

Twenty-ninth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 11-12 September 2025

REPORT

OF THE TWENTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

OF THE INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY

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**Report of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council
of the International Renewable Energy Agency**

1. The twenty-ninth meeting of the Council of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) was held in Abu Dhabi on 11-12 September 2025, in hybrid format. The meeting was attended by 19 Council members: Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Azerbaijan, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, Solomon Islands, Togo, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Zimbabwe, as well as 10 Council alternates: Canada, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, India, Japan, Mauritius, Republic of Korea, Senegal, and Türkiye. Also in attendance were delegations of 91 other IRENA Members and 5 States in Accession and other United Nations Member States.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

2. The Chair of the twenty-eighth meeting of the Council of IRENA, Zimbabwe, represented by Dr Gloria Sibusisiwe Magombo, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Energy and Power Development, opened the meeting. On behalf of the Government of Zimbabwe, she reiterated immense honour and gratitude for the unwavering support and the trust placed by the Membership during Zimbabwe's Chairmanship of the Council meetings in 2024. She further expressed a profound sense of responsibility in guiding the work and discussions of the Council in relation to the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024 to 2025, as well as in addressing important administrative and institutional issues.

3. Dr Magombo commended the Bureau of the fifteenth IRENA Assembly – Slovenia, Costa Rica, Namibia, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates – who through continuous engagement with Members, managed to resolve the leadership impasse and eventually set a date for the twenty-ninth Council meeting. She also commended the Secretariat and the IRENA Membership for continued work towards the energy transition, leading to an additional 585 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy installed capacity in 2024.

4. Dr Magombo underlined that climate change remains an emergency which needs urgent action from all. She acknowledged the continued work by IRENA on the assessments on decentralised renewable energy deployment for agriculture and health, which will further inform Zimbabwe's Rural Industrialisation Strategy and help attract investment for rural electrification, focusing on productive use of energy and improved healthcare. She informed that, with support from development partners, Zimbabwe has already commenced work on viability gap funding for renewable energy mini-grids and green smart villages. She expressed gratitude for the continued work through the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), where technical assistance to Zimbabwe in the areas of feasibility of concentrated solar power (CSP), study of power system flexibility, and capacity building in wind assessments have already commenced. She highlighted that this clearly exhibits IRENA's important role in the energy transition trajectory.

5. Dr Magombo expressed anticipation for the second Investment Forum in Sierra Leone in October 2025, which presents another platform to unlock project financing that has been received with positivity, with around eight private sector projects already being submitted on the ETAF

Platform through the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency (ZIDA), for potential funding. She stated that these are key to changing the financing architecture towards increasing investments to the Global South, particularly Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), where around 600 million people still live without access to modern energy. She further acknowledged the Mission 300 initiative by the World Bank and African Development Bank, which aims to halve the population without access to electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. She informed that Zimbabwe is among the second cohort of countries that are expecting the National Energy Compact to be endorsed shortly.

6. Dr Magombo provided a detailed overview of Zimbabwe's National Energy Compact, and stated that it provides a roadmap for a coordinated and sustainable energy future, built on five pillars: expanding generation and modernising transmission and distribution infrastructure; leveraging benefits of increased regional integration; embracing distributed renewable energy and clean cooking solutions for affordable last mile access; incentivising private sector participation to unlock additional resources; ensuring financially viable utilities that provide reliable and affordable services. She further outlined the aim to mobilise over USD 9 billion in investments across generation, transmission, distribution, off-grid distributed systems including battery energy systems and clean cooking solutions, with more than USD 4.42 billion expected from private sector investments.

7. Dr Magombo highlighted that the Government of Zimbabwe recognises the need to shift to sustainable and clean energy solutions, and has made provisions to ensure that new capacity is prioritised based on maximising the country's energy resource endowment. In this regard, the government is currently looking at increasing the contribution of coal and gas in the energy mix through clean coal development and natural gas utilisation, thereby increasing base load capacity and improving system stability while reducing environmental impact, to enable a balance of energy reliability with climate responsibility. She conveyed Zimbabwe's willingness to collaborate with countries that are conducting research on reducing the costs of carbon capture and sequestration, which is key to reducing the impact of fossil fuels as countries move towards net zero emissions.

8. Dr Magombo noted that while hydropower remains a key contributor to Zimbabwe's energy supply, challenges arising from climate change and persistent droughts have reduced water availability and impacted generation capacity. Despite this, Zimbabwe will continue to develop hydropower along the Zambezi basin through conjunctive use, while climate proofing the energy supply systems by integrating hydropower with other technologies, including scaling up solar deployment – both floating solar on reservoirs and land-based installations – to complement existing generation infrastructure. Inter-basin water transfer options are also being considered at a regional level.

9. Dr Magombo informed that the government is undertaking energy sector reforms in collaboration with development partners, which include a wind resource assessment aimed at ascertaining the wind resource to boost the energy mix and ultimately reducing dependence on one renewable energy resource. She highlighted that Zimbabwe's approach to the energy transition is pragmatic, inclusive, and forward-looking. By diversifying the energy mix, improving existing technologies, and expanding renewable solutions, Zimbabwe is positioning itself to meet growing demand while promoting sustainable development and resilience to climate change, with the National Integrated Energy Resource Plan envisaging the deployment of 2.2 GW of solar PV and up to 3.9 GW with batteries by 2045.

10. Dr Magombo highlighted that Zimbabwe is endowed with critical energy minerals. She stated that, riding on the demand for critical energy solutions and the need to move up the energy value chain, Zimbabwe welcomes partners to explore this industry by ensuring critical minerals value

addition and beneficiation, including localisation of production for battery storage systems and renewable energy technologies.

11. Dr Magombo underlined that the shift to sustainable energy is not just about energy, but also about resilience, competitiveness, and prosperity. She informed that Zimbabwe is open for partnerships with private sector investors, researchers, and governments to co-develop innovative solutions that are both scalable and transformative. With policy reforms in place, including the move from unsolicited bidding to competitive procurement for renewable energy and enhanced incentives including reduced regulatory costs, the country's energy sector has a bright future, which is already unfolding. She called on Members to seize this moment together, and build an energy sector that is clean, affordable, and inclusive – not only for Zimbabwe, but for Africa and the world.

12. Dr Magombo reiterated Zimbabwe's commitment to host the Southern African Renewables Investment Forum, and extended an invitation to the 2026 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Sustainable Energy Week in Victoria Falls, hosted by the Government of Zimbabwe in partnership with the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE), from 23 to 27 February 2026. She called upon all Members to support the event as speakers, partners, and exhibitors, and assist in bringing investment to the SADC region.

13. Dr Magombo expressed thanks to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as Host Country, represented by H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany, Permanent Representative of the UAE to IRENA. She underlined that the UAE Government's unwavering support and hospitality towards IRENA's Governing Body meetings will forever be appreciated, and expressed her gratitude to the entire leadership of the Host Country.

14. Dr Magombo extended sincere gratitude to Bangladesh, as Vice-Chair, and Antigua and Barbuda, as Rapporteur, of the twenty-eighth meeting of the Council. She assured the incoming Chair and Vice-Chair of the twenty-ninth Council meeting of their support. She further expressed appreciation to the IRENA Director-General, Deputy Director-General and the Secretariat for the organisation and support to the Council meetings.

Agenda Item 2: Organisation of work

a. Election of officials

15. Dr Magombo recalled that, at its twenty-eighth meeting in October 2024, the Council was informed that in line with geographic representation and rotation, 2025 Council members from the Latin America and the Caribbean Group would be eligible for Chairmanship of the twenty-ninth Council, and 2025 Council members from the Europe and Others Group would be eligible for Vice-Chairmanship of the twenty-ninth Council. She informed that accordingly, Costa Rica and Cyprus had been designated Chair and Vice-Chair of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council.

16. The Council elected by acclamation Costa Rica, represented by H.E. Mr Francisco Chacón Hernández, Permanent Representative to IRENA and Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, as Chair, and Cyprus, represented by Mr Marios Panayides, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry, as Vice-Chair of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council.

17. As proposed by the Chair, Uganda was appointed as Rapporteur of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council.

18. H.E. Mr Francisco Chacón Hernández in his opening remarks expressed thanks to Zimbabwe, represented by Dr Gloria Magombo, for the excellent leadership and achievements as Chair of the twenty-eighth Council meeting, and recognised the work of Zimbabwe as a nation, and as a champion of renewable energy. He also expressed his sincerest gratitude to the United Arab Emirates, as Host Country, for its generous and steadfast support to IRENA and for its exceptional hospitality in welcoming all delegates to Abu Dhabi.

19. H.E. Mr Francisco Chacón Hernández acknowledged Zimbabwe and Bangladesh, as Chair and Vice-Chair of the twenty-eighth meeting of the Council, for their dedicated stewardship of the Council. He expressed that Costa Rica is honoured to hold the Chairmanship of the twenty-ninth Council meeting and looks forward to working closely with Cyprus, as Vice-Chair, as well as Council members, alternates, and the IRENA Membership.

20. H.E. Mr Francisco Chacón Hernández highlighted that Members are gathering at a pivotal moment in the global energy transition – one that requires bold ambition, shared responsibilities, and unwavering commitment to deliver on the promise of a cleaner and more resilient future. He stated that Costa Rica, through its national decarbonisation plan, has demonstrated for decades that an energy system almost entirely powered by renewables is possible, and can go hand in hand with social and economic progress, resilience, and prosperity – and that the government continues to build on this path.

21. H.E. Mr Francisco Chacón Hernández acknowledged COP30 in Belém, Brazil, as a historic opportunity for Latin America and the Caribbean. He stated that, with the amazon as its backdrop, COP30 will highlight both the vulnerabilities faced and the solutions that can be offered on renewables, adaptation, and opportunities for future generations. He noted great achievements and tangible successes across various geographies, including the offshore Aeolic Park at Viana do Castelo in Portugal which is one of the biggest in Europe, the Noor Ouarzazate solar complex in Morocco, the Lake Turkana wind power project in Kenya, the Girasol Solar Park in the Dominican Republic, the Pailas I and Pailas II geothermal complex in Costa Rica, the Pavagada Solar Park in India, the Berlin Geothermal Plant in El Salvador, the SunZia Aeolic Park in the United States of America, the 2024 Solar Park Plants in Antigua and Barbuda, the geothermal plants in Roseau Valley in the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Al Dhafra Solar Park in the UAE, and the Sudair Solar Park in Saudi Arabia. He further acknowledged impressive renewable energy developments in China and across Europe, and noted that Members have collectively built on renewable energy efforts for the future and much more remains to be done.

22. H.E. Mr Francisco Chacón Hernández underlined Costa Rica's commitment to fostering dialogue and working with all Members to celebrate renewable deployment, ensuring equity and aligning efforts to improve lives and households and leave no one behind. He expressed hope for a successful Council meeting.

23. The Director-General in his opening remarks welcomed all participants to the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, and highlighted that over 426 delegates registered to attend the Council meeting both in-person and online, representing 93 Members. He noted that this is a testament to IRENA's inclusive process and the timeless of its mission.

24. The Director-General expressed sincere gratitude to Zimbabwe and Bangladesh, as Chair and Vice-Chair of the twenty-eighth Council, for their leadership and work. He warmly welcomed and congratulated Costa Rica and Cyprus for taking up the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair respectively, and stated that he looks forward to working closely with them in the coming days.

25. The Director-General emphasised that the shift to a global renewable-based energy system is an undertaking of profound ethical and societal significance with geopolitical dimensions. He noted that while priorities and circumstances are shifting, the challenges remain the same. In this context, he stated that the current landscape is defined by the necessity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and scale up infrastructure investments, while navigating national development and energy security ambitions – and that these efforts are interdependent and must be pushed through co-ordinated action and peer-to-peer co-operation.

26. The Director-General recalled that IRENA’s work is designed to address these multifaceted challenges, providing analysis, insight, and policy recommendations to ensure that the global shift to renewable energy is both effective and equitable. He informed that IRENA’s analysis reveals that 91% of newly commissioned renewable power projects in 2024 delivered power at a lower cost than the cheapest newly-constructed fossil fuel alternatives, underlining remarkable advances in cost competitiveness. He further informed that this has culminated in estimated global savings of USD 467 billion in avoided fossil fuel costs, firmly establishing the strategic value of renewables in bolstering energy security and economic stability. He noted that while a small number of technologies show minor cost upticks, onshore wind and solar PV remain the most competitive source of new power generation, and that the cost of battery storage systems has also undergone a monumental decline, plummeting by 93% since 2010. He highlighted that this data further underscores that investing in renewables is not merely an environmental imperative but also the most financially sensible and profitable course of action.

27. The Director-General underscored that despite significant progress in the global energy transition, several challenges continue to impede a uniform and swift advancement, with a notable issue being the persistent and pronounced regional disparity in deployment – 84% of all capacity additions in 2024 were concentrated in China, the United States of America, and the European Union. He stated that this creates a stark imbalance that threatens the principle of an equitable energy transition and undermines the collective speed required to meet global climate goals in a timely manner.

