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Statement

by

**Mr. Christian Friis Bach
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Executive Secretary of the United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe**

at

**25th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference
Ministerial Session
"Development of Transit Corridors – a Key to Global
Energy Security"**

**Astana, Kazakhstan
27 November 2014**

Excellencies
Ministers
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the UN and UNECE I would like to thank the Government of Kazakhstan for being such an excellent host of the 25th meeting of the Energy Charter Conference "Development of Transit Corridors – a Key to Global Energy Security."

It is the start of a new tradition of chairmanship in the organization and Kazakhstan's leadership that keep the issues of energy security and energy transit high on the international agenda.

The Astana Declaration brings a strong vision for the next 5 years. The Energy Charter's aspiration to expand the geographical scope of its involvement through the adoption of a modernized Energy Charter next year will indeed be a robust step to strengthen the framework of global energy governance.

I would like to underline our long-standing cooperation with the Energy Charter Secretariat and I am here to build an even stronger partnership.

What unites us at UNECE with the Energy Charter process is our commitment to multilateral dialogue on energy transit, security, policy coordination and efficiency – major priorities for UNECE member States.

We work closely with the Energy Charter Secretariat and would like to offer our platform for your use in pursuing the vision of the Astana Declaration. Our continued close collaboration will enhance the multilateral energy security framework for UNECE member States and signatories of the Energy Charter Treaty.

UNECE's origins go back to the post-WWII Europe and our membership extends from the US to Russia, from Kazakhstan to Canada. We have for more than 60 years convened our countries and helped them to agree on hundreds of recommendations, standards and conventions that has a direct and positive impact on the life of citizens in the ECE region from the UN transport conventions, standards in trade facilitation, environmental conventions, agricultural standards, standards for housing and statistics and standards for energy production and use and increasingly for sustainable energy solutions.

This work is what UNECE does really well.

Our work in energy is guided by goals of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Though simply stated, the concept of sustainable energy is extremely complex.

It includes energy **security**. It must focus on **accessability** and **affordability**. And it must focus on **sustainability** with all its three dimensions – ensuring economic progress, and environmental and social protection.

All above components are integral and inseparable. And we must meet these complex demands in a world that is

changing rapidly in terms of environmental considerations, technological progress, and globalization. What we meant by energy security in 1970 became something different in 1990, and the concept is changing again as the world works to tackle climate change and ensure access to modern energy services.

Because energy security considerations are dynamic, the energy dialogue must be dynamic and continuous as well. UNECE's sustainable energy programme embraces a range of activities.

We work on:

- developing clear recommendations and standards for energy efficiency and renewable energy - standards are needed for windows, waterpumps and windmills. And we work with our partners to implement them, not least in economies in transition and in this region
- encouraging the greater use of natural gas as a "transitional" fuel and the safe use of gas with our work on standards for gas use and leakages and coal mine methane management.
- further development of the UN Framework Classification for both Fossil Fuels, nuclear and now expanding to also cover renewable energy sources. It is a framework we encourage all countries to use to ensure consistent reporting and statistics – we need better energy statistics.
- we work on promoting cleaner electricity production from fossil fuels and here our members just agreed on a new set of strong recommendations for Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage that will be submitted to the

UNFCCC. Fossil fuels will be with us for a long time and we need to reduce their carbon footprint.

Earlier this month, we also held the Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development in Tunisia which resulted in a joint statement by the Executive Secretaries of the five United Nations regional commissions – the Hammamet Declaration. The statement affirms that the objectives of energy sustainability are attainable and are not in conflict with more short-term considerations, if the world embarks on a determined, collective effort.

Up to recently there was fear that tackling climate change would become a stumbling stone on the way towards economic progress. Today we know that sustainable energy and tackling climate change does not need to be a stumbling stone – it is a building block, and an important building block, of a future strong green economy. It can help to create energy security and new jobs, more investments, higher growth – and green growth.

I would like to emphasize that UNECE – as always – stands ready to provide support to our member states in the field of energy. In this context, the international exhibition EXPO 2017 in Astana is an excellent opportunity to expand UNECE's technical cooperation with Kazakhstan and the region in the area of future energy and clean technologies.

Lastly, I would like to thank once again the Energy Charter and the Government of Kazakhstan for organizing this event and for their kind hospitality.

Thank you for your attention.