

Summary of the 3rd Informal Virtual PSC Meeting

26th March 2025, 15:00 to 16:30 Gulf Standard Time (GST)

1. **H.E. Ms Vanessa Interiano, PSC Chair and Permanent Representative of El Salvador to IRENA**, welcomed PSC members and IRENA Members to the third virtual meeting of the **Programme Strategy Committee (PSC)**. The PSC Chair highlighted the importance of dialogue, collaboration, and joint action to advance renewable energy goals and stated that the meeting's objective was to share ideas in preparation for the next in-person meeting on May 21, 2025. Reflecting on the October 2024 meeting, she noted the discussions on the Work Programme and Budget 2024-2025 and acknowledge the progress made and expressed appreciation to the Agency's efforts in accelerating the deployment of renewables. The PSC Chair also highlighted ongoing challenges, including access to technology, innovation, and financial instruments, particularly for developing countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and the need for stronger international and private sector cooperation. She encouraged all Members to actively participate, share their perspectives, and contribute to shaping the collective efforts moving forward. She further reminded Members that the agenda had been shared in advance, in collaboration with the Secretariat, to facilitate a productive and meaningful discussion.
2. The PSC Chair outlined the meeting's agenda as follows:
 - Key Priorities and focus areas for the new biennium 2026-2027
 - New Partnerships & Initiatives
 - Any other considerations from Members (including submissions received)
 - Next Steps and Closing
3. The PSC Chair introduced the item and invited Mr Antonio Bernardini, Chief of Staff at IRENA, to present the process and timelines for the 2026-2027 Work Programme and Budget.
4. Mr Antonio Bernardini extended his welcome to all Members and started his presentation by stating that the business case for renewable energy is undeniable, noting its advantages in cost, effectiveness, security and environmental impact and despite the current geopolitical tensions. He referenced IRENA's report [*Renewable Capacity Statistics 2025*](#) and noted that the renewable energy sector has demonstrated remarkable resilience, with global renewable capacity, reaching 4,448

gigawatts by the end of 2024 and representing a robust 15% increase from the previous year. He stated that this growth is not merely a statistical anomaly but a clear indication of a fundamental shift in global energy parity.

5. He acknowledged the significant hurdles that still remain, pointing out that global supply chains essential for renewable technology development are facing unprecedented strain. He highlighted that disruptions and bottlenecks could impede progress and increase costs. Additionally, he noted that the private sector, as a key driver of renewable energy investment, is navigating a complex landscape of risk and uncertainty.
6. He stated that the ambitious goal of tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030, as outlined in the UAE Consensus, can only be achieved through the implementation of robust, holistic, and forward-looking policies, which must create an enabling environment for investment while ensuring that the benefits of the energy transition are shared.
7. He underscored the critical role of PSC for the next programmatic cycle will be essential to ensuring that IRENA can effectively support Members in their energy transitions, while also reinforcing the Agency's role in shaping the global energy landscape.
8. Turning to the agenda item on key priorities and focus areas for the new biennium 2026-2027, he presented an overview of the process of preparing the Work Programme and Budget for the biennium 2026-2027. He recalled that, in February 2025, Members were invited to submit inputs to help shape the preliminary framework of the upcoming Work Programme and budget for 2026-2027. He expressed appreciation to the delegations of Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, El Salvador, Egypt, Georgia, Italy, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates for their valuable contributions, and invited additional input from Members who had not yet sent their contribution.
9. Mr Bernardini further informed that the preliminary framework was in the process of finalisation and would be submitted for consideration at the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, along with the sessional documentation. He explained that based on the feedback received at twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, the development of the draft Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027 would be presented for consideration at the thirtieth meeting of the Council and ultimately be submitted for adoption by the Assembly, at its sixteenth session.