28. Noting that numerous developing countries must overcome the multifaceted “triple penalty”, characterised by the absence of supportive policies, high cost of capital, and inadequacies in grid infrastructure, the Director-General stated that these hurdles lock these countries into reliance on older, more volatile energy systems, thereby exacerbating the global energy gap. He further stated that addressing these systemic barriers is essential to ensuring a truly inclusive and resilient global energy future, with the need to take a hard look at why the world is not moving faster, and why more countries are not part of the renewables revolution.

29. The Director-General emphasised that the world does not have the luxury of time to develop a clean energy system in the way the fossil fuel-based system evolved over the past 150 years. He stated that to ensure a successful global energy transition, there must be a simultaneous evolution of policy and regulatory frameworks that must be adapted to account for the current dynamics, and strategically guide investment in grid infrastructure and transmission routes, both on land and at sea. New locations for energy production, evolving trade patterns, and changing centres of demand must also be considered. He further stated that this effort must be complemented by a strategic reorientation of institutional capacity, ensuring that skills and capabilities are precisely aligned with the future energy system.

30. Highlighting innovation as another strategic imperative for the energy transition, the Director-General pointed out that IRENA’s Innovation Week is at the forefront of convening a diverse group of stakeholders to share cutting-edge solutions and accelerate digital and technological advancements. He informed that the 2025 edition addressed the critical topic of renewables and

digitalization for a sustainable energy future, and explored new business and financial models, adaptive regulation and social innovations.

31. The Director-General highlighted that another key pillar of IRENA's work is the strategic guidance and technical expertise provided to help Members transform their climate pledges into actionable energy plans – over the past few years, IRENA has been actively engaging with over 100 countries to support their climate action efforts. He informed that approximately 30 countries have submitted the third generation of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0), which includes updated energy sector targets. He further informed that IRENA is currently supporting approximately 30 additional countries with their NDC 3.0 submissions, which are anticipated before COP30 in Belém. He highlighted that the generous support of the UAE and Denmark, and the partnership with the NDC Partnership has enabled this assistance to be comprehensive, spanning from providing data and statistics and conducting resource assessments, to performing technology and mitigation analysis.

32. Noting that the regional dimension of IRENA's work continues to expand based on Member needs and requests, the Director-General informed that, in partnership with Azerbaijan, IRENA launched the Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Central Asia (APRECA), which is structured around four strategic pillars – strengthening energy infrastructure; enabling local value creation and green industrialization; enhancing policy regulatory frameworks; and mobilising private sector investment – and includes Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan as members. He further informed that APRECA is now moving into its crucial fundraising and implementation phase, with a pledging event planned for October 2025 in Kazakhstan, and national consultation workshops to be held in all four member countries over the coming months to identify priority actions for IRENA and its partners to engage in, at both the national and regional levels.

33. The Director-General stated that IRENA's project facilitation platforms – the Climate Investment Platform (CIP) and the Energy Transition Accelerator Financing Platform (ETAF) – continue to yield positive outcomes, with three of the 25 projects featured at the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA) Investment Forum resulting in financial closure, and another in advanced discussions. Furthermore, 27 new project applications have been received for the upcoming APRA Investment Forum in Sierra Leone. He informed that IRENA is advancing work in Central Asia under the APRECA initiative, as well as in Latin America, Southeast Asia and SIDS, and acts as the secretariat for both the APRA and APRECA regional initiatives.

34. The Director-General informed that IRENA is actively promoting sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) as a key decarbonization pathway and developing a dedicated financing window under ETAF to help SAF projects secure financial resources. He stated that this window will also provide support, including de-risking services and targeted technical assistance, and that IRENA has also intensified its focus on carbon markets and trading as a critical tool for financing the energy transition by forging strategic partnerships and expanding collaborations.

35. The Director-General underlined that the world stands at a pivotal moment, with a moral obligation to ensure an inclusive, equitable and prosperous climate-safe world for all, leaving no one behind. He emphasised that we do possess the tools and resources to deliver on this promise, and must critically assess our collective readiness to meet this challenge. He further emphasised that now, more than ever, success requires immediate action, unwavering political resolve and unified action from all. In this context, he expressed his profound hope that the discussions at the Council will generate the strategic insight and innovative ideas needed to make this year a definitive turning point in the global energy transition, powered by IRENA.

36. Mr Marios Panayides, in his opening remarks, thanked Council members for entrusting Cyprus with the role of Vice-Chair of the twenty-ninth Council meeting and expressed honour to contribute to the important work of IRENA. Mr Panayides stated that Cyprus, despite being a small island member state of the European Union, is deeply committed to IRENA's mission and has actively participated in initiatives ranging from the Long-Term Energy Scenarios (LTES) Network and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Lighthouses Initiative to the Collaborative Frameworks on Green Hydrogen and the Geopolitics of Energy Transformation.

37. Mr Panayides highlighted that for Cyprus, the energy transition is not only an environmental necessity, but also a path to security, resilience, and prosperity. He underlined that international co-operation is the only way to ensure access to clean and sustainable energy, and that IRENA remains central to this effort.

38. Mr Panayides expressed that as Vice-Chair, Cyprus will work constructively with the Chair, the Secretariat and all Members to ensure inclusive and forward-looking deliberations, and strengthen IRENA's role at the heart of the global energy transition.

b. Adoption of the agenda

39. The Chair introduced the Provisional Agenda (C/29/L.1) and outlined two issues for consideration by the Council. The Chair informed the Council that Austria had stated its intention to raise an issue under 'Any other Business', on the establishment of an Open-ended Group to review and adapt IRENA's Rules of Procedure.

40. The Chair also informed the Council that, in light of the number of items scheduled to be discussed during the afternoon session on 12 September 2025, the Chair and Vice-Chair had requested the Secretariat to make arrangements for the resumption of the Council meeting at 09:00 hrs Gulf Standard Time (GST), instead of 10:00 hrs GST.

41. A delegation welcomed Members to Abu Dhabi and congratulated Costa Rica, Cyprus, and Uganda for their respective appointments as Chair, Vice-Chair, and Rapporteur of the twenty-ninth Council meeting. The delegation also thanked Zimbabwe and Bangladesh for their efforts as Chair and Vice-Chair of the twenty-eighth Council meeting. The delegation suggested that the item on General Member Statements be considered for removal from future meetings of the Council, and expressed the view that such statements are best placed at the Assembly, which is the forum for broad policy direction. The delegation further expressed its view that the Council should remain focused on its core mandate, namely the Agency's Work Programme, financial matters and institutional issues, and that keeping this focus will strengthen the efficiency and impact of the Council's discussions.

42. The Council considered and adopted the Agenda (C/29/1).

43. The Council agreed with the proposal by a Council member to remove the standing item on 'General Member Statements' from future meetings of the Council, noting that such statements are already included in the agenda of the Assembly.

Agenda Item 3: Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025 (C/29/2)

44. The Director-General reflected on the Progress Report, drawing attention to the significant acceleration in renewable energy deployments in 2023, highlighting that, however, the current pace is insufficient to meet the ambitious goal of tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030. He added that without accelerated action, standard renewable capacity will fall short of the required 11.2 terawatts by 2030, leaving a gap of 3.8 terawatts, which is 34% below target. He then stressed that there is not much time to act, but the drivers for an accelerated energy transition are there.

45. The Director-General then brought up some key highlights demonstrating the scope of IRENA's recent efforts and offering a concise overview of the current global energy transition. He stated that the world is experiencing unprecedented growth in renewable energy. IRENA's data shows that a record-breaking 582 GW of new capacity were added in 2024, bringing the global total to approximately 4,443 GW. He pointed out that this surge, overwhelmingly driven by solar and wind power, demonstrates that renewables are now the dominant force in new power generation. As a result, he stressed, the overall share of renewable energy in total installed power capacity reached 46.2%. The Director-General underlined that for a remarkable 91% of all new renewable power projects commissioned last year, the cost of electricity was lower than the cheapest newly-built fossil fuel alternative. He explained that this has resulted in a staggering USD 467 billion in avoided fossil fuel costs globally, reinforcing the strategic value of renewables in enhancing energy security and economic stability. However, he stressed, significant regional disparities in deployment persist year after year. For example, China, the United States of America, and the European Union collectively accounted for 84% of all new capacity in 2024, leaving an evident disparity that threatens to undermine the equitable and rapid energy transition. The Director-General explained that a central reason for the regionally disproportionate deployment is the equally disproportionate investment in renewables. Despite record investments in 2023, renewable capacity funding remains far below the USD 1.5 trillion needed every year between now and 2030 to stay on track towards our global objective to triple installed renewable capacity by 2030, as mandated under the historic UAE Consensus. He emphasised that the widening financial deficit is driven in part by regional disparities and investment volatility, with regions such as Africa experiencing a nearly 50% decline in international project financing between 2022 and 2023. In particular, Sub-Saharan Africa receives 40 times less per capita investment than the global average.

46. He relayed that IRENA's various workstreams examine these disparities and focus on exploring solutions based on national, regional and global requirements and circumstances. He pointed out that a recent example is the establishment of the Global Coalition on Energy Planning (GCEP) in which IRENA acts as the Secretariat. The core value of GCEP is to connect energy planning with investment mobilisation strategically. He added that this is achieved by creating enabling environments through transparent planning and co-ordinated partnerships, fostering investment-ready plans via knowledge exchange and credible project pipelines, and building robust governance with national ownership and sustained implementation mechanisms.

47. Turning to the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), he highlighted that it is expanding rapidly, now counting 10 member countries with the inclusion of Uganda in June 2025. He stated that in addition to the seven national priority action plans already developed, Djibouti's plan is being finalised, and consultations in Mozambique will be held the week thereafter. Uganda will also follow. The Director-General underscored that through IRENA's role as Secretariat to APRA, and thanks to the voluntary contribution of partner countries such as Denmark and Japan, the initiative has been working to support project facilitation activities in Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. He added that together with the Government of Sierra Leone, IRENA will convene the 2nd APRA Investment Forum on 22-23 October 2025 in

Freetown. Technical Assistance based on national priorities highlighted in national action plans is also ongoing, focusing on Power Sector Development, Nexus and Access. He highlighted that overall, APRA's growing footprint underscores its role as a catalyst for renewable energy project facilitation and skills development to enhance energy access, enable green industrialisation and foster economic and societal resilience across Africa. With respect to IRENA's project facilitation platforms – the Climate Investment Platform (CIP) and Energy Transition Accelerator Financing Platform (ETAF) – he relayed that they continue to show positive results: three of the 25 projects featured at the inaugural APRA Investment Forum in Nairobi, Kenya last year have achieved financial closure. He added that IRENA received 27 new project applications for the upcoming Investment Forum in Sierra Leone, and the Agency is working diligently with project developers to bring them to the required level to be featured at the Forum.

48. The Director-General then mentioned that in partnership with Azerbaijan, IRENA has launched the Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Central Asia (APRECA). This initiative, launched at COP29, focuses on four strategic pillars: strengthening infrastructure; enabling green industrialisation; enhancing policy frameworks; and mobilising private investment. He was pleased to announce that Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan have already joined. APRECA is now entering its fundraising and implementation phase, with a pledging event scheduled for October 2025 in Kazakhstan, and national workshops to identify priority actions.

49. Turning to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), he stressed that in the past few years, IRENA has engaged with 102 countries on climate action and has seen roughly 30 countries submit their third-generation NDCs (NDC 3.0), with updated energy sector targets. He continued that IRENA is currently supporting about 30 additional countries with their NDC 3.0 submissions, expected before COP30, and with support from the UAE and Denmark, and in partnership with the NDC Partnership, IRENA's assistance includes providing data, analysis, and technical recommendations on energy targets and their implementation.

50. He added that in June, IRENA held the 2025 edition of IRENA's Innovation Week – a biennial flagship event – convening a diverse group of stakeholders to share cutting-edge solutions and accelerate digital and technological advancements. He explained that the meeting addressed the critical topic of Renewables and Digitalisation for a Sustainable Energy Future and explored new business and financial models, adaptive regulation, and social innovations.

51. He then highlighted that IRENA has significantly increased the visibility of its flagship reports, including through a strategic partnership with the United Nations on joint communications and stakeholder outreach activities across multiple platforms. Bringing an example, he said that since its publication in March, IRENA's *Renewable Capacity Statistics 2025* Report has been downloaded 20,000 times. Impressively, within the first month, IRENA data was mentioned in 1,500 media articles in 22 languages across 88 countries. He added that in the two weeks following the joint launch of the UN Secretary-General's climate speech and technical report 'Seizing the Moment of Opportunity' in July, which prominently featured and referenced IRENA data, IRENA's *Renewable Power Generation Costs* report was downloaded over 8,000 times, marking a 40% increase compared to the same period last year. In addition, he noted that the *Renewable Power Generation Costs* report has been mentioned in over 1,300 media articles in 80 countries in just one month alone – a 500% increase in media coverage compared to last year.

