for energy stability and security.



High- and technical-level bilateral contacts included the eighth Ministerial Meeting of the SGC Advisory Council held on 4 February in Baku with the participation of Commissioners Simson and Várhelyi, Energy MoU meetings on 7 April and 13 May, and the Commission participation in the Baku Energy Forum on 2 June with bilateral meetings on the margins with Azerbaijan's Minister of Energy Parviz Shahbazov and SGC stakeholders. With a view to securing a key source of natural gas, as alternative to Russian gas, continued engagement with Azerbaijan is essential with prospects for doubling the SGC capacity over a period of four to five years. This could cover an important share of the needs of South Eastern European countries throughout the EU's long-term decarbonisation process. Furthermore, Azerbaijan has strong untapped renewable energy potential, far in excess of its domestic needs, in particular in the offshore wind sector. Azerbaijan's strategic goal is to gradually turn from a fossil energy supplier into a renewable energy supplier capable of exporting renewable electricity and renewable hydrogen to the EU.

#### **d) Gulf region**

The Gulf region and the cooperation with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) gained further in importance due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, both in relation to fossil fuels but also in view of the global energy transition. The Gulf Communication, which the Commission published also together with the EEAS as part of the REPowerEU package on 18 May, recognizes the GCC region's importance for the global energy transition and incentivizes further cooperation in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energy, as well as the exploration of possible hydrogen partnerships.

A virtual EU-GCC Joint Council took place on 3 February with the participation of Executive Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioner Simson. On 10-11 May, the EU-GCC Energy and Climate dialogue, at senior official level, allowed to engage on REpowerEU and priority thematic such as renewable hydrogen and methane emission reduction. The EU-GCC clean energy network project continued activities throughout the period, contributing to the sharing of knowledge and practice on clean energy and energy efficiency among European and Gulf countries public and private sector. It will be replaced by a new EU-GCC Green Transition Network at the start of 2023. Senior official meeting with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, provided also opportunities to present REpowerEU and the interest of the EU to diversify its fossil fuel supplies and in future import renewable hydrogen in bilateral engagements.

#### **e) Latin America**

The energy relations with Latin America and Caribbean are bound to be strongly reinforced in view of the present situation. The political alignment with most countries in the area, together with the opportunities offered by the region's huge energy resources (conventional and renewable), are powerful drivers for this development.

Energy dialogues are being renewed, the first one with Argentina in June 2022, to be followed by Brazil and Chile, in virtual format, and later on Colombia. On a regional level, the EU's Permanent Observer status at the Latin American Organisation for Energy (OLADE) will be used as a leverage to deepen relations with the continent.

#### **f) Japan**

Engagement with Japan on energy continues to be a priority for the EU, both bi-laterally and in the context of international organisations, as the IEA, and fora as the G7. In response to the high prices for natural gas and a tight global market for LNG, Japan agreed in February to facilitate the re-direction of LNG shipments to the EU in order to help ensure sufficient gas supplies to the EU, once it had secured enough supplies for its domestic market. Commissioner Simson met Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda on 25 March 2022 in Brussels. They discussed energy security, in particular gas/LNG supplies, and policies towards climate/carbon neutrality. In the context of the EU – Japan Green Alliance (adopted at the EU – Japan Summit in May 2021), the energy dialogue has been further reinforced, with a focus on hydrogen, offshore wind energy and electricity market reform (the latter in particular in view of integrating large shares of renewable energy). Cooperation with Japan on methane emissions mitigation is also being stepped up. Concrete activities in all these areas have been discussed during the EU – Japan Energy Dialogue meeting of 26 April 2022.

#### **g) India**

Following the EU – India Energy Panel meeting of 1 December 2021, a new work programme of the EU-India Clean Energy and Climate Partnership (CECP) has been adopted. The implementation of the CECP continued through technical-level activities and workshops on renewable energy, energy efficiency, smart grids and electricity market reform and regulation. New EU – India joint activities are being initiated in the fields of green hydrogen, just transition and regional electricity inter-connections. The EU also continues to cooperate with India in the context of the International Solar Alliance, an international organisation launched by France and India at COP21, which aims at globally promoting the deployment of solar energy, and in particular in sun-rich development countries.

#### **h) Japan**

Engagement with Japan on energy continues to be a priority for the EU. In response to tight natural gas supply market in Europe, in February Japan committed to assisting with re-routing of LNG cargos to Europe where possible. The EU-Japan Energy Policy Dialogue on 26 April reviewed, next to the current global energy trends, in particular the global situation on LNG market, a set of regulatory issues. The Commission engaged with Japan inter alia on hydrogen, offshore wind energy, electricity market regulation and carbon capture and storage. Japan remains also a close partner on energy matters in G7.