10. Mr Bernardini also outlined key activities under each of the five pillars of the Medium-term Strategy (MTS) for 2023-2027, drawing from input received to date and internal discussions and noted that these pillars provided a general sense of the direction being considered by the Agency. He stressed the importance and the necessity of a critical mass of input to ensure that the preliminary framework and subsequent Work Programme and budget 2026-2027 align with the needs and priorities of the Membership.
11. Additionally, he informed participants that the upcoming external mid-term evaluation of the of the Medium-term Strategy (MTS) for 2023-2027 would be conducted this year and announced that the procurement process for hiring of a consulting firm was underway. He affirmed that the evaluation would begin at the end of April, and the results be presented at the thirtieth meeting of the Council. He also explained that the part of the evaluation process would entail interviews and surveys with Members and other stakeholders to provide further insights that would be incorporated into the development of Work Programme. Furthermore, Mr Bernardini also mentioned that the Progress Report of the Director-General on the implementation of the Work Programme 2024-2025, which will be part of the sessional documentation of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, will include analysis and visuals from IRENA's new monitoring and evaluation system. He explained that the monitoring and evaluation system, use the previous biennium as the baseline and shared, as an example, the analysis and data on the number of knowledge products produced annually, disaggregated by topic and publication type.
12. Ms Nermina Grierson, Chief Budget Officer provided an overview of the budgetary context. She noted that while budget matters are not discussed at the PSC, this meeting provided an important platform to address budgetary overview. She explained that IRENA's biennium budget for 2024–2025 stands at USD 64.7 million, made up of core assessed and core non-assessed contributions. She underlined that the budget has not increased since 2016, with only small adjustments reflecting the admission of new Members joining IRENA.
13. Furthermore, Ms Grierson acknowledged the growing challenges faced by the Agency, including rising salary costs due to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) adjustments, inflation, and the increasing costs of goods and services. She explained that despite these pressures, the Agency has managed to implement cost-saving measures and drive efficiency without jeopardising delivery of its mandate. However, Ms Grierson cautioned that continuing to operate under such constraints is not sustainable.

14. Referring to the 2026–2027 biennium, she highlighted that the financial challenges facing the Agency will continue. The major financial impact foreseen relates to rising increases in general services contracts, twenty-five staff members reaching their tenure milestones, and the continued increase in the actual cost of goods and services. In addition, she noted that the Agency is facing compounding pressures from implementing ongoing requirements to strengthen administrative capacities, which brings its own financial pressures.
15. She stressed that if the budget remains at its current level, the Agency will have no choice but to implement some drastic and very difficult cost reduction measures. She cautioned that such steps would significantly compromise operational capabilities and limit the Agency’s ability to undertake new initiatives, scale up existing successful projects, and adequately respond to emerging strategic priorities and opportunities.
16. She reiterated by stating that maintaining the present budgetary stance is unsustainable in the longer term and could affect the Agency’s ability to effectively fulfill its mandate.
17. Following Ms Grierson presentation, Mr. Antonio added that the topic of the budget, which frequently generates interest, is a sensitive issue within international organisations and reiterated that the PSC meeting was not specifically intended for budget discussions, and stated, however, it remained important to consider resource implications when addressing activities for the upcoming Biennium.
18. The PSC Chair thanked Mr. Bernardini and Ms Grierson for the presentation, including an update on the budget. She acknowledged that while the budget is officially discussed during the Administrative and Finance Committee (AFC), Members were welcome to ask specific questions on the matter. Before opening the floor to Members, she posed a question regarding member contributions to the 2026–2027 Work Programme and Budget. She inquired whether countries that missed the initial deadline of 17 March could still submit proposals.
19. Mr Bernardini informed that deadlines help ensure an orderly process, but also emphasised flexibility, noting that contributions from Members are always welcome. He encouraged Members, still working on their inputs, to notify the Secretariat. While open to additional contributions, he also stressed the need to conclude the process to ensure timely and comprehensive analysis.
20. The PSC Chair thanked Mr. Bernardini for the clarification and inquired whether any new activities or initiatives were expected in the upcoming Work Programme for 2026-2027, or if they were still under development.

21. Mr. Bernardini stated that several new initiatives are under consideration and many remain in early stages of development. He referred specifically to the Global Coalition for Energy Planning (GCEP) initiative and noted it is still being formulated. He stated that it is important to keep a focused approach to the activities of the Agency. Mr Bernardini added that the sense of priorities indicated by the Membership must be combined with a focused approach and stated that this is even more sensible considering the limited resources. He clarified that the issue of new initiatives should not be seen as blocking ongoing activities, as these new initiatives have emerged in several multilateral meetings through proposals from many Members. However, he noted that the focus should remain on the initiatives currently being developed.
22. H.E Dr Nawal Al-Hosany, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to IRENA, expressed gratitude to the PSC Chair for organising the informal PSC meeting and acknowledged that budget discussions fall within the mandate of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC). She clarified that while Members are not opposed to a budget increase, they requested clearer financial information and noted that Members are still waiting for that information.
23. She reiterated that, on multiple occasions, the lack of clarity and transparency in the budget expenditure was flagged. H.E Dr Al Hosany recalled the requests made to reform the way financial information is presented and noted that the Membership is still waiting for it. She emphasised the challenge for the Membership to consider an increase in the budget, unless there is a clear and transparent account of the financial performance of the Agency.
24. H.E. Dr. Al-Hosany expressed confusion regarding the emergence of new initiatives. She underlined that, on multiple occasions, Members had requested an assessment of the impact of these initiatives on the Agency. She also recalled that requests made regarding clarity on the progress of Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Africa (APRA) and expressed surprise at learning that IRENA had requested the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to create an office in Nairobi to manage APRA. She stated that the role of the office in Nairobi appears to be taking much of IRENA’s mandate in relation to renewables in Africa and emphasised that this decision had not been brought to the attention of either the Council or the Assembly. She requested information on how such decisions are being made, including how steering committees are set up and decisions are implemented without consultation with Members.
25. She further expressed concern regarding the creation of additional platforms, noting that it contributed to the ambiguity surrounding how the Agency’s resources are being utilised. She