52. The Director-General emphasised that the world's collective strength is its most significant strategic asset. IRENA's progress is a testament to the power of unity and a shared purpose. With a clear vision and unwavering commitment, IRENA will ensure that the collective efforts not only

meet immediate goals but also strategically pave the way for a more resilient, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable energy future for all.

53. Mr Gurbuz Gonul, Director, Country Engagement and Partnerships (CEP), provided an update on IRENA's support to national energy transitions, explaining that IRENA is working with over 30 countries to update the energy components of their NDCs, aligned with the global tripling of renewables goal. He explained that thanks to the support of the UAE and Denmark, IRENA has delivered technical recommendations in 12 countries, primarily informed by the Agency's energy transition assessments, built capacities on energy data and resource assessments in eight countries and conducted technology and infrastructure analysis on mitigation options planning, grid flexibility and bioenergy in another. He continued that in Southeast Europe, IRENA has helped countries align and design ambitious national energy and climate plans. IRENA is piloting country strategies in three countries to overcome barriers to tripling renewables, such as infrastructure, supply chains and investment, creating clear action plans to reach national renewable goals.

54. Turning to the work on advancing industry alliances for tripling decarbonisation through the Utilities for Net Zero Alliance (UNEZA), he stated that IRENA is working with more than 70 Members, tackling challenges such as supply chains, investments and skills. He mentioned a recent IRENA report that shows how common standards have accelerated progress, from scaling access technologies in India, to solar deployment in Namibia. He added that IRENA also leads the Alliance for Industry Decarbonization (AFID) together with over eight Members and has a flagship project in the South Hydrogen Corridor, producing green hydrogen in North Africa and delivering it to Europe. He underlined that this framework ensures finance policy and safeguards are aligned to scale hydrogen hubs worldwide. He noted that both Alliances have been invited by the COP30 Presidency to help shape plans for tripling renewables and decarbonising the end-use sectors, and extended thanks to the UAE for supporting the engagement with the industry.

55. Mr Gonul then touched upon the work of Powering Remote Communities with Renewables. This global initiative aims to replace diesel with clean energy in some of the world's most vulnerable areas, from small islands to mountains, indigenous lands, and conflict zones. He explained that in phase one, IRENA built knowledge with a guidebook and developed a network reaching out to 10 countries and 15 partners. He continued that now in Phase 2, IRENA is moving to assessments in Indonesia and Malaysia, aiming for micro, hydro and solar mini grid operators and knowledge exchanges linking African countries with Nepal. He underlined that with strong support from Canada and partners, IRENA is delivering practical community-driven solutions and will showcase progress this October at the OLADE Energy Week and then at COP30.

56. Mr Ahmed Badr, Director of Project Facilitation and Support (PFS), stated that IRENA has provided complete financial project support for three projects in Zimbabwe for USD 25,000,000, including 40% equity and the remaining is debt, under APRA and the Investment Forum in Kenya, saving more than 60,000 equivalent ton of CO₂ as well as also providing about 60% of the budget. He continued that IRENA also provided technical assistance to Dominica with a technology project from Israel and provided more than USD 60 million in partnership with ETAF partners and CIP. Turning to ETAF, he mentioned that the Government of the United Arab Emirates has already provided a USD 30 million grant for a project in Comoros, and part of the due diligence was conducted through partners from Swiss RE, and the project is providing more than 20,000 tons of CO₂ equivalent savings.

57. Mr Badr underlined that under APRA, there is one project for Sierra Leone to increase the existing hydropower plant by adding additional capacity between 25 and 50 MW in partnership with OPEC Fund and Africa50. The project will be announced in Sierra Leone during the

Investment Forum in Freetown in October 2025. He added that seven countries, including Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan have asked for support, clarifying that 50% of the support is coming from voluntary contributions from Denmark, Italy, and Japan, and an additional 50% from the core budget. Mr Badr stressed the goal of creating momentum for a carbon credit market by creating a second carbon credit exchange. He stated that IRENA, in partnership with one private sector company from the United Arab Emirates, the IHSE, and the non-profit international regional organisation called SIDARI, has reached the final stage of preparing a Memorandum of Understanding to be shared with the thirtieth Council meeting before signing. Mr Badr emphasised that IRENA and the UNFCCC have also partnered to provide complete, tailored, fit-for-purpose country-based level support on how they monetise carbon credits by creating a robust carbon exchange and carbon credit mechanism.

58. Regarding sustainable aviation fuels, he noted that IRENA is working with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to create, within the flexible structure of ETAF, a new window for INFRA-Invest. He noted that is the original structure agreed with the UAE since the beginning, represented by the development partner Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. He also explained that together with ICAO, IRENA will create a new type of support to minimise the impact of climate change globally, through ICAO, a structure called FIN-Invest, to be finalised in the coming weeks.

59. Ms Ute Collier, Acting Director, Knowledge, Policy and Finance Centre (KPFC), discussed resource assessment, which includes mapping investment opportunities for utility-scale solar and wind, and mentioned the recently produced assessments for Colombia and Georgia, with Angola in the pipeline. She stated that in the context of the Global Atlas and Solar City Simulator, IRENA has worked with several countries, for example, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and has assisted Zimbabwe in assessing the technical and financial viability of 10 solar sites.

60. Turning into policy and drawing from IRENA's long expertise on renewable energy auctions, which is one of the key policy instruments, Ms Collier noted that the Agency has worked with several countries on capacity building. For example, IRENA has provided it in 12 African countries, with more planned. IRENA has also partnered with GIZ on tailored support on renewable energy policies in Senegal. She added that IRENA is continuing the work on end-use sectors and highlighted two recent reports on electric vehicles for road transport and green hydrogen in Central Asia.

61. She then underlined that maximising the benefits of the energy transition and raising awareness around it has long been a key area of IRENA's work. She informed participants that IRENA is working on the 2025 edition of the *Renewable Energy and Jobs* report. She also mentioned that in the next months, the update of the 2019 report on *Renewable Energy: A Gender Perspective* will be published, examining the share of women in the renewable energy sector. She noted that the numbers have not improved, and the report will include policy recommendations to this end.

62. Ms Collier highlighted IRENA's work on the environmental impacts of renewables, emphasising that job creation should not come to the detriment of nature-sensitive areas. She continued that under the Coalition for Action, IRENA has shared nature-positive principles with recommendations for policymakers, and is working with the support of China on the environmental impacts of utility-scale solar.

63. Ms Norela Constantinescu, Acting Director, IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre (IITC) elaborated on the IRENA Innovation Week, which is a flagship event that unites the minds of innovators on how to integrate renewables in power system, how to address flexibility needs, and how to use digital solutions. She noted that discussions were also around how to promote

innovation in emerging and developing markets and economies. She underlined that IRENA prioritises the sharing of best practices as it can help bridge future activities into the next Work Programme, taking into account state-of-the-art solutions. For example, IRENA is developing, with Canada's support, a report on digitalisation and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) or data centres, which require electricity. Ms Constantinescu then mentioned IRENA's technical assessment provided to the United Nations Secretary-General for his technical brief and speech on 'Seizing the Moment of Opportunity' event. She explained that IRENA's assessment covered the G20 countries and beyond, and is now focusing on regional assessments to get more granular information around performance indicators, which support the deployment, integration and use of renewables across the system through electrification or other energy vectors.

64. She explained that IRENA published, in June 2025, the *Regional Energy Transition Outlook: European Union*, has worked on one for the Eastern Partnership, is finalising in time for COP30 the South America Regional Transition Outlook and will work on one for the Caribbean region. Ms Constantinescu highlighted the costing report for renewables in the power sector, and the work undertaken on batteries, electrolyzers, and hybrid systems, where solar PV or wind farms are connected to storage capabilities. She highlighted stakeholder engagement and referred to the Global Coalition for Energy Planning, launched at the request of COP30 Presidency. She also highlighted the first Summit held this year that focuses on enhancing technical and implementing capacities. She concluded her presentation by highlighting the efforts made to transform energy planning into investments and a pipeline of projects.

65. The Chair of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC), El Salvador, represented by H.E. Ms Vanessa Interiano, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to IRENA and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs, presented the outcome of the Committee meeting held on 10 September 2025, contained in document C/29/CRP/2.

66. The PSC Chair reported that the Committee welcomed the Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the World Programme and Budget. At the same time, some participants urged IRENA to include an executive summary in future Progress and Annual reports, capturing developments and work of the Agency.

67. The PSC Chair then reported that some participants called on IRENA to expand the programmatic activities targeting the Latin America and Caribbean region, to help the countries address emerging challenges related to the energy transition. The PSC Chair relayed that the Committee underlined that some participants urged IRENA to examine and provide policy recommendations on critical issues such as the recycling of solar panels, carbon market creation, data collection harmonisation across countries, and new sources of bioenergy.

68. Furthermore, the PSC Chair stated that a participant called for deeper strategic-level discussions at Committee meetings, regarding programmatic work and priorities. The Chair also added that a participant welcomed the implementation of the results-based framework, suggested the creation of an online dashboard to access the data, and expressed interest in learning how the data informs strategic decisions.

69. The PSC Chair stated that some participants welcomed the Preliminary Framework as a good basis for the next Work Programme and Budget. The PSC Chair explained that a participant highlighted the critical work emanating from Collaborative Frameworks and called on IRENA to review their modalities to ensure increased and direct impact on the ground.

70. The PSC Chair continued that a participant highlighted the need to expand the regional dimension of IRENA's work and suggested the creation of an initiative focusing on Latin America

and the Caribbean in the upcoming Work Programme and Budget. In addition, the PSC Chair stated that a participant underlined the need for IRENA to continue being a strong voice for renewables and fostering multilateralism, in light of the current geopolitical climate. In addition, another participant applauded IRENA's programmatic activities and initiatives but also called on the Agency to ensure prioritisation and careful consideration before establishing new ones, and to focus on its core mandate and key strengths.

71. On issues raised by Members at the PSC meeting in March 2025, the PSC Chair explained that some participants sought clarity on the relationship between IRENA and a partner organisation in the context of the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA). Furthermore, some participants welcomed the work under APRA and invited IRENA to share the work plan, as well as staff and resource allocation and oversight.

72. In closing, the PSC Chair pointed out that a participant requested that the presentation on APRA be shared with Members. Also, participants requested the inclusion of an executive summary in future Progress and Annual reports, capturing developments and work of the Agency.

73. The Vice-Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC), the United Arab Emirates, represented by H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany, Permanent Representative to IRENA, presented, on behalf of the Chair of the AFC, the outcome of the Committee meeting held on 10 September 2025, contained in document C/29/CRP/3.

74. The AFC Vice-Chair informed the Council that during the AFC meeting, the Secretariat presented an update on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024 to 2025, providing a consolidated financial and programmatic overview as of 31 July 2025. In this regard, she informed that the Secretariat provided an update on the status of contributions, including core assessed, core non-assessed, and voluntary contributions. She conveyed that the Secretariat expressed appreciation to Members for their timely contributions and encouraged others to settle outstanding contributions, and that the Secretariat also underscored the essential role of voluntary contributions in complementing the core budget and in supporting and enabling the full implementation of IRENA's Work Programme and Budget.

75. The AFC Vice-Chair stated that the Secretariat reported a core assessed budget execution rate of 94% for the biennium, as of 31 July 2025. In response to a request for clarification, the Secretariat confirmed that the execution rate reflects expenditures and open obligations, noting that reported expenditure accounts for staff costs and planned activities until the end of the year. It was further reassured by the Secretariat that internal financial controls are in place to prevent overspending and ensure implementation within approved resources and that no deficit spending is anticipated under the core budget 2024 to 2025.

76. The AFC Vice-Chair informed that the Secretariat underscored the persistent challenges posed by rising staff and service costs, emphasising that activities have thus far been implemented without exceeding approved resources. However, the Secretariat stated that the long-term viability of this approach remains uncertain given ongoing operational pressures.

77. The AFC Vice-Chair reported that a participant raised a question regarding whether vacancies were factored into budget execution, and if unfilled positions would require additional resources for recruitment from the core assessed budget. She further reported that in response to this question, the Secretariat clarified that the vacant posts included both core and voluntary funded positions, and that savings generated from vacancies under the core budget had provided some flexibility in managing financial constraints thus far, though recruitment needs may require further consideration in future planning.

78. The AFC Vice-Chair stated that the Director-General reaffirmed that Members' feedback will continue to guide the development of the next Work Programme and Budget, and that he reiterated the Secretariat's commitment to delivering a strengthened framework that more clearly links financial resources to programmatic delivery and ensures accountability.

