

The Secretary General of the International Energy Charter and his team were in Energy Commission of Nigeria, ECN on the 6th of March 2017 ahead of the “ *Nigeria Joins International Energy Charter* ”

signing in ceremony. The team, received by Director, Nuclear Science and Technology, ECN, Dr Mala Umar, were led to the office of the Director General, from where the team proceeded to the Board Room of the Commission, members of the ECN Management being already seated. The said signing ceremony is being organized in collaboration with the Energy Commission of Nigeria as the host of the event. The Energy Charter team, made up of the Secretary General, Dr Urban Rusnak, a regulatory expert of the Energy Charter, Dr Ernesto Bonafe and Nigerian and ECOWAS coordinator, Dr Monica Emmanuel.



DG/CEO RECEIVES GIFT FROM DR. URBAN RUSNAK

In his opening remarks, the DG/CEO, ECN briefly spoke about the basic role of the Commission as an agency for policy making and strategic planning. Explaining the DG said that the International Energy Charter, based in Brussels, Belgium, is a governmental organization for promoting transparent development in the energy sector worldwide.

The Energy Charter process was initiated in 1991 with the Energy Charter Declaration, commonly referred to as the *European Energy Charter*, which was a concise expression of

principles underpinning the international energy cooperation, based on a shared interest in secure energy supply and sustainable economic development. The

European Energy Charter

subsequently provided the foundations for 1994 Energy Charter Treaty, a unique multilateral binding framework for energy cooperation in international law. Energy charter members are committed to the promotion of energy security through more open and competitive energy markets, while at the same time respecting the principles of sustainable development of and sovereignty over energy resources. Protection of foreign investments, non-discriminatory conditions for trade in energy materials, products and energy related equipment and guarantee of reliable cross-border energy transit, dispute resolution and the promotion of energy efficiency are pillars holding up the energy charter global governance architecture.

Since 2003, Nigeria became an observer by invitation to the energy charter conference and did participate in 2014 negotiations in Brussels. A process of reform and modernization through negotiations was initiated in 2009. Negotiations for a new political declaration then culminated in the May 2015 International Energy Charter which offered opportunity to countries in the world to contribute to the modernized 1991 declaration.



MANAGEMENT STAFF OF ECN WITH THE IEC TEAM AT THE ECN HEADQUARTERS IN THE DG'S BOARD ROOM

Responding, the Secretary of the International Energy Charter, Dr. Urban Rusnak spoke about

the synergy between the Energy Charter and the ECN, understanding better on how to make Nigeria a better country as regard the energy sector for its citizens since Nigeria is blessed with natural resources. He noted the non-uniqueness of using generators and also the long fuel queues experienced by Nigerians. He also emphasized on the importance of the Energy Charter as regards dealing with different aspects of energy and how these experiences can be useful to the world.

Speaking further, DG/CEO, ECN explained how the *International Energy Charter* started as a European Union affair, their coming together of the eastern and western Europe and how the Charter had a reform to include other countries such as Nigeria. He further explained the reasons why the Energy Commission decided to cooperate with the Charter as the consideration of the fact that the Charter does not have any legal and financial implication and that the Commission can decide to exit whenever it is discovered that the benefits are not commiserate to what is expected. The DG went further to say that a lot is to be gained as regards joining the Charter since Nigeria is a country with a lot of resources such as oil and gas, renewable energy.

Joining a bigger club guarantees investors to come to help develop the resources. Therefore there is a need to join the Charter under the approval of Mr President, Muhammadu Buhari given in December 2016. A framework has also been drafted for flagship programme between Nigeria and the *International Energy Charter* which was coined as the National Energy Summit. It involves the activities of the Charter in the summit which is a forum where Nigeria expresses its opinion about Nigeria's energy sector, its challenges and proffer solutions on how to overcome some of these challenges.

The scope of the program was also given in detail.



GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF ECN MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS WITH THE IECh TEAM