reiterated the frequent requests for clarity on the ongoing lack of transparency, particularly in relation to the benefits of these initiatives for the Membership.

26. Furthermore, she referred to requests made by Members and recognised administrative reforms as essential and imperative due to the various issues relating to both administration and finance. H.E. Dr. Al-Hosany also referred to the potential drastic measures stated during the presentation on the Budget and requested clarification on the nature of these measures, recalling that Members requested the Agency to demonstrate measures of improving efficiency. She also affirmed that suggestions were provided by Members regarding how these efficiencies could be achieved, and noted, however, no report or implementation of these suggestions has followed.
27. She pointed out a lack of alignment between what is agreed upon in the Work Programme and how the organisation proceeds, referring to the requests made by the Membership to elaboration and detail are often not addressed, including on budget discussions, where requests for more funding are not accompanied by justifications or implementation details.
28. H.E. Dr. Al-Hosany underlined Members' commitment to supporting IRENA's mandate highlighting that the Agency was established with the collective vision of tackling critical issues and closing substantial gaps. However, she noted concerns regarding the treatment reserved to the Membership in which their requests for information have not been managed, often delayed or addressed only partially. She explained that it was in response to these issues, particularly relating to transparency and accountability, that Members requested for administrative reform.

29. Intervention by Germany – Mr Tobias Rinke, expressed gratitude to the PSC Chair for initiation of the process and opportunity to provide inputs on the framework related to the Work Programme and Budget. He stated that Germany stands ready to engage actively; and explained that the contribution process is strenuous in light of ongoing governmental transition. He added that any proposal must be well articulated and justified, noting that all Members are facing increased budgetary pressure,
30. Mr Rinkle stated that Germany would expect the upcoming Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027 to include a clear prioritisation of activities, structured around the five strategic pillars

outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2023-2027. In addition, he underlined the importance of including a transparent and clear assessment of past and forthcoming decisions within the work programme, to inform of the broader discussion. Mr Rinkle expressed hope that the results-based framework would inform, enhance transparency and guide decision-making throughout the process.

31. Referring to new initiatives, he stated that Germany views as critical the plans to expand APRA to other regions of the world, while the initiative is still in the phase of operationalisation for APRA. He added that such expansion to regions may be premature as the proof of concept remains pending.
32. He concluded by requesting clarification, within the context of budget, whether one of the scenarios under consideration for the next Work Programme and budget includes a higher reliance on voluntary contributions, or whether the proposal will continue to be based exclusively on Assessed Contributions from Members.
33. Intervention by Antigua and Barbuda, - Ms Ruleta Camacho Thomas expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in her first meeting of the Programme and Strategy Committee and reaffirmed Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to deploying renewable energy.
34. She referred to recent global events and expressed concerns, regarding the budget, stating that if there are institutional reporting issues they should be addressed with clarity She highlighted the increasing risks faced by countries such as Antigua and Barbuda due to evolving geopolitical landscape, noting due to reliance on support for renewable energy and adaptation initiatives.

35. On the preparation of the upcoming Work Programme, she welcomed the extension of the submission deadline and indicated that Antigua and Barbuda would be submitting its inputs. while noting that all elements remain a priority, Ms Camacho Thomas further called for the continued prioritisation of areas mentioned in the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS), such as affordability, reliability, sustainability, and modern energy access for SIDS.
36. She drew attention to the critical need for a well-trained renewable energy workforce, stating that the energy transition also represents an economic transition. Ms Camacho Thomas also stressed

the need for greater support for physical infrastructure, and raised emerging concerns regarding the circular economy of renewable energy systems, particularly the disposal of aging.