79. The AFC Vice-Chair informed the Council that there was a proposal by the AFC Chair to update the reporting requirements for the Work Programme and Budget, noting that the current reporting guidelines date back to 2013 and that at present, the information provided on budget and spending remains overly vague and aggregated. She further informed that as the proposals were only transmitted to the AFC Chair on 4 September 2025, the AFC was not in a position to conclude its deliberations on the matter during its meeting. The AFC Vice-Chair reported that the AFC therefore recommended that a draft decision be prepared for consideration at the next AFC meeting, with a view to presenting it to the Council for recommendation to the Assembly. In this regard, she informed the Council that a document had already been prepared by the Secretariat, which can be further revised with input from Members at the next AFC meeting, to better address their needs.

80. The AFC Vice-Chair highlighted that there was also a call for a more strategic focus in the Progress Report, which the AFC sees as a valuable step towards enabling Members to take a more forward-looking, strategic view of budget management, moving beyond year-to-year reporting of staff costs and routine expenditure data.

81. Delegations welcomed the Progress Report on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024 - 2025. Some delegations noted the positive progress towards the pathway to renewables and IRENA's contribution in this regard, especially the support to developing countries.

82. Some delegations welcomed the reports on *Renewable Capacity Statistics 2025*, *Renewable Energy Statistics 2025*, *Renewable Power Generation Costs in 2024*, and the *SDG7 Tracking Report*, stressing that IRENA has provided trusted data and insights for policymakers. Some delegations expressed concern that the *World Energy Transitions Outlook* report, a key flagship report, has not been published thus far, and underlined the need to consult with Members on this decision.

83. One delegation called for IRENA's reports and documents to have a stronger focus on the strategic dimension and provide a clearer sense of IRENA's vision. One delegation expressed the wish for all IRENA documents to be available in Arabic and French, ensuring that Arabic and French-speaking countries can comprehend the data and information provided.

84. One delegation emphasised that IRENA's work should remain technically robust and strategically impactful. One delegation recommended that IRENA support the development of harmonised methodologies for data collection, and offered to provide more details on how this suggestion can be achieved.

85. One delegation highlighted the challenges remaining in key sectors of energy transition, particularly the offshore wind sector, such as rising costs, policy uncertainties, and emerging security risks and urged IRENA to identify solutions to them. One delegation expressed concern about the uneven deployment of renewables, with developing countries continuing to face limited resources, insufficient storage and network capabilities, and called on IRENA to help Members overcome these difficulties, particularly in terms of resources, technology transfer, and financing.

86. Some delegations recognised IRENA's leadership in innovation and technological solutions, welcomed the IRENA Innovation Week and Innovation Day in advancing the discourse on

digitalisation and AI, as well as IRENA's work on emerging areas such as sustainable aviation fuels, demonstrating IRENA's agility in addressing new challenges and opportunities.

87. One delegation urged IRENA and development agencies to provide technology transfer and capacity building in offshore wind, smart grids, and green hydrogen to developing countries.

88. One delegation welcomed the work undertaken in the regions, particularly in Africa and SIDS, and on key topics such as supply chains. One delegation recognised that industrial growth must be anchored in sustainable energy systems and welcomed the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative launched at COP28, which seeks to place renewable energy and green technologies at the centre of Africa's industrial transformation.

89. One delegation applauded the work undertaken under APRA and APRECA, but requested clarifications on the function of IRENA as Secretariat, the involvement of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), budgetary flows, resource allocation, and governance structure guiding these initiatives, and how success is measured. The delegation added that initiatives of this significance should be discussed at the Council and formally approved by the Assembly.

90. One delegation underlined that IRENA's work in Southeast Asia has been valuable and will play a central role in supporting Southeast Asia's energy transition, and expressed anticipation for the Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Southeast Asia (APRESA) to be launched at the fifth Singapore-IRENA High-Level Forum during the Singapore International Energy Week (SIEW) in October 2025.

91. Some delegations welcomed IRENA's involvement in international initiatives, such as the Global Coalition for Energy Planning (GCEP). One delegation expressed support for the work carried out by IRENA's Long-Term Energy Scenarios (LTES) Network.

92. One delegation acknowledged IRENA's effort to undertake Investment Forums and Collaborative Frameworks to exchange experiences. One delegation highlighted IRENA's contribution to multilateral fora, including the G7 and the G20.

93. One delegation underlined the importance of international organisations to abide by international finance standards and monitor socio-economic and environmental implications, especially regarding cross-border projects.

94. One delegation supported IRENA's critical role in helping countries align their NDCs with global climate change objectives to ensure just and inclusive energy transitions. One delegation encouraged IRENA to provide Brazil with all the necessary support in preparation for COP30, even though the country is a State in Accession.

95. Some delegations highlighted the urgent need to mobilise financing from public and private sources and welcomed IRENA's upcoming publication on the Global Landscape of Energy Transition Finance in helping to take stock of the current financing landscape. One delegation emphasised that financing is crucial to implementing the energy transition, particularly in developing countries, and was pleased to see the growing interest in IRENA's project facilitation platforms, CIP and ETAF, as well as the Investment Forums.

96. One delegation called on developing countries to harness the opportunities offered by the carbon market to establish a robust Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system and access voluntary and compliance markets.

97. One delegation was pleased to hear that IRENA's communication activities, as well as social media engagement and media coverage, have grown. Some delegations emphasised the need for IRENA to communicate its empirical and analytical findings strongly to counter voices opposing renewables. One delegation expressed concern over IRENA's silence concerning the blackouts in Liberia and Brazil in April 2025, noting that other organisations quickly provided public explanations that renewables were not to blame, instead underlining the importance of resilience infrastructure, energy storage, and smart grids.

98. Some delegations welcomed the implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework, noting that there is some scope for improvement, e.g. in terms of visual presentation and qualitative analysis on the impact and efficiency of some areas of work.

99. One delegation expressed concern about the high rate of budget utilisation by mid-year and sought clarification on possible consequences for planned activities. One delegation encouraged IRENA to ensure the responsible management of resources and that expenditure does not exceed available resources by slowing the implementation of activities in the coming months. It also requested the Secretariat to report on the measures taken for consideration by the next Council meeting.

100. One delegation urged IRENA to pause the travel of staff, new recruitments and procurement where possible, and prioritise virtual participation in meetings to mitigate the financial risk ahead, clearly reflected by the non-payment of all assessed contributions by Members.

101. One delegation referred to the multi-year voluntary contributions from non-Members, particularly from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), and sought to understand why no contributions were received during the 2024-2025 period, despite the multi-year commitments.

102. The Council took note of the Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025, contained in document C/29/2, as well as the reports on Collaborative Frameworks and the interventions by Members on these matters.

103. The Council took note of the Report of the Chair of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC), contained in C/29/CRP/2, and agreed to the actions contained therein for follow up, as well as the interventions by Members on this matter.

104. The Council took note of the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC), contained in C/29/CRP/3.

Agenda Item 4: Preliminary Framework for the Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027 (C/29/3)

105. The Director-General stressed that under the current mandate, IRENA is tasked with spreading the global energy transition, with the Agency's Theory of Change serving as a strategic blueprint delineating its contribution to transforming the energy system. He noted that this is the second Work Programme within the new strategic cycle, which offers a unique opportunity to build on the achievements of the first. He explained that the first one of this cycle successfully demonstrated the Agency's strategic direction, indicating a strong alignment between its mission and the concrete activities undertaken. The Director-General emphasised that IRENA's goal is to

enhance the level of strategic alignment and impact, noting that the feedback received from Members has reaffirmed the strategic trajectory outlined in the Medium-term Strategy 2023-2027.

106. He stressed that the feedback also highlighted the critical need to harmonise a broad spectrum of national priorities, such as balancing development goals with energy security and resilience, while navigating tight fiscal spaces and dealing with the devastating effects of climate change. He highlighted that, meanwhile, the energy sector has become increasingly volatile, disruptive and geopolitical. The Director-General pointed out that in recent years, global events have continued to have a profound and immediate impact on energy markets and policies. Given this expanding and complex energy agenda, there is a need for deliberate and careful choices. To stay on track with the Paris Agreement, he stressed the importance of significantly boosting renewable energy capacity within the next six years. He underscored, though, that achieving this will remain within reach, but it demands concerted global action to overcome significant barriers. To this end, he called for modernising infrastructure, creating supportive policies and markets and building the necessary institutional and human capabilities.

107. The Director-General emphasised that, in line with IRENA's mission statement, the Agency will continue to focus on five strategic areas that acknowledge the diversity of its Membership, the evolving dynamics of the energy transition, and prevailing policy imperatives. These include policy and regulation, infrastructure and system operation, supply chain, skills and capacities, finance and international co-operation. He emphasised that, specifically, under the Centre of Excellence, IRENA will serve as the custodian agency for the global stocktake, monitoring global progress towards tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030. He continued that the World Energy Transitions Outlook and the Delivering of the UAE consensus reports will be the cornerstone of this effort. Furthermore, the Agency will continue its comprehensive work in data collection and analysis, focusing on areas such as jobs, renewable energy capacity and generation, energy security, geopolitics and technological innovation.

108. He stressed that international collaboration is crucial for overcoming the barriers to the energy transition and IRENA will continue to serve as a key facilitator of dialogue. The Agency will enhance existing partnerships, including the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative (LHI), the Global Offshore Wind Alliance (GOWA), the Alliance for Industry Decarbonization (AFID), and the Global Geothermal Alliance (GGA), among others. He explained that these partnerships continue to benefit from IRENA's efforts in fostering knowledge-sharing platforms and supporting regional initiatives while providing data and insights to help them implement their clean energy goals and strengthen socio-economic resilience. The Director-General stated that as the Global Voice for Renewables, IRENA will remain a crucial source of knowledge and analysis for the energy transition, focusing on a wide range of topics, from socio-economic policy and finance to technology and governance. The Agency will prioritise the integration of renewables into the power grids, assess supply chains, geopolitical risks and use macroeconomic models to help countries maximise the socio-economic benefits of their clean energy transition. He added that IRENA will announce its communication strategy to become a stronger global voice for renewables, advocating for a holistic transition that includes gender equality and social equity.

109. The Director-General emphasised that, given that universal decarbonisation requires a tailored approach, IRENA will continue to provide targeted country-specific advice and support to its Members. He stated that the Agency will focus on building capacity for integrated energy planning, supporting the development of green industrial policies and offering guidance on financing and risk mitigation. This work aims to help countries align their national energy strategies with global climate goals, ensuring a transition that is both effective and equitable. He explained that developed countries face significant challenges in financing the energy transition, as current investment levels are insufficient and concessional bankability criteria are too narrow. To address

this, IRENA will help countries by developing a risk assessment framework, providing technical assistance on policy design, and mapping investment opportunities. He continued that through the CIP and ETAF, IRENA will expand its project facilitation work to mitigate risks and advance a strong pipeline of renewable energy projects.

110. The Director-General underscored that a core part of these efforts is the full transition to the Results-based Framework, which will enhance the alignment of programmatic key activities with the Agency's strategic objectives and intermediate outcomes. This systematic approach, which includes a continuous feedback loop and ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation, ensures that IRENA's outputs are evidence-based, responsive, and consistently augment its role as a leading force in the global energy transitions. He underlined that this concrete, results-driven approach is essential for demonstrating value to Members and securing the voluntary contributions necessary to sustain efforts. He stressed that the Secretariat noted the close guidance and priorities expressed by the Membership during the last budget cycle and will remain fully mindful of the importance placed on prudent resource management, the practical ability to fund, and transparency, while safeguarding the Agency's ability to deliver its Work Programme. The Director-General emphasised that, in preparing the budget proposal, the Secretariat has carefully reviewed the statutory cost increases accumulated over recent years. This arises from obligations beyond the Secretariat's discretion, salary adjustments determined by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), tenure-related provisions, and rising costs to sustain essential operations and services, especially in areas such as information and communications technology (ICT). He stressed that these pressures are not the result of programmatic expansion but reflect a requirement that the Secretariat has to absorb to remain compliant and operationally sound.

111. He added that during the current biennium, the Agency has faced a significant cost increase communicated to the Membership in 2024 without a corresponding budget adjustment. To cope, the Secretariat had to leave several posts unfilled and prioritise activities in certain areas. While delivery has been maintained, this has placed a heavy and unsustainable burden on staff. He underscored that this experience demonstrates that a continued zero-growth approach is unsustainable, as rising fixed costs can no longer be absorbed solely through efficiency measures. To ensure transparency in response to Member requests, the Secretariat will present two budget scenarios for the 2026-2027 biennium.