#### **i) South East Asia**

Outreach with the major suppliers and consumers in South East Asia was undertaken to enhance global market functioning and increase liquidity. This has led to a sign of solidarity by the Republic of Korea reselling five shipments of LNG to European companies.

The EU is conducting a mapping to identify the possible areas for future collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This aims to lead to the establishment of the ASEAN-EU Clean Dialogue expected in December 2022. Engagement with the ASEAN countries was intensified to this effect. Preparations have taken place to amplify notably regarding cooperation notably on connectivity, in particular grid connection, in the region – in line with the Global Gateway.

The Commission contributed technical expertise to the development of the Just Energy Transition Partnerships proposed by the G7 Presidency covering South Africa, Indonesia, India and Vietnam. In Vietnam, the EU is co-leading the undertaking together with the UK, coordinating the effort with Vietnam and the other international partners.

**j) China**

The 10th edition of the EU-China Energy Dialogue took place on 31 March, ahead of the **EU-China Summit**. Commissioner Simson and Administrator of the National Energy Administration Zhang Jianhua reviewed progress on the Joint Statement on the Implementation of the EU-China Energy Cooperation of 2019.

Against the backdrop of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, this year's dialogue addressed topics of common interest, such as energy security, the green energy transition and electricity market reforms. LNG, natural gas and oil markets featured prominently in discussions on energy security. Policies and practices to accelerate the green energy transition were at the core of exchanges with the Chinese counterparts. Three joint reports on power market reforms, innovative energy solutions and energy efficiency were presented at the meeting.

**k) African Union and Sub-Sahara Africa**

Following a gap of 4 years, the **EU-African Union Summit** successfully took place in February 2022, notably with the announcement of the Global Gateway EU-Africa Investment package, a financial allocation of EUR 150 billion to support infrastructure development on the continent.

In the energy sector, the Africa-EU Green Energy Initiative was launched, with the aim to support renewable energy, energy efficiency and access to energy. Prior to the summit, President von der Leyen and 5 commissioners travelled to Senegal to engage on energy, migration, digital, jobs and growth. It was an opportunity to discuss Senegal's energy plans, including the development of its gas reserves, as well as the African Union energy priorities, namely the Africa Single Electricity Market and related infrastructure project.

The EU continued its support to the Africa Single Electricity Market, namely through its support to the development of the Continental Master plan on electricity, and in particular the identification of large-scale energy generation and transmission infrastructure to be financed under the Global Gateway.

Engagement with Nigeria allowed to present REpowerEU strategy, engage on possible additional LNG volumes from Nigeria (Nigeria supplied 10 bcm of LNG in 2021, representing 14% of EU's LNG supply), and engage on the Delta Niger situation (vandalism and theft in the Delta Niger are affecting the production capacity, leading to 30% reduction). An EU-Nigeria Business forum, with a dedicated session on gas, will be taking place end of June. Future engagement will assess the opportunities to develop a specific partnership on energy, including on LNG production.

Engagement with South Africa in the framework of the **Just Energy Transition Partnership** signed at COP26 is progressing and will lead to the development of a list of actions and investment projects to be endorsed by COP27 in November 2022. Technical cooperation is ongoing, notably with the organisation of a study tour in April 2022 of a South African delegation on renewable hydrogen technology and market development and a series of webinars on energy regulation for energy transition.

As Namibia is ambitioning to become a renewable hydrogen hub, engagement with Namibia in view of the development of an **EU-Namibia raw material value chain and renewable hydrogen partnership** have started.

Under the leadership of the G7, negotiation have started for a Just energy transition partnership with Senegal in view of a signature at COP27.

### **III. Multilateral engagement**

#### **a) Energy Charter Treaty**

The EU concluded a two-year long process of negotiation on the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) with an ad hoc conference of the Energy Charter on 24 June, which led to an agreement in principle to end negotiations.

The negotiated outcome would bring the ECT in line with modern standards of investment protection and with EU energy and climate objectives, including the implementation of the Paris Agreement. During the negotiations, the EU managed introduced proposed revisions that would bring the Treaty in line with the rules of the internal energy market when it comes to transit provision, as well as to include a carve-out for investment protection for fossil fuels in the EU. This carve-out will apply as of next year for new investments and after a transition period of 10 years for exiting investments.

The provisionally agreed text will now undergo legal scrubbing and will then be submitted to all Contracting Parties, including the EU and its Member States, for a 3-month consultation period ahead of the Energy Charter conference of 22 November.

#### **b) International Renewable Energy Agency**

The Twelfth Session of the IRENA Assembly took place 14-16 January; the central narrative of the Assembly was the acceleration of action on the deployment of renewable energy, in line with COP26 and at the beginning of a decisive decade.