37. Ms Camacho Thomas explained that Antigua and Barbuda views, the sustainability of its national activities, including energy and utility transition, as a priority and she noted that while ambitious, additional factors create significant hurdles. She further cited the IMO requirements as an example of external elements that will have significant impact on marine-dependent countries, particularly in food security.
38. In this context, she stressed the importance, within the results-based framework and performance of activities, to assess external factors and their impact on Members' rate of performance in achieving previously identified outputs and outcomes. She also urged the recognition of the shifting geopolitical environment, emphasising its necessity to interpret how these challenges might affect performance. In closing she noted that while issues should be resolved, the Agency remains cognisant of the many external factors that could impact results.
39. Intervention by Dominica - H.E. Mr Avondale Paul, extended his appreciation to the PSC Chair and voiced his support to the budgetary concerns expressed by the UAE. He noted that, for a major international organisation, the concerns raised regarding the budget should be examined and added that reporting should be timely and detailed, stressing that the financial aspect of an organisation is key. He stressed that the Agency must communicate clearly why funds are needed, when it is going to be spent, and the manner in which it will be spent.
40. H.E. Mr. Paul further recommended that the Secretariat coordinate with the AFC and closely examine the issues raised repeatedly in past meetings. Drawing on his background in finance and accounting, he stressed the importance of transparency, accountability, and adherence to sound financial policies. He reiterated his support for UAE's concerns on budgetary matters, which have been repeatedly brought up in past meetings without resolution and warned that unresolved budgetary issues could hinder program implementation.

41. He called for collaboration and collective effort to improve financial reporting. H.E Mr Paul concluded by expressed readiness to support with the Secretariat, his expertise, to strengthen the Agency's financial reporting.
42. Intervention by China – Ms Yufei Yang, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the PSC and commended IRENA's achievements over the past two years in advancing sustainable energy development. She suggested that the new biennium Work Programme promote synergies among renewable energy, traditional energy, energy storage and new energy vehicles to create a diversified supply system. She noted that this approach would enhance the stability of wind and solar power and support the development of new power systems and adapt to high renewable energy penetration.
43. Ms Yang further emphasised the need to study and promote market mechanisms for renewable energy, including trading systems, pricing policies, and certificate systems such as the green electricity certificate. She reiterated China's advocacy for the unimpeded, free, and non-discriminatory flow of green products and technologies globally, aiming to reduce the impact of unilateral measures and ensure fair access to energy transition benefits. Additionally, she stressed the importance of prioritising renewable energy research and development, policymaking, and market promotion while suggesting a reduction in focus on activities less relevant to the energy sector. She concluded by reaffirming China's commitment to supporting IRENA's leadership and noted that detailed inputs had been submitted in writing.
44. Mr Antonio Bernardini, Chief of Staff, addressed the concerns regarding financial and operational challenges faced by international organisations. He explained that rising inflation, increasing costs of goods and services, upcoming staff retirements, and higher general service contract expenses are issues that impact operational capacity should not be combined with other concerns raised. He emphasised that, over the course of an organisation's lifecycle, there will inevitably be cost-related challenges that affect its operational capacity. These issues, he noted, are not unique to IRENA but are shared by many international bodies operating under similar circumstances. He highlighted that the Agency, like other international bodies, experienced a period of high inflation rate, with costs increasing across many regions, while its budget have remained the same, expressing the view, that this is a real and pressing issue, but not one that should be the focus of the PSC meeting.

45. On matters of accountability and transparency, he reaffirmed that IRENA remains committed to upholding these principles. He acknowledged that if there are reporting issues, they should be examined and reiterated the Agency's support for auditing and enhanced verification systems to monitor its work.
46. Mr Bernardini emphasised that on one side, there is the issue of resource availability, and on the other, the way activities are managed and how to ensure broader participation from Members. He further stated that the implementation of these activities should be conducted in a manner that is satisfactory to Members.
47. He reaffirmed the strong economic case for renewable energy, highlighting that the sector is expanding and that IRENA's mandate remains solid. He welcomed Members' contributions to discussions on programs and activities, particularly thanking Germany for highlighting the APRA initiative. He stated that APRA has generated high expectations from other regions despite its preliminary phase and expressed IRENA's readiness to analyse and refine its initiatives to ensure success for Members.
48. Intervention by Egypt - Mr Mohamed Osama, expressed appreciation for IRENA's efforts in enhancing renewable energy deployment worldwide. He further acknowledged the Agency's work in preparing its next Work Programme and its commitment to structured methodologies and programmatic priorities. He highlighted key focus areas, including improving energy systems infrastructure, enhancing legislation and policies for renewable energy dissemination, and building capacity and skills.

49. Furthermore, he referenced the invitation for Members' input for the 2026–2027 Work Programme and budget and confirmed that Egypt had submitted its contribution, addressing financing mechanisms, the energy transition, the Energy Transition Accelerator Financing (ETAF) platform, the Climate Investment Platform (CIP), and initiatives such as the Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Africa (APRA). He emphasised the importance of adhering

to rules and principles of international law, followed by international financing institutions, regarding the selection criteria of project, particularly when these have transboundary impacts.