112. He explained that according to the Zero Nominal Growth scenario, the budget will remain at USD 64 million, as in the previous cycles. He stressed that this scenario severely constrains the Agency's ability to sustain its Work Programme and core operations. He continued that Zero Real Growth scenario reflects the minimum resources required to cover actual costs. This scenario outlines the requirements for covering statutory adjustments, tenure-related provisions, the requested ethics function, and the cost of essential services, without expanding functions. It simply maintains essential staffing levels and services already approved by Members, ensuring continuity of operation and compliance with statutory obligations. He emphasised that the key pressures remain mandatory statutory adjustments and essential operational costs, which are obligations outside the Secretariat's discretion. He pointed out that the proposal will also include a dedicated budget for the new liaison office in Austria, which will be fully funded by Austria as the host Government, with no financial implication for other Members. The Director-General stated that by presenting both scenarios, the Secretariat aims to provide Members with the basis to weigh the implications of each option, while reaffirming the commitment to efficiency, accountability, and responsiveness to Members' guidance. He stressed that the Secretariat looks forward to engaging in a constructive dialogue with the shared objective of ensuring that the Agency remains fully equipped to deliver its core activities and stressed that, should Members wish, the Secretariat stands ready to support consultation on budgetary matters ahead of the next Council meeting, to further enhance understanding and transparency of the proposed budget. He added that the forthcoming

budget will be presented in a revised format, reflecting Member requests for a separate annex, expanded details, and greater clarity in presentation.

113. The Director-General welcomed Members' feedback and guidance as the Agency refines the Preliminary Framework into a comprehensive Work Programme and Budget for consideration at the next Council meeting. He stressed that the actions taken over the coming two years will shape the trajectory of the energy transition and sustainable development for decades to come. Within this defining moment, IRENA carries the vital responsibility of advancing the global energy transition. Yet, this task requires collective action to be achieved through the active participation and support of Members.

114. Delegations welcomed the Preliminary Framework, and some delegations were pleased that their submissions for the drafting of the Preliminary Framework were reflected in it.

115. Some delegations noted that IRENA's core strength lies in its robust data collection and analysis, evident in the success of its reports on renewable energy capacity generation and cost trends, complemented by the Agency's technical expertise on energy system infrastructure, policy development, and knowledge sharing. One delegation encouraged IRENA to present its analytical findings in a more focused manner, with concrete and concise policy recommendations, rather than lengthy technical reports, accompanied by practical implementation support.

116. Some delegations lauded IRENA for promoting the renewables-based energy transition and monitoring progress in achieving the tripling of renewables goal.

117. One delegation highlighted the importance of simultaneously and comprehensively tackling energy security, climate change, critical minerals, and the geopolitical risks related to clean energy technologies in manufacturing. One delegation encouraged IRENA to continue to advocate for a people and planet-centric energy transition.

118. Some delegations welcomed IRENA's country-level expertise and support in providing tailored advice to developing countries in policy formulation and technical implementation, and sought clarification on the criteria used for country selection. One delegation called on IRENA to prioritise translating commitments into tangible action, providing the necessary technical and financial support to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy.

119. One delegation called on IRENA to continue improving its capabilities and providing political guidance for the integration of intelligent networks and storage, to enhance interconnections for the adequate distribution of renewable energy, and to support research and development in these areas.

120. One delegation expressed support for IRENA's work on the digital transformation and artificial intelligence, and encouraged the Agency to explore its potential benefits in the energy transition.

121. One delegation noted that the Collaborative Frameworks promote participation, knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices.

122. One delegation underlined the importance of geothermal energy in the energy transition, and while praising IRENA's work in this field, it called on the Agency to create an initiative with a focus on Latin America.

123. Some delegations called for increasing the number of programmatic activities focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean in the Work Programme.

124. One delegation requested further information on the work and structure of the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA).

125. Some delegations encouraged IRENA to work strategically with a wide range of stakeholders to help avoid duplication and maximise collective impact.

126. One delegation highlighted IRENA's work in supporting countries in formulating their NDCs and urged IRENA to continue providing targeted analysis and enhancing implementation, particularly through the NDC Partnership.

127. One delegation welcomed IRENA's work in education and noted that the IRENA Youth Program has become one of the Agency's most successful initiatives, and it has strong potential to build on this foundation.

128. Some delegations underlined that IRENA should be a facilitating rather than an implementing Agency and requested clarification on the scope of the proposed energy transition project development support facility.

129. Some delegations called on IRENA to enhance its communication strategy to raise awareness of the energy transition and further position the Agency as a leading global voice for renewables.

130. One delegation welcomed the full implementation of the Results-based Framework and expressed hope that it would clearly demonstrate the alignment of activities with the strategic pillars.

131. Some delegations stressed that they oppose any budgetary increase for the coming biennium.

132. Several delegations called for complete transparency and open dialogue on the operational baseline required for IRENA to function and develop the next Work Programme. Several delegations encouraged IRENA to provide the budgetary estimates and clear indications on which activities could not take place in case of no budget increase to allow Members to have a more informed discussion on the budget.

133. Some delegations proposed putting forward one scenario on zero nominal growth, a second scenario on zero real growth adjusted for inflation and cost increase, and a third scenario on a modest real growth defined percentage. Each scenario should clearly outline the essential requirements for IRENA's operation and the implications for the programmatic delivery.

134. Several delegations suggested that IRENA convene an Open-ended Group on budgetary issues to reach an agreement before the thirtieth meeting of the Council.

135. One delegation called for a robust governance structure to manage voluntary contributions, particularly from non-Members. Another delegation posed the question of whether IRENA is still pursuing the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund and other resource-based diversification options.

136. The Council took note of the Preliminary Framework for the Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027, contained in document C/29/3.

Agenda Item 5: General Member Statements – National Experiences on the Energy Transition

137. The Chair invited Members to share their experiences on priority actions and challenges related to the deployment of renewable energy and exchange views on issues relating to the energy transition in the coming decade and beyond. He also invited Members to provide their statements in written form, to be annexed to the Summary Report of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council. These statements are contained in Annex V.

138. Some delegations welcomed the resolution of the issues that led to the delay of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, and urged the Secretariat and the IRENA Assembly Presidency to conduct a legal assessment of the issue and explore options to avoid similar disruptions in the future.

139. Some delegations underlined that renewables irreversibly crossed a positive tipping point and entered a virtuous cycle of cost decline and widespread adoption.

140. Several delegations reiterated their commitment to the goals of the Paris Agreement, SDG7 and the Tripling of renewables goal.

141. Delegations underlined that renewable energy is crucial for achieving energy security, socio-economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Several delegations highlighted climate change as a global security threat, posing a significant risk to their very existence.

142. Some delegations discussed their national plans to increase access to energy.

143. Several delegations highlighted their plans to secure diverse supply chains for grid infrastructure, including transmission, and to enhance integrated long-term energy planning, digitalisation, demand response etc.

144. Delegations discussed the national strategies and targets set to increase the share of renewables in their national energy mix and achieve carbon neutrality and one delegation noted the incorporation of energy poverty reduction as a guiding principle in political planning for the first time.

145. Delegations elaborated on their plans to promote the use of solar, hydropower, onshore and offshore wind energy, geothermal, biogas, biomass, green hydrogen, e-mobility, mini-grids, battery storage, heat pumps and energy efficiency as well as nuclear power.

146. Some delegations underscored the importance of interconnectivity and regional grid integration and elaborated on their plans in this regard.

147. One delegation elaborated on the nationwide schemes to promote training, partner with universities, establish a professional framework with International Labor Organization (ILO) aligned standards, and work with industry on skills and jobs as well as raise awareness among women and children.

148. One delegation underscored that the lack of domestic manufacturing capacity for renewable energy technologies continues to constrain our ability to build resilient local value chains, and welcomed APRA as a catalyst for green industrialisation.

149. Several delegations recognised IRENA as a key locus for exchange of knowledge and experiences, international co-operation, and forging alliances that can ensure clean energy is an inclusive process.

150. Delegations underscored the importance of international and multi-stakeholder collaboration to create an enabling environment that fosters innovation and accelerates the deployment of renewables, and praised IRENA's role in this area. One delegation extended thanks and acknowledged the critical partnership with IRENA on G7 discussions, and the upcoming report on digital solutions to support the G7 Presidency.

151. One delegation invited Members to participate in the 2026 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Sustainable Energy Week, to be hosted in Zimbabwe in February 2026.

152. Delegations discussed their efforts to create national roadmaps and policies to attract investments, facilitate project implementation, and achieve a just energy transition.

153. Delegations underlined the key challenge of attracting financing for the deployment of renewable energy projects as well as the high cost of financing renewable infrastructure, limited access to concessional finances, and risk mitigation instruments. Some delegations stressed that IRENA's Energy Transition Accelerator Financing (ETAF) platform can play a catalytic role in mobilising capital for vulnerable countries.

154. Some delegations called on the international community to take immediate, bold, and transformative actions to remove barriers to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and developing countries in accessing adequate, predictable, timely, and nationally guided climate finance and scaling up implementation of renewable energy technologies.

155. **The Council took note of the experiences shared by Members.**

Agenda Item 6: Programmatic discussion on Advancing Investments in Sustainable Aviation Fuels by ETAF (C/29/BN/1)

156. The Director-General, in his introductory remarks, highlighted sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) as a critical component for decarbonising one of the hardest-to-abate sectors. He recalled IRENA's recent work with the G7 Presidency on renewables and aviation, noting that this discussion comes at a pivotal moment as global efforts toward net-zero accelerate.

157. The Director-General underlined that aviation currently contributes around 2% to 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions, a share expected to rise with growing passenger demand, and that SAF offers the most direct pathway to reduce lifecycle emissions by up to 80%, without modification to existing aircraft. Presently, however, SAF represents less than 0.1% of global jet fuel use, with deployment constrained by challenges related to feedstock availability and traceability, certification alignment, permitting and logistics risks, and costs two to four times more than conventional jet fuel.

158. The Director-General informed that, building on more than USD 4 billion already pledged to the Energy Transition Accelerator Financing (ETAF) Platform, a dedicated SAF segment is being established. This will provide technical assistance and readiness support, bankability assessments covering feedstock, certification and uptake arrangements, and facilitate access to financing and de-risking solutions. He invited Members to share SAF project pipelines with the Secretariat, and to actively engage in shaping the support that this new segment will provide. He

stressed that, while aviation will remain central to connectivity and trade, its growth must be accompanied by commensurate decarbonisation efforts.

159. The Director of the Project Facilitation and Support (PFS) Division, Mr Ahmed Badr, in his [presentation](#) elaborated on the initiative to create a dedicated SAF “window” within the ETAF Platform, explaining that while SAF projects are still rare globally and absent from the current ETAF pipeline, preparatory work is underway to build the necessary foundations for investment. He underlined that the aviation sector is one of the hardest to decarbonise and stressed the importance of engaging the Membership to advance programmatic discussions in this field.

160. Mr Badr outlined the four key pillars underpinning the new SAF window. First, co-blended finance would combine concessional and commercial lending to lower the overall cost of capital and incentivise banks to support SAF projects. Second, equity participation would be pursued to attract investors and enable the development of production and refuelling infrastructure. Third, technical advisory and bankability assessments would be provided, particularly in relation to feedstock and recycled oils, with certification processes coordinated in collaboration with the batching system of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Fourth, guarantees and insurance would be developed with partners such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and Swiss Re to de-risk both projects and financiers.

161. Mr Badr highlighted that IRENA is actively engaging with ICAO and has initiated outreach to industry stakeholders, including the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and major aircraft manufacturers such as Boeing, to align technical standards and mobilise investment. In parallel, discussions are ongoing with the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and other ETAF partners to establish co-financing solutions. He noted that initial scoping had identified opportunities in Côte d’Ivoire and Kenya for technical advisory and project facilitation.

162. Mr Badr informed that the operational framework and partnership structure were in the process of being finalised, with the launch of the new window anticipated shortly. He encouraged Members and stakeholders to collaborate with ETAF to generate a bankable pipeline of SAF projects, emphasising the urgency of advancing investment in this emerging sector.

163. A delegation welcomed the inclusion of the topic in the agenda, stressing that aviation is essential for connectivity, particularly for island states. The delegation noted that while small volumes of imported SAF are already blended domestically in line with regional regulation, there is not yet domestic production. It explained that high levels of renewable energy curtailment are creating opportunities for power-to-liquid projects, and expressed interest in pursuing joint projects with other countries under IRENA’s guidance.

164. A delegation commended the establishment of a SAF window within ETAF and highlighted the potential of SAF to reduce emissions while creating jobs and value addition. It stressed the need for targeted support to address early-stage financing gaps, weak supply chains, and high production costs. It also underlined the importance of safeguarding food security, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. The delegation confirmed its readiness to collaborate with ETAF and ICAO to explore viable projects, promote technology sharing, and attract investment.

165. A delegation underscored the central role of aviation in its national economy and described its national SAF roadmap, which sets an ambition to produce 700 million litres by 2030. The roadmap focuses on accelerating technology development, establishing a robust regulatory framework, building domestic capacity, and strengthening international co-operation. The

delegation recalled its experience in 2019, operating the world's first flight using fuel produced from saltwater plants, and outlined plans for up to five facilities, including power-to-liquid plants and waste-to-SAF projects. It emphasised that public-private partnerships are central to implementation and welcomed ETAF's potential role in advancing upcoming projects.