Just transition and climate justice featured prominently in the narrative of African and SIDS Members, with strong parallel to international climate discussions. The role of the energy transition not only for climate change mitigation but also for economic and social development was also stressed by most participants. Africa received lot of attention and COP 27 was often referred to as a crucial moment for the energy transition in Africa.

The Assembly also kickstarted the work on IRENA's next Medium Term Strategy (MTS 2023-27), which continued in a dedicated working group and at the 23<sup>rd</sup> IRENA Council in May 2022. The Commission and EU Member States participated actively in the process and the first outline of the MTS reflects the EU priorities for IRENA.

### **c) International Energy Agency (IEA)**

2022 has seen a charged agenda in the EU engagement with the International Energy Agency (IEA). The IEA held a number of IEA Ministerial meetings this year. During the ad hoc Ministerials chaired by the USA, IEA members and the EU coordinated unprecedented oil stock releases. In its regular 2022 ministerial meeting, IEA adopted four key mandates: leading global energy sector's fight against climate change; ensuring energy security during the energy transition; strengthening IEA family; and IEA resources and free data. In 2022, the IEA lifted the pause on extending Association, adding Egypt and Argentina. The Agency's Governing Board also decided to offer immediate Association status to Ukraine. Furthermore, IEA Energy ministers also approved the third mandate of Executive Director Fatih Birol. The Commission has been working very closely with the IEA throughout 2022, in particular on activities aimed to reduce EU's dependence on Russian fossil fuels.

### **d) G7**

In the context of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, increasing energy prices, tightening energy supply and the push to reduce reliance on Russian fossil fuels in the G7 members, G7 energy ministers held a number of ad hoc discussions this year and issued, together with climate and environment ministers, a consensus communique in Berlin on 27 May.

In addition to being able to maintain the G7 ambition, G7 energy track made progress in 2022. The key achievements include a commitment to a goal of achieving predominantly decarbonised electricity sectors by 2035, agreement to prioritise concrete and timely steps towards the goal of an eventual phase-out of domestic unabated coal power generation. Furthermore, ministers committed to end new direct public support for the international unabated fossil fuel energy sector by the end of 2022, except in limited circumstances. Throughout the process, the EU and others in G7 highlighted the importance of maintaining the focus to the 2050 commitment requiring a profound energy transition, while addressing the immediate issues at hand relating to the global energy crisis.

**e) G20**

The G20 energy ministers are scheduled to meet in Bali on 2 September. Work is ongoing in the G20 Energy Transition Working Group to determine the possible G20 deliverables with a focus on energy transition and energy security.

**f) European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group**

Since the very beginning of the war, European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) held emergency meetings and expressed its strong support to the Ukrainian regulator, SNRIU, strongly condemning Russia. Regular contacts took place between SNRIU, the Commission and European nuclear safety regulators. ENSREG also mandated the Western European Nuclear Regulators Association (WENRA) to provide further support to SNRIU to enhance accident preparedness.

The sixth edition of ENSREG's nuclear safety regulatory conference was held on 20-21 June 2022. The topics included a special session on Ukraine and nuclear safety in times of war; the regulatory response to the pandemic; and the regulatory challenges posed by new nuclear reactor designs, particularly small modular reactors (SMR).

**g) International Atomic Energy Agency**

Commissioner Simson met with the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi in April 2022. The topics discussed included: safety of nuclear installations in Ukraine following the Russian military aggression; coordination of nuclear safety support to Ukraine; the status of Russia at the IAEA, and update of the Memorandum of Understanding between Euratom and the IAEA on cooperation in the field of nuclear safety.

**e) COP26 follow-up and COP 27 preparation**

Following up on COP26 commitments, in addition to implementation of the Just Energy Transition partnership signed with South Africa and the development of new partnerships with India, Indonesia, Vietnam and Senegal, the Commission, together with Germany, is developing an international platform for coal regions in transition. It will be operational mid of 2022. The Global Methane Pledge has continued to receive applications and now counts 113 members.



COP27 will be an opportunity to show progress on implementation. Several initiatives are expected to be developed throughout 2022 and be endorsed at COP 27. The Commission is supporting the development of Just Energy Transition Partnerships being negotiated with Indonesia, Vietnam, Senegal and India. International engagement on energy efficiency is a workstream likely to pick up and be turned into an energy efficiency pledge and the EU would certainly support.

With the influence of COP27 presidency, the Commission is engaging European and African stakeholders to boost private sector investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency, through various fora, such as the Africa EU Energy Partnership, the SE4All ministerial meeting in Kigali in May 2022, and the Africa Energy Forum in Brussels in June 2022.

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