50. Mr Osama suggested the assessment of the potential social, economic and environmental consequences of the proposed project. Moreover, he stated that the beneficiary country should formally notify other countries of the proposed project, provided technical specification and relevant data. This, he emphasised, would allow to assess whether the proposed project could impact, through water deprivation or pollution. He concluded by reaffirming Egypt's interests in promoting development project, referencing Nova energy projects, which achieve collective benefits and well-being of people globally.
51. **The PSC Chair** acknowledged and highlighted widespread support for renewable energy, noting that the energy demand increase in 2024 was met by renewables, further reinforcing its importance. She recognised the valuable comments from Members and emphasised the need for the Secretariat to address specific requests and issues raised. She urged collaboration between the Secretariat and the Members concerned to and allow continued support for IRENA's work.
52. The PSC Chair also referred to specific points raised and suggested it may be beneficial for the Agency to create a plan of work for initiatives in which it serves as a Secretariat. She emphasised this would assist Members in understanding how IRENA is managing responsibilities for these initiatives, including how human resources are being utilised, the amount of time dedicated to these activities, and whether these initiatives are covered by the Agency's budget.
53. She further acknowledged comments regarding the importance of a skilled workforce and infrastructure, noting that these issues will be addressed in the upcoming Work Programme as well as extended her appreciation towards Egypt for their valuable input for the 2026-27 Work Programme. She concluded by encouraging continued cooperation to enhance clarity, ensuring that Members can effectively support IRENA's objectives.

54. The PSC Chair invited the Secretariat to present recently launched initiatives, including the Global Coalition of Energy Planning (GCEP) and the Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Central Asia (APRECA). The PSC Chair highlighted that this presentation would allow Members to reflect on the strategic value of these recent initiatives.

55. **In his presentation, Mr Gurbuz Gonul, Director of the Country Engagement and Partnerships Division**, provided an overview of the Agency’s partnerships framework, with a focus on a new regional partnership in Central Asia aimed at accelerating renewable energy development, launched at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. He highlighted that Central Asian countries have made notable progress in formulating plans and implementing actions to achieve their renewable energy goals. However, he noted that they still face major challenges. These include, the aging infrastructure, gaps in enabling and policy regulatory frameworks, substantial investment needs and barriers to finance.
56. Despite these challenges, Mr Gonul underscored the region’s immense potential in terms of renewable energy sources, positioning the region to transform its energy landscape towards sustainability and resilience. He further highlighted central Asia’s potential to serve as a powerhouse, capable of renewable powering neighbouring regions through improved connectivity. Additionally, he emphasised that the regions reserve of critical minerals essential for energy transition, combined with its skilled workforce and favorable investment climate present avenues for growth and development.
57. Considering this potential, he stated the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Central Asia (APRECA) initiative was launched at COP29 in collaboration with the Azerbaijan Presidency and Central Asian countries. With the aim to fast-track renewable energy investments, modernise infrastructure, improve interconnectivity, and promote local value creation to support a renewable-based economic transformation, he further highlighted the role of the initiative is to provide the region with an operational framework for implementing the UAE Consensus to triple renewables and double energy efficiency by 2030, while remaining well aligned with the COP29 pledges of green energy zones and corridors, and also energy storage and grids.
58. He outlined APRECA’s four key pillars, which form the core focus of the partnership:
- **Strengthening Energy Infrastructure:** enhancing the flexibility and reliability of national power systems to accommodate a higher share of renewables, and improving the interconnectivity of regional power systems to facilitate cross-border trade of clean energy

- Enhancing Policy, Regulatory and Institutional Frameworks and Capacity Building: centers on creating a more conducive investment environment for renewables. This includes providing technical support to strengthen policy, regulatory, and institutional frameworks.
- Enabling Local Value Creation and Green Industrialisation: focuses on developing skills and local capabilities, recognising the energy transition as part of broader socioeconomic development. This includes promoting local value creation, green industrialisation, and opportunities in manufacturing and mineral processing to support the transition.
- Mobilizing Private Investments and Boosting Access to Finance: Facilitating access to investments through mechanisms such as IRENA's Energy Transition Accelerator Financing (ETAf) platform and other coordinated efforts.

59. He noted that while the partnership remains in its early stage, the COP 29 in Baku and the fifteenth meeting of the IRENA Assembly have, through regional deliberations, served as key opportunities to scope specific activities and deliverables. He added that country-level consultations with governments have continued, alongside efforts to explore opportunities with partners to design targeted technical workstreams. He also outlined plans for the second segment of the Central Asia Investment Forum, which will focus on project pipeline development and access to finance.