166. A delegation underlined that SAF is essential for making the aviation sector more sustainable and resilient. It highlighted the country's strong industrial base, major ports, and a large international airport as enablers of SAF development, while acknowledging that significant innovation and financing are still needed. The delegation noted ongoing EU and national funding initiatives to scale advanced biofuels and synthetic fuels and stressed that this must remain a global effort involving both public and private investors. It further noted long-term investments in hydrogen and electric flying as complementary solutions for short-haul aviation.

167. A delegation outlined its national experience with biofuels, noting that petrol is already blended with ethanol and that a feasibility study on SAF production, supported by ICAO, had been completed. The study assessed potential feedstocks, including jatropha, castor beans and sugarcane. The delegation stressed that while technical potential exists, finance and technology transfer are urgently required, and expressed willingness to share its findings with ETAF to identify next steps.

168. A delegation described national efforts to scale SAF supply through a three-pillar approach. It explained that a SAF mandate had been established, setting a trajectory for blending that will start with 2% of jet fuel in 2025, increase to 10% in 2030, and reach 22% in 2040. The delegation further noted that an advanced fuels fund is being used to support first-of-a-kind SAF plants in progressing towards investment-readiness and commercial scale. It also underlined that a revenue-certainty mechanism is being introduced to provide greater predictability in a market where SAF prices remain volatile. The delegation emphasised that this mechanism would be essential to mobilising the scale of capital investment required.

169. A delegation underlined that although agrarian feedstock is abundant, technological know-how and capacity remain limited. It stressed the need for international partnership to establish pilot projects that could demonstrate the financial and economic viability of SAF in developing countries, with potential for replication. The delegation affirmed its readiness to work with IRENA, its Members, and ETAF partners to explore these opportunities, emphasising that SAF could drive both emission reductions and create new avenues for green economic growth.

170. Mr Badr thanked delegations for their interventions and the valuable comments raised. He emphasised that the Secretariat stands ready to provide technical advisory, capacity-building and project facilitation support through its various Divisions, and assured Members that their observations would be reflected in the further development of the SAF window under ETAF.

171. The Council considered and took note of the presentation and interventions made.

Agenda Item 7: Programmatic discussion on Energy Security – The Role of Renewables Supply Chains (C/29/BN/2)

172. The Director-General, in his introductory remarks, highlighted the global consensus to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030 as a landmark achievement in international co-operation. He emphasised that this shared ambition requires an unprecedented scale and speed of industrial mobilisation, which in turn calls for a forward-looking dialogue on the long-term resilience of the emerging energy system.

173. He noted that the traditional concept of energy security has historically centred on access to and the stable supply of fossil fuels, shaping geopolitical and economic strategies for decades. As the energy transition accelerates, attention is shifting toward the technologies and supply chains that underpin a renewables-based system, necessitating a re-definition of energy security in this new context.

174. The Director-General pointed to the paradox at the heart of the energy transition: while cost reductions in solar PV and other technologies have driven global deployment, these gains have been enabled by highly efficient and concentrated manufacturing supply chains. This industrial success, though beneficial, introduces new structural considerations regarding supply chain diversity and resilience. He stressed that the energy transition offers all nations the opportunity to enhance energy independence through distributed renewable resources. In this regard, inclusive and resilient supply chains are essential to safeguarding collective investments in a sustainable future.

175. The Director-General referred to IRENA's analytical work, including the Geopolitics of the Energy Transition series of reports, as a foundation for navigating complex international dynamics. He noted that the Agency's recent analysis on energy security underscores the need to understand this concept across the entire technology value chain, highlighting key questions and trade-offs that governments must address. In this context, he highlighted the objective of the programmatic discussion to facilitate a strategic and candid exchange of views among Members. He stated that, by sharing national and regional perspectives, the discussion aims to illuminate the balance between cost-efficiency, energy security, and industrial development.

176. The Acting Director of the IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre (IITC), Ms Norela Constantinescu, in her [presentation](#), introduced the programmatic discussion as a deep dive into energy security and local value creation, developed in collaboration with the IRENA Knowledge, Policy and Finance Centre (KPFC). She emphasised that the energy transition is reshaping the global security landscape, shifting the focus from fuel flows to technology flows, and that this transformation requires a re-definition of energy security.

177. She noted that while renewable energy deployment continues to expand, 74% of the global population still lives in countries dependent on fossil fuels. Energy security must now be understood through the lens of technology supply chains, which are increasingly central to both energy and industrial policy. She pointed out that the deployment of renewables and associated technologies is altering the economic landscape, requiring a more integrated approach to policymaking.

178. Ms Constantinescu highlighted that today's supply chain concentration is not a market accident but the result of decades of targeted industrial policy. This has led to structural dependencies, with a single country holding up to 97% of the market share for critical components such as solar wafers. While new exporters are emerging, this core vulnerability exposes the global energy transition to geopolitical and logistical shocks.

179. Ms Constantinescu presented IRENA's analytical tool, developed with support from Australia and the Clean Energy Ministerial, which assesses the solar PV supply chain across multiple countries. The analysis revealed a cost premium of nearly 60% for domestically manufactured modules in the upstream sector. This gap is driven not only by industrial electricity prices but by a broader systemic cost structure, including trade conditions, labour costs, access to capital, and regulatory efficiency. She highlighted that effective policy responses must therefore address the full spectrum of structural factors.

180. Ms Constantinescu stressed that full industrial autarky is economically unviable – instead, strategic regionalisation offers a pragmatic path forward. She cited the Mediterranean region as a prime example, where abundant renewable resources, raw materials, and proximity to demand centres can support the development of robust local manufacturing ecosystems. Similar policy-backed initiatives are emerging across Africa, Türkiye, and Southeast Asia, aiming to move from potential to deliberate capacity development.

181. Providing an update on recent investment trends in solar PV manufacturing, Ms Constantinescu informed that in 2023, global investments reached record highs, led by China, as manufacturers shifted from p-type PERC cells to more efficient n-type TOPCon cells. However, in 2024, investments fell by 71% due to oversupply in China and Southeast Asia, compounded by rising tariffs and non-tariff barriers. She noted that India is rapidly emerging as a major solar PV manufacturing hub, with capacity growing from under 5 GW in 2018 to over 68 GW in 2024, supported by the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. India's share of global investment is projected to triple by 2025 to 2026.

182. Ms Constantinescu emphasised that this wider distribution of investments is enabling a more geographically diverse and resilient solar PV supply chain. She also highlighted the role of next-generation technologies, such as perovskites, which lower material and capital barriers to entry. Importantly, the research and development (R&D) base for these technologies is already globally distributed, with more than 15 countries across Europe, North America, and Asia–Oceania investing in innovation through academia and industry.

183. Ms Constantinescu outlined that a holistic approach to de-risking supply chains includes addressing electricity costs, market design, certification, financing, institutional capacity, workforce development, and innovation. She stressed the need for hybrid strategies that reconcile short-term market dynamics with long-term industrial sustainability. The ultimate measure of success, she underlined, is the creation of inclusive local value, translating supply chain security into high-quality jobs and shared prosperity. She invited Members to provide guidance to help shape IRENA's work in this area for the 2026-2027 biennium.

184. A delegation welcomed the topic of the programmatic discussion and emphasised the importance of secure and resilient supply chains for both existing and emerging technologies. It called for international co-ordination to substitute critical raw materials, improve recyclability and circularity, and harmonise regulations. The delegation highlighted the unique challenges faced by small island states – including limited recycling volumes and high costs for material transport – and proposed tailored strategies, such as regional collaboration and modular recycling solutions.

185. A delegation described national challenges related to energy supply gaps and climate impacts, noting the importance of localising value chains to create employment and economic resilience. It stressed the need for technology transfer, diversification of the energy mix, and improved storage solutions. The delegation called for collaboration on capacity building, infrastructure modernisation, and access to finance to support localisation and energy security.

186. A delegation underscored the need to address energy security, climate change, and economic growth in an integrated manner. It outlined national efforts to support domestic industries and attract private investment. The delegation advocated for international co-operation on industrial policy, human resource development, and standardisation, and encouraged IRENA to support analysis and best practice sharing.

187. A delegation highlighted its industrial strategy focused on clean energy sectors and supply chain resilience. It identified barriers such as high capital costs, infrastructure challenges, and demand uncertainty, and described efforts to de-risk investment and improve regulatory environments. The delegation introduced the Global Clean Power Alliance supply chain mission and expressed interest in collaborating on standardising technical specifications for electricity transmission systems.

188. A delegation emphasised its longstanding commitment to open co-operation and mutual benefit in renewable energy supply chains. It noted that its industrial success has lowered global costs and accelerated deployment. The delegation cautioned against rising protectionism and called for multilateralism and inclusive co-operation. It cited examples of companies localising production abroad and expressed readiness to work with IRENA to strengthen global supply chain resilience.

189. A delegation stressed that a diverse energy mix enhances security and that resilient supply chains are essential to meet global climate goals. It described national and international initiatives, including the Transforming Solar Supply Chains programme (Clean Energy Ministerial) and the Solar SunShot investment. The delegation highlighted the role of innovation and international collaboration in building competitive and resilient solar industries, and reaffirmed its commitment to working with IRENA and partners.

190. A delegation linked energy security to reducing dependence on imported fuels and outlined national policies aimed at scaling solar deployment. It emphasised the need for affordable access to components, grid stability, and workforce training. The delegation called for co-operation on logistics, technology transfer, and local manufacturing, and expressed its commitment to working with IRENA to build robust renewable supply chains.

191. A delegation noted both the opportunities and risks of global solar PV supply chains, citing reliance on a single supplier as a vulnerability. It advocated for diversification through innovation, R&D collaboration, and regional co-operation. The delegation shared experiences from offshore wind development and described efforts to overcome financing and regulatory barriers. It encouraged IRENA to provide analysis, de-risking instruments, and tailored technical assistance to support diversification.

192. The Director-General thanked Members for their interventions and noted that the discussion clearly demonstrated the strategic importance of renewable energy supply chains for global energy security. He further noted that the interventions underscored the need for IRENA's leadership in this domain and proposed elevating the dialogue to a higher level of international engagement.

193. The Director-General informed Members that the Secretariat would present, at the next Council, a proposal for the establishment of a Global High-Level Commission on the Geopolitics of Energy Security and Supply Chains. This initiative would build on the precedent set by IRENA's first Geopolitical Commission, with the aim to provide a structured platform for strategic reflection and co-operation. He further stated that the concept note for the proposed Commission would be released soon.

194. The Council considered and took note of the presentation and interventions made.

Agenda Item 8: Administrative and Institutional matters

195. The Chair of the Council recalled that the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC) met on 10 September 2025 and reviewed finance and institutional matters relating to the current Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025, as well as other administrative matters. He referred the Council to the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in C/29/CRP/3.

196. The Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, Tonga, represented by H.E. Mr 'Akau'ola, Permanent Representative to IRENA and Ambassador to the UAE, referred the Council to document C/29/CRP/3 for a comprehensive listing of the discussions and issues raised, as well as the information provided by the Secretariat, and highlighted salient points from the discussions of the AFC on the various agenda items.

197. On the Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends, the AFC Chair stated that delegations requested clarity on a number of issues: the criteria used to determine recruitment priorities; justification on internal promotions or transfers comprising over half of new appointments; the heavy reliance and disproportionate spending on individual consultants; the status of the recruitment process for the position of Head – Partnerships and apparent discrepancies in dates reported; succession planning, especially in the context of lessons learned and steps taken for mission-critical posts; the factoring of HR risks into budgetary planning and their impacts; and measures taken to strengthen staff retention and reduce turnover rates.

198. The AFC Chair reported that the Secretariat provided clarifications on these questions, and stated that staff recruitment, including succession planning, is prioritised based on organisational needs and budgetary realities; that all recruitments, including internal promotions, follow a rigorous process involving independent evaluation panels and HR oversight; that consultants are engaged for specialised, time-bound assignments; and that efforts continue to strengthen staff retention rates, which are gradually improving. On the recruitment of the Head – Partnerships, the Secretariat explained that the position was re-advertised as the internal candidate who was appointed to the position reached their tenure limit in August 2025, and that the recruitment process remains under way. He informed that the AFC took note of the report and agreed to submit it to the Council.

199. On the Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, the AFC Chair informed that the inclusion of Note 16 in the Financial Statements was welcomed, and the Secretariat was requested to add further disclosure explaining any deficit on the Statement on Financial Performance in future financial statements. He further informed that a number of questions were also raised, including about variances in budgeted and actual expenses, and the resulting deficits; on some funding sources; on the decrease in travel expenditures in relation to an increase in operating costs; and whether deficits in reporting periods related to a single year or for a biennium.