60. In his closing, Mr Gonul underlined that each partnership initiative has a different scope, involves different spectrums of stakeholders, and is supported by distinct operational machinery. Therefore, each must be assessed on its own merits and its potential contribution to advancing the energy transition in the particular context. He emphasised since the early days of IRENA regional approach has proven to be successful. With initiatives having clear political hooks and strong ties to regional organisations, they have supported the Agency's mandate by raising awareness as well as creating frameworks to advance the energy transition agenda.

61. The PSC Chair thanked Mr. Gonul for his presentation, highlighting the importance of regional initiatives and IRENA's unique role in working within regions, which sets it apart from other international organisations. She recalled previous regional initiatives with specific action plans and ministerial meetings. The Chair expressed appreciation for the work being done in this area and

then opened the floor for comments or questions. She also inquired about the Global Coalition of Energy Planning (GCEP), whether it is open to the participation of all Members or whether it is limited to those Members involved in the Long-Term Energy Scenarios (LTES) initiative.

62. Mr Roland Roesch, Director - IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre explained that the Global Coalition of Energy Planning (GCEP) initiative was established under the G20 presidency of Brazil to reduce financing costs for the energy transition in least developed countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and emerging markets. He stated that IRENA, which has been working on long-term energy scenario planning since 2018, was selected by the G20 to build this initiative and emphasised that the initiative is open to all IRENA Members.
63. He further added that currently, discussions are ongoing with Brazil on the development of the initiative, and a high-level conference is scheduled on 3 and 4 June in Rio de Janeiro, where further details will be presented. However, he clarified that there are no specific budgetary commitments at this stage.
64. H.E. Dr. Nawal Al-Hosany, thanked the Chair and the directors for their interventions. She reiterated requests made for information on how many initiatives the Agency is currently serving as Secretariat, including administrative and staff costs associated with these roles. She conveyed that such information, within international organisations, are usually provided to assess the value of such initiatives.
65. She stated that initiatives aim to avoid duplication of efforts. In this context, she requested information on who are the partners in Agency's initiatives, the sources and scale of funding, including the impact of these partnerships and the changes these make to the Agency's main pragmatic objectives of such tripling renewables, expanding energy access and improving energy efficiency. She recalled that this request had been raised in previous meetings. She further underscored the need for the Progress Report of the Director-General on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget to go beyond outcomes and place greater focus on results and requested an update on the development of the results-based framework.
66. Referring to the development of the Work Programme for 2026-2027, she noted that there had been limited information on artificial intelligence (AI) and noted that while the reference to AI in the context of diplomatic discussions was welcomed, she expressed concern that the Agency may not be keeping up with the latest tools available to improve and enhance tracking.

67. Additionally, she proposed revisiting the issue of the Secretariat’s accountability to the Council, including the issues that should be brought to its attention. Referring to the office set up by UNOPS, H.E Dr Al Hosany questioned how such critical information could come to the attention of the Membership through external sources. She underscored the urgent need to address the issue of accountability between the Secretariat and the Membership.
68. **Canada – Mr Jean-Philippe Bernier**, extended his gratitude to the Secretariat for their presentations. Referring to discussions during the IRENA Assembly in January 2025, he recalled that both Brazil and the Secretariat had indicated that draft terms of reference of the Global Coalition of Energy Planning (GCEP) would be circulated. However, he noted that, no documents had been received and requested clarification on the expected timeline for sharing these drafts, noting the importance of allowing for sufficient time for review ahead of the summit in June 2025. He also inquired about the format of the new forum, whether it would be held in person or virtually, as this would inform expectations for participation and engagement.
69. In addition, he requested information on IRENA’s role with South Africa in the context of its G20 Presidency. Mr Bernier referred to South Africa’s previously expressed interest in integrating the G7 coalition into its G20 Presidency and asked where IRENA sees the G7 in supporting South Africa’s key priority areas for the G20.
70. Mr Gurbuz Gonul, Director, Country Engagement and Partnerships Division, provided clarifications on the Agency’s various partnership initiatives. He explained that these initiatives operate at different levels, regional, technology-specific, and thematic. He acknowledged that while progress on these initiatives is captured in IRENA’s progress and annual reports, the information may be distributed across different sections rather than consolidated under a single heading, that some initiatives fall under regional engagement, while others are categorised under the broader partnership framework.
71. Mr. Gonul stated that the Secretariat is exploring how to present a more comprehensive demonstrative overview of these activities and their impacts within future reports. He stated that a results-based framework would support this effort, enhancing transparency and enabling the

Secretariat to report back to the membership more clearly on the outcomes and impacts of various partnership initiatives.

72. Regarding AI, he acknowledged its relevance within IRENA and highlighted ongoing efforts to explore its potential across various activities and frameworks, both in knowledge development and the implementation of partnership initiatives. He mentioned that AI and digitalisation elements are currently being integrated into the APRECA initiative, specifically in the areas of grid expansion, modernisation, and interconnectivity. He explained that the aim is to use AI to support Members in achieving APRECA's objectives, particularly in enhancing grid expansion and flexibility.
73. Mr. Roland Roesch, Director, IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre informed the PSC Chair that the G20 initiative currently under discussion originated during Brazil's G20 Presidency last year. He stated that the initiative received broad support from G20 countries and is now being led by Brazil. He explained that IRENA was requested to provide support in the role of Secretariat, primarily by preparing key documentation and other organisational aspects.
74. He noted that an event related to the initiative took place during the recent IRENA Assembly and informed the participants that summary notes from that session would be circulated to the members. He further stated that IRENA has prepared, led by Brazil, draft terms of reference, a proposed governance structure, and supporting documents, which are intended to inform discussions at the upcoming high-level meeting.
75. Mr. Roesch mentioned that this high-level meeting is scheduled to take place in Rio de Janeiro on 3 and 4 June 2025, and that formal invitations will be issued soon. He specified that the meeting would provide an opportunity to finalise decisions regarding the governance framework, leadership rotation, meeting modalities, whether in-person or virtual, and proceedings. He emphasised, however, that the decision to share these preparatory documents lies with Brazil's leadership, as they are currently leading the initiative. Therefore, he clarified, the IRENA Secretariat is not in a position to distribute the documents independently.
76. Mr. Roesch stated that discussions are ongoing between the Brazilian and South African G20 Presidencies. He noted that there is an intention to involve the initiative in the energy transition

working group meeting and ministerial level under South Africa's upcoming G20 Presidency. While final arrangements have yet to be confirmed, he informed that a contribution from the current initiative to South Africa's G20 agenda is expected, though still under discussion.

77. He provided an update on the Agency's work at the Innovation and Technology Center, focusing on the use of digitalisation, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence (AI) to support the integration of smart technologies and better use of renewable energy technologies. He outlined three levels of focus, which included expanding knowledge and providing briefings on the role of new technologies in renewable energy integration, addressing the higher energy demand driven by AI, and utilising AI to enhance IRENA's response capabilities to the requirements made by the Membership.
78. He highlighted that following the adoption of the global target to triple renewable energy capacity, the Secretariat has experienced significantly increased demands and shorter response timelines from the membership. He noted that this developing setting requires the strategic use of emerging tools, including those related to artificial intelligence, to enhance the Agency's capacity to support Member States in advancing the energy transition.
79. H.E. Dr. Nawal Al-Hosany sought clarification on the relationship between IRENA and Brazil, noting that while IRENA appears to be doing the work and possibly serving as the Secretariat, it is Brazil that seems to be providing the information. She requested clarity IRENA's role in the initiative, Brazil's role, the involvement of the broader Membership, and the source of funding - particularly given that Brazil is, to their understanding, not currently a member of the Agency. H.E. Dr Al Hosany further asked whether Brazil is contributing financially to the initiative.
80. Mr. Roland Roesch clarified that considering the initiative's early stages IRENA is supporting the initiative through limited inputs and documentation utilising the knowledge from the LTES network. He added that the initiative is operating under Brazil's leadership, and that financial resources are currently minimal and will continue at that level until the event in June 2025.
81. Mr Antonio Bernardini reiterated on the role of international organisations, such as IRENA, in supporting G20 or G7 Presidencies. He explained that organisations are often sought after for their expertise, which may not always be fully present within the government holding the G20 and