200. The AFC Chair reported that the Secretariat, in its responses, explained that Divisions are able to incur commitments in the first year of the biennium that relate to expenses expected to be incurred in the second year, causing the overutilisation reflected. The Secretariat also emphasised that overall expenditure will remain within the approved budget for the biennium, and that the Agency cannot exceed its approved core budget. The AFC Chair further reported that, as explained by the Secretariat, measures had been taken to contain travel costs; that continued rises in the prices of goods and services was the reason for the increase in operating costs; and that deficits were for a specific year, resulting from timing of accounting entries, including with respect to prior-year obligations and multi-year voluntary contributions. The Secretariat also confirmed that

meeting costs included delegate travel, and that only staff travel was reported under travel expenses.

201. The AFC Chair highlighted that delegations had further queries on specific items of importance with respect to the Audited Financial Statements and given their technical detail, they were requested to submit these queries in writing, to ensure that an adequate response is provided. He informed that the AFC took note of the Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, and the 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund, and decided to submit them to the Council.

202. The AFC Chair informed that, on the Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor, it was noted that there should be a clear separation between operational management and oversight governance. It was further noted that the outcome of this proposed process is dependent on the establishment of the proposed Oversight Audit Committee. He stated that the AFC took note of the report and the comments made.

203. The AFC Chair reported that the Committee took note of the Report of the Director-General on Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel and agreed to recommend renewing the same six members for a further term of two years. The AFC also took note of the Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA, and agreed with the recommendation contained therein.

204. He further informed that the AFC considered the Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken and decided to submit it to the Council for its consideration.

205. Noting the forthcoming end of the two-year tenure of the existing AFC members at the twenty-ninth Council meeting, the AFC Chair thanked the UAE, represented by Dr Nawal Al Hosany, as Vice-Chair, and all members of the AFC for their hard work, support, insights and inputs, which were vital to the work of the Committee. He expressed hope that the Membership finds the AFC to have fulfilled its objective of strengthening the administrative and institutional framework of IRENA, for the betterment of the Agency, its Members, and the important role that all Members play in the global energy transition.

206. The Council took note of the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in document C/29/CRP/3, as well as the proposals and recommendations contained therein.

a. Human Resources Management

i. Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends (C/29/4)

207. The Deputy Director-General presented the Report on Human Resources Management and Trends (C/29/4) and informed that no revisions were made to the report since it was transmitted to the Membership as an advanced copy in May 2025.

208. The Director of Administration and Management Services (AMS), Ms Jelena Barnes, delivered a presentation ([available at this link](#)) on the ongoing human resources initiatives and human resources trends at the Agency.

209. The Chair of the Council noted that the Internal Audit Office is currently staffed by one professional staff member, and requested information on when the Internal Auditor is expected to be appointed. Ms Barnes informed that a vacancy announcement was launched in 2024 and the selected candidate later informed that he was unable to relocate to the duty station prior to the end of 2026. The candidate was therefore placed on the roster for future opportunities and a vacancy announcement for the role was relaunched, with recruitment underway. In response to this, the Chair of the Council requested detailed information on when the vacancy announcement was relaunched, the closing date for applications, and when a decision would be made on the appointment of the Internal Auditor. Ms Barnes stated that on average, the length of time between the closing date for applications and the onboarding of the selected candidate can take between six to eight months, depending on the status of the selected candidate and their onboarding, as well as visa processing and security clearance. She acknowledged that the role of the Internal Auditor is critical, and stated that the Secretariat will endeavour to accelerate the recruitment and appointment process.

210. On request of the Chair of the Council, Mr Andrey Timoshenko, Chief of Human Resources, provided a response and stated that the vacancy was readvertised at the end of July 2025 and the closing date for applications was August 2025. He stated that the Internal Auditor is expected to be appointed in the first quarter of 2026. The Chair of the Council noted that the Internal Audit Office has been functioning with only one staff member for a significant amount of time, and requested the Secretariat to prioritise and expedite the appointment of the Internal Auditor.

211. A delegation (written statement [at this link](#)) noted that the Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends is based on data up to 31 March 2025, and stated that the Membership would require more information to have a well-informed discussion. The delegation further noted that the Report indicates that succession plans have not been followed due to budget constraints, leaving key positions unfilled, and requested clarification on the criteria applied by the Secretariat in deciding which positions would be filled, and which would remain vacant. The delegation observed with concern that many recent hires have been the result of internal transfers or promotions, including from Service Contractors or Associate Professionals, and requested clarity on the rationale for this approach.

212. The delegation raised serious concern on the balance between staffing and consultancy expenditures, and noted that, based on the Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, for every USD 1.00 spent on staff, around USD 1.50 was spent on consultants, with this figure being higher in 2023. The delegation observed that this suggests a high reliance on external expertise, and requested context on how this compares with other international organisations, as well as the rationale for maintaining such a balance.

213. The delegation informed that it had made a similar intervention on these points during the AFC meeting, as reported by the Chair of the AFC. The delegation noted however, that the response provided by the Secretariat was vague and incomplete, and therefore requested specific answers to its concerns regarding data timeliness, succession planning, and reliance on consultants:

- Data timeliness: Could the Secretariat indicate when updated HR data will be available to the Council, and whether the Membership can expect to receive such data on a more regular basis going forward?
- Succession planning: What specific criteria or benchmarks are used to determine which vacant positions are prioritised for recruitment, and how does this align with the Agency's strategic priorities?
- Reliance on consultants: Has the Secretariat undertaken any benchmarking with comparable international organisations to assess whether IRENA's level of reliance on

consultants is within the norm, or whether it indicates a structural issue that needs to be addressed?

214. In light of these points raised, the delegation requested that the Secretariat provide updated human resources data, further clarity on recruitment criteria, and comparative benchmarking on consultancy reliance in advance of the thirtieth Council meeting, to allow the Membership to consider these matters on the basis of complete and current information. The delegation stressed that this request is being made in the spirit of strengthening the Agency's governance and ensuring that the Council has the necessary information to exercise effective oversight.

215. A delegation welcomed the positive trend of a reduction in vacancy rates, and an increase in the average length of service of staff. The delegation noted that, as mentioned by the Secretariat, the process of filling vacancies is sometimes delayed due to financial pressures. In this context, the delegation requested clarity on whether the Secretariat is certain that positions at the senior levels of P5 and above will be filled at all, and which, if any, positions the Secretariat is considering for removal.

216. The Deputy Director-General, in reference to the specific questions that were raised by the delegation in paragraphs 211 to 215, assured that detailed answers will be provided prior to the thirtieth Council meeting, and integrated into the sessional documentation package for that meeting.

217. On the criteria for determining which senior staff positions are prioritised for recruitment, Ms Barnes informed that each Division Director identifies key priorities for the upcoming period. While certain positions had to be kept vacant for a period of time to accumulate savings for the biennium, the Secretariat ensured that key priorities for the Work Programme during the period were not compromised, with some Divisions undertaking additional responsibilities within their existing capacities to enable the Agency to progress financially through the biennium. Ms Barnes stated that in the case of critical positions which cannot be kept vacant, such recruitments are advertised ahead of the incumbent staff member's departure, to accelerate the recruitment and onboarding process. She noted the requests made by Members for further information, and confirmed that additional details on these criteria and the specific succession plans being undertaken will be provided in the Report that will be presented to the thirtieth Council meeting.

218. The Council took note of the Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends, contained in document C/29/4, and the interventions and recommendations made on these matters, as well as the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in document C/29/CRP/3.

ii. Draft Policy on Individual Consultants (C/29/5)

219. The Deputy Director-General provided an update on the Draft Policy on Individual Consultants (C/29/5) and informed that it was developed to align IRENA's consultancy framework with UN standards as well as the recommendations issued by the Internal Audit Office. She stated that the Draft Policy was presented to the Council at its twenty-eighth meeting in 2024, to inform its recommendation on the Draft decision on Break in Service for Re-employment of Former Staff Members as well as on the conditions for engaging consultants and former staff members. She informed that the present document has been updated to reflect requests made by Members during the AFC meeting on 4 August 2025, including on provisions clarifying the conditions under which a spouse of the Director-General may be engaged as a consultant, and additional data on the diversity and costs of consultants.

220. The Director of AMS, Ms Jelena Barnes, delivered a presentation ([available at this link](#)) on the updates made to the Draft Policy on Individual Consultants.

221. The Chair of the AFC, Tonga, represented by H.E. Mr 'Akau'ola, informed the Council of the AFC's deliberations on the matter, as contained in C/29/CRP/3. He reported that a number of comments were made regarding preferential treatment in relation to family members, the approving authority for the engagement of family members as consultants, and expanding the definition of "family members" in the Draft Policy. It was further noted that if a consultancy role is located within the immediate office of the Director-General, the Director-General should not serve as the approving authority for the engagement of such individuals as consultants. The AFC Chair stated that some new modality for approving authority would therefore need to be explored and incorporated into the Draft Policy.

222. The AFC Chair reported that, in considering the document, the AFC noted that there may be other areas of the Draft Policy requiring further refinement, including the provisions included in Annex V to the document. He further reported that several comments and observations were made in this regard, and that there are still open questions on these issues that require further clarification. The requested provisions would also have to be integrated, for the Draft Policy to be considered by the thirtieth Council.

223. A delegation (written statement [at this link](#)) stated that it is important to include a clear provision that immediate family members of staff (spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister, or brother) should not be engaged as consultants. The delegation noted that, given the relatively small size of the Agency and the tendency for consultants to be retained for longer periods than staff in some cases, such a safeguard is necessary to avoid any perception of conflict of interest, and to uphold the integrity of the Agency's recruitment practices.

224. The Council took note of the Draft Policy on Individual Consultants, contained in document C/29/5, and the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in document C/29/CRP/3.

225. The Council requested the Secretariat to make the necessary adjustments to the Draft Policy on Individual Consultants, for consideration at the thirtieth meeting of the Council.

b. Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024 (C/29/6)

226. The Director of AMS, Ms Jelena Barnes, delivered a presentation ([available at this link](#)) on the Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, as contained in C/29/6.

227. A delegation referred to Note 4 on page 18 of the Audited Financial Statements, concerning cash and cash equivalents. The delegation pointed out that cash on hand is indicated as USD 12,000 as of December 2024, and asked whether this refers to petty cash, and if so, why the Agency is holding a significant amount of cash on hand. If this does not refer to petty cash, the delegation requested clarification on the source of this cash, as well as the policy on depositing cash received into the bank in a timely manner – whether this is done a day, week, month, or six months upon receipt.

228. Ms Barnes informed that the amount of USD 12,000 refers to operating cash, which is required for minor operating expenses such terminal expenses, or for staff that travel on missions, and that this is regularly reconciled.

229. In response to a request by the delegation for clarity on whether operating cash is mainly used for staff travel, Mr Ziyaad Asvat, Chief Finance Officer, explained that this cash on hand, in US dollars, is kept in a safe and disbursed when staff are traveling on mission and need to pay terminal expenses to eligible Member delegates attending a specific event or meeting organised by IRENA, and that this usually amounts to around USD 200 per person based on the delegate and the travel destination. He stated that this practice is more convenient than going to the bank to convert money into actual dollars in hand, so that the cash is readily available to be passed on to Member delegates that are entitled to these terminal expenses when attending any meeting or event organised by IRENA.

230. In response to the explanation provided, the delegation noted that such events and meetings are planned in advance, which would provide enough time to go to the bank to withdraw the necessary funds, as needed. The delegation observed that the current practice of having a large amount of money in a safe as a matter of convenience for travel expenses is not prudent, and that petty cash for incidentals is supposed to be much lower. The delegation expressed the view that there is a need to revisit such a practice, to minimise any associated risks.

231. The Deputy Director-General noted the view expressed by the delegation and stated that the Secretariat will review the current practice and revert accordingly.

232. The delegation raised an additional question on payables and accruals, and noted that these are recorded as amounting to around USD 4 million. Reiterating the question that it had raised during the AFC meeting, the delegation requested a response from the Secretariat on how much of this amount relates to credit card balances, and whether the Agency reconciles its credit card statements every month and posts the necessary expenses to the respective line items on the financial statements.

233. In response to this question, Mr Asvat confirmed that the Agency does have credit cards in operation, which amounted to around USD 6,000 of the payables balance as of 31 December 2024. He explained that these credit cards operate as debit orders and that the bank automatically clears the outstanding dues prior to the deadline, thereby ensuring that no interest is accrued by the Agency. Mr Asvat further explained that these credit cards are reconciled on a monthly basis, based on supporting documentation that is submitted.

234. The delegation referred to Statement V on page 11 of the Audited Financial Statements, relating to a comparison of budget and actual amounts across Divisions, for the year ended 31 December 2024. The delegation noted that two Divisions stand out due to the significant variance between budgeted and actual expenditure – the Office of the Director-General (ODG), which recorded a variance of USD 1.8 million, and the Knowledge, Policy and Finance Centre (KPFC), which recorded a variance of USD 1.6 million. The delegation went on to observe that the actual amount recorded by KPFC was USD 6.9 million, while the original and final approved budget was recorded as USD 5.3 million, and requested an explanation on this variance. The delegation further observed that the actual amounts are around 21% over the final budget for ODG, and 32% over the final budget for KPFC, and requested clarification on what is driving these variances, and how these amounts will be recovered, if at all.