- G7 Presidencies. While the membership of these international organisations may not align with the more exclusive groups of countries in the G20 or G7, being asked to provide inputs is a significant recognition of an organisation's value.
82. Mr Bernardini emphasised that IRENA's role as Secretariat reflects this acknowledgment, showcasing its ability to contribute meaningfully at the international level. While acknowledging concerns around limited resources, he stressed that IRENA's involvement in such high-level deliberations is a positive sign and a testament to its credibility. He expressed hope that more such requests for IRENA's involvement would emerge from future summits.
83. H.E. Dr. Al-Hosany clarified that the UAE is not uncertain about the initiative itself but seeks to understand how resources are being allocated. She noted that the meeting began with a budget presentation indicating limited resources and the need for careful decision-making.
84. Given the constraints of time and resources, she expressed the importance of understanding the process of resource management and reflected on UAE's experience as the COP28 Presidency, where clear budget requirements were provided when requesting IRENA's support for specific initiatives, emphasising that the concern was about the rather practical aspects of resource allocation rather than the rationale behind the initiative.
85. The PSC Chair thanked the directors for their presentations and acknowledged the valuable insights shared during the meeting. The PSC Chair reiterated the importance of creating a clear plan of work for each initiative where IRENA serves as a Secretariat addressing Members requests on transparency detail on funding sources, expected outcomes, and measurable impact, in line clarity and accountability.
86. The PSC Chair noted that IRENA's participation in G7 and G20 initiatives is evidence to its credibility and the trust placed in it by the international community. However, she reiterated Members' comments on the need to understand how the Agency is deploying its limited resources across these initiatives to ensure effective support to IRENA. She also stressed the growing importance of artificial intelligence (AI) and related technologies such as data centers. and encouraged IRENA to provide more detailed updates on its AI-related work at the next PSC meeting.
87. The Chair invited Members to share their inputs on the implementation of the 2024–2025 Work Programme and Budget, as well as preliminary considerations for the 2026–2027 cycle, starting with Italy's proposal.

88. Italy - Mr Stefano Raimondi thanked and expressed appreciation to the Secretariat for the presentation and ongoing development of the Work Programme. He recognised the positive growth in renewables as an important element for building optimism and highlighting the impact of initiatives managed by IRENA.
89. He drawn attention to energy efficiency, stating that while many countries showed high performance in renewables deployment, achieving the objectives of the UAE Consensus, namely tripling renewables and doubling energy efficiency by 2030, would require full emphasis on efficiency; he stressed that it must be improved and integrated within the programme alongside renewable energy capacity growth.
90. He outlined two priority areas for IRENA's continued efforts: increasing the share of renewables and improving efficiency, observing that the latter appears to lag behind. He also stated that efficiency is applicable across all sectors, not only renewables. As such, it can be applied across all sectors, including industry, residential buildings, and transport.
91. Similarly, he noted that the technology needed to achieve emissions reductions through efficiency already exists and can be deployed at various levels, from simple solutions to advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence.
92. Building on this point, he highlighted the lack of professional staff capable of managing and driving energy transition. He acknowledged IRENA's efforts but stressed the need to consolidate training and capacity-building across other countries. Behind efficiency, he said, lies the need for skills and trained professionals, from workers to engineers, who can contribute to emissions reductions.
93. He proposed strengthening and consolidating existing initiatives to include the creation of new professionals capable of managing energy and just transitions. He also acknowledged proposals by participants and reiterated support for training programmes that serve as a start-up model for countries to develop their own programmes.

94. He underscored the importance of transparency, echoing points raised by other Members. He emphasised transparency is critical for increasing the supply chain and for enabling national focal

points to communicate the value of support, investment, and collaboration with IRENA to their respective capitals.

95. He also emphasised that enhancing transparency and access to results can also help attract private sector engagement. He noted that with better feedback, action plans, and visible results, countries could more effectively involve private sector actors, which is key to improving internal supply chains. He further underlined the need to better connect IRENA's work with the private sector, including small, medium, and large enterprises. stating that some still remain distant from these processes.
96. He further underlined the importance of transparency, referencing African initiatives, such as APRA. He noted that while Africa holds potential for renewable energy production, actual progress remains limited. He suggested that greater transparency in governance and financial mechanisms would help coordinate efforts, reduce overlap, and foster more effective collaboration between countries and stakeholders and would be crucial for achieving the targets outlined in the Paris Agreement.
97. H.E Dr. Nawal Al-Hosany raised a concern regarding the election of the Council membership for 2025-2026, noting that the silence procedure had been broken. She requested clarity about the potential failure to elect a new Council by May 2025, and asked if the Secretariat had a plan in place to continue with the work program should the election not take place as scheduled. H. E Dr. Al-Hosany further inquired if the PSC could assist in temporarily facilitating the Agency's work during this period of uncertainty.
98. Mr Bernardini acknowledged the concern and confirmed that preparations for the Council meeting are ongoing, the Secretariat remains committed to continuing its work, supporting the resolution of the election of the Council membership and while the arrangements for the meeting of the Council are ongoing.
99. The PSC Chair closed the meeting by thanking all participants for their time, cooperation, and valuable contributions. She expressed hope for a successful Council meeting in May and confirmed that she would incorporate today's suggestions in her report to the Council. She also committed to working with the Secretariat to ensure members receive the necessary information for a productive exchange during the next PSC meeting, scheduled for 21 May 2025.