235. In response to this question, Ms Barnes stated that the Audited Financial Statements reflect the financial situation of the Agency at the end of 2024, which was the first year of the current biennium (2024-2025). She explained that, as the budget is approved for the biennium, the Secretariat can incur obligations during the first year of the period, which will be carried over to the second year of the same period as open obligations rather than over-expenditures. In the case of the two Divisions that were cited, Ms Barnes informed that the timing of staff contract

extensions took place in such a way that these obligations were open and carried to the following period. She advised Members that the Secretariat has internal controls and safeguards in place that prevent overspending on approved budgets, and expressed that the Secretariat stands ready to provide any further clarification, as needed.

236. The delegation requested the Secretariat to provide an overview of the trends relating to the collection of assessed contributions and voluntary contributions, in percentages, and what efforts have been made to reach out to those who have outstanding contributions. The delegation further requested clarification on the implications of outstanding contributions on the Work Programme and operations of the Agency.

237. In response to this question, Ms Barnes informed that 98% of core assessed contributions have been collected for the period closing 31 December 2024, and that the Secretariat is actively following up with Members on their outstanding contributions, including by submitting formal requests for payment. She further informed that, with regard to the current financial period, 66% of assessed contributions have been collected as of 31 August 2025, which represents a normal trend as some Members make payments later in the year. She stated that the Secretariat continues to follow up through formal as well as bilateral means, and expressed expectation that Members will continue to pay their core assessed contributions in a timely manner. On core non-assessed contributions, she reported that a 100% collection rate has always been achieved, including in 2025, for which contributions from the Governments of Germany and the United Arab Emirates have been paid on time. In terms of voluntary contributions and the risks of outstanding contributions, Ms Barnes informed that the Secretariat processes allocations or allotments for activities that are to be funded from voluntary contributions based on funds received – meaning that while pledges or agreements with higher values may exist, the Secretariat allots funds based only on what is received, thereby protecting the Agency from any overspending.

238. The Chair of the Council proposed that the delegation referred to in paragraphs 227 to 237 submits the rest of its questions to the Secretariat in writing within three working days, and that the Secretariat, within three working days of receipt, provides a response to these questions with supporting documentation. The delegation agreed with the proposal of the Chair, and requested that the response from the Secretariat is made available to Council members to ensure that they are well-informed on some of the figures reflected in the Audited Financial Statements. The Chair agreed with the delegation on the importance of access to information, and requested the Secretariat to make its response available to Council members and the IRENA Membership.¹

239. The Council took note of the Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, contained in document C/29/6, as well as the issues raised on this matter in the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in document C/29/CRP/3, and agreed to transmit it to the Assembly at its sixteenth session.

c. 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA (C/29/7)

240. The interim Chair of the Staff Provident Fund Management Board, Mr Ziyaad Asvat, informed that the financial statements of the Staff Provident Fund for 2024, as contained in document C/29/7, were audited by the external auditor of the Agency, Lochan & Co. He informed that the external auditor rendered an unqualified audit opinion, confirming that the financial

¹ Following the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, a delegation provided a written statement on the Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, which is available [at this link](#).

statement represent fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Staff Provident Fund. Mr Asvat further informed that as of 31 December 2024, the Staff Provident Fund had 191 participants, and that the Provident Fund Management Board convened formally once in 2024.

241. The Council took note of the 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on the Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA, contained in document C/29/7, as well as issues raised on this matter in the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in document C/29/CRP/3, and agreed to transmit it to the Assembly at its sixteenth session.

d. Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor (C/29/8)

242. The Director of AMS, Ms Jelena Barnes, delivered a presentation ([available at this link](#)) on the Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor, contained in C/29/8.

243. A delegation expressed that it was timely to revisit this process based on experience since the establishment of the Agency in 2011. The delegation referred to the three proposed models for the selection and appointment of the external auditor, outlined in document C/29/8, and stated that it is most favourable to model two – strategic oversight – which would moderately enhance Member involvement and oversight while the Secretariat would remain responsible for leading and managing the selection process.

244. A delegation expressed appreciation for the Secretariat's comprehensive presentation of the various options for enhancing transparency and Member involvement in the selection of the external auditor. The delegation expressed the view that integrating an oversight governance structure into the selection process is prudent, while maintaining a clear separation between operational management and oversight governance. In this context, the delegation proposed a hybrid approach combining the elements of model two and model three, where the Secretariat retains operational responsibility as outlined in model two, while an independent oversight committee conducts a review of the entire selection process before it is reviewed by the Council and approved by the Assembly.

245. The delegation noted that the oversight audit committee has not yet been constituted and the Council's discussion on the proposed process for the selection and appointment of the external auditor therefore remains notional at this stage. The delegation further underlined the need to take up this matter once the governance mechanism for the Oversight Audit Committee is formally established.

246. A delegation acknowledged the rationale for greater transparency and Membership involvement alongside the need to maintain operational efficiency and a clear division of labour. The delegation noted the added value of creating an oversight audit committee, and stated that it is favourable to option two – strategic oversight.

247. The Council noted that the outcome of the proposed process for the selection and appointment of the external auditor is dependent on the establishment of the Oversight Audit Committee and agreed to continue its discussions on the matter after the Oversight Audit Committee is established.

e. **Matters relating to Arbitration**

i. **Report of the Director-General on Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel (C/29/9)**

248. The Chair referred the Council to the report on the Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel (C/29/9) as well as the Report of the Chair of the AFC (C/29/CRP/3).

249. **The Council took note of the Report of the Director-General on Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel contained in document C/29/9 and approved the six candidates to serve on the Arbitration Panel for a two-year term from 19 August 2025 to 18 August 2027.**

ii. **Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA (C/29/10)**

250. The IRENA Legal Advisor, Ms Shavonna Maxwell, introduced the Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA and informed that during the two-year period covered by the report, two requests for arbitration were received. The first request was received in March 2024 from a staff member appealing a final decision of the Director-General. Following conclusion of the proceedings, the award was issued by the arbitrator and communicated to the parties in June 2025, with the arbitrator finding in favour of the Agency. The final award is binding on both the staff member and IRENA, and has been fully implemented in accordance with Rule 27 of the Arbitration Rules.

251. Ms Maxwell stated that the second request received in June 2025 from a former staff member also seeking to appeal a final decision of the Director-General. However, as the notice of arbitration was filed without compliance with Rules 1 and 3 of the Arbitration Rules and was subsequently abandoned by the claimant, the matter is considered closed.

252. Ms Maxwell further referred to Rule 7, Paragraph 3 of the IRENA provisional Arbitration Rules, which states that arbitrators are appointed for a renewable term of two years. She stated that, to ensure continuity and to avoid any gap in the operation of the arbitration system, it is proposed to amend Rule 7, Paragraph 3, to provide that the arbitrators may remain in service for a period of two years or until such time they are replaced on the arbitration panel by the Council. She also stated that it is proposed to add a new paragraph to Rule 7, to establish procedures in the event of vacancies on the arbitration panel. She informed that the precise textual revisions that are proposed are set out in document C/29/10.

253. Ms Maxwell stated that in view of the Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA, the Council may wish to consider the report and recommend that the Assembly approve, at its sixteenth session, the proposed amendments to Rule 7 of the provisional Arbitration Rules, and additionally recommend that the Assembly request the Director-General, after consultation with the staff representative body, to submit, at its eighteenth session, a report on the operation of the arbitration system, including any recommendations or comments made by arbitrators on the need for amendments to the arbitration rules, if applicable.

254. **The Council took note of the Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA, contained in document C/29/10, and agreed to transmit it to the Assembly at its sixteenth session.**

f. Matters relating to Ethics**i. Report of the Ethics Advisory Board (C/29/11; C/29/11/Add.1)**

255. The Chair of the Ethics Advisory Board, the United Arab Emirates, represented by H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany, delivered the Report of the Ethics Advisory Board (EAB) on behalf of EAB members, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America. She informed that during its two-year mandate, the Ethics Advisory Board met on several occasions to conduct its work, including with the Secretariat and the Ethics Officer of IRENA. She stated that these discussions focused on strengthening the Agency's ethics framework to align with international standards, including the updating of existing rules, regulations, and oversight policies adopted at the Agency's inception; addressing allegations of misconduct and other submissions by staff; monitoring compliance with mandates, guidance, and requests from the Governing Bodies and the EAB; and observing and reviewing the implementation of ethics policies, with the objective of fostering an ethical organisational culture, in line with the policies that were strengthened and adopted at the fifteenth session of the Assembly in January 2025.

256. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany recalled that the EAB proposed four key decisions at the fifteenth session of the Assembly, aimed at harmonising IRENA's ethics framework with international standards and reinforcing a culture of respect, accountability, and integrity across all levels of the Agency, including staff, the Director-General, and other personnel. She noted that, in addition to the revision of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest, three new policies were adopted by the Assembly at its fifteenth session: the Policy on Handling Allegations of Unsatisfactory Conduct and Misconduct against the Director-General, and on Investigations and the Disciplinary Process for such Conduct; the Policy on Protection Against Retaliation for Reporting Misconduct or Cooperating with Duly Authorized Audits and Investigations; and the Policy Addressing Prohibited Conduct, including Fraud, Corruption, Financial Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment, including Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority.

257. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany further recalled that the EAB also recommended a revision of its Terms of Reference, to ensure alignment with these new policies and to address gaps identified during its mandate. She informed that, in co-operation with the Secretariat, the EAB worked on updating the Code of Conduct, identifying remaining gaps and ensuring consistency and comprehensiveness across all ethics-related policies. She further informed that the revised Code of Conduct was finalised in May 2025 and applied provisionally, pending submission for approval at the sixteenth Assembly.

258. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany reported that the EAB's work on advice and guidance largely centred on reviewing draft policies and proposals, offering recommendations to strengthen them, and monitoring the implementation of the policies adopted at the fifteenth session of the Assembly. She further reported that over the past two years, the EAB received four complaints or allegations – three complaints relating to the Director-General, and one complaint relating to financial management.

259. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany noted that compliance with ethics policies is fundamental for IRENA's credibility and accountability. She stated that the policies adopted at the fifteenth Assembly, the revised Code of Conduct, and the updated Terms of Reference of the Ethics Advisory Board constitute a comprehensive framework for ethical decision-making, cultivating a positive work environment, and mitigating legal and reputational risks – she underlined that the EAB therefore emphasises the importance of their timely and consistent implementation.

260. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany reported on a number of observations made by the EAB in the course of its work. Among these, on the timeliness of implementation, she noted that while the policies were adopted at the fifteenth Assembly, their dissemination and roll-out took approximately three months, as indicated in the Secretariat's communication of 17 April 2025 to the EAB. She stated that the EAB notes, with concern, this delay, given that these policies reflect the Agency's guiding principles and values. Similarly, the Code of Conduct required more than a year to finalise and remains provisionally applied. The EAB recommends ongoing dialogue with the Secretariat to secure assurances that all ethics policies are being implemented effectively.

261. On training and awareness, H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany noted that no evidence has been provided on training or awareness-raising activities for staff on the newly adopted policies. For this reason, the EAB recommends that the Secretariat, in consultation with the EAB, develop a comprehensive training and engagement plan to ensure staff awareness and understanding at the earliest opportunity.

262. With regard to reporting and protection from retaliation, H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany noted that there remains a lack of clarity on reporting procedures and mechanisms that would allow staff to raise concerns or report misconduct without fear of retaliation. She stated that despite the adoption of a dedicated policy on the matter, no updates have been provided on its practical implementation or related training, and that the EAB therefore urges the Secretariat to prioritise this matter.

263. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany recalled that, in line with international practice, the EAB transmitted a report of an investigation to the Council at its twenty-seventh meeting in June 2024, containing recommendations to address gaps in management practices. At that Council meeting, the EAB recommended that IRENA act on these recommendations, which included improving the dissemination of core communications; instituting ethics and professional behaviour training, with regular follow-up on violations; establishing robust requirements for the drafting and execution of Terms of Reference for IRENA roles; and addressing inconsistencies in performance evaluations and personnel record retention. She noted that the Secretariat was requested to provide updates on the implementation of those recommendations and while an update was promised following the twenty-eighth meeting of the Council in October 2024, no information has been received to date. She underlined that the EAB stresses that compliance must be taken seriously, and where delays occur, reasons should be communicated to the Membership.

264. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany noted that since its establishment, the EAB has relied on Secretariat support, including legal, administrative, and procedural advice. She stated that while this support has been valuable, limitations have been observed in both the scope and timeliness of advice provided. For this reason and to address possible conflicts of interest and align with international best practices, the draft revised Terms of Reference of the Ethics Advisory Board (C/29/11/Add.1) include the option of external support in exceptional circumstances. She further stated that the EAB recommends that the financial implications of this provision be duly considered.

265. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany stated that, on the basis of its two-year mandate and observations, the EAB recommends that the Council endorse its report and recommend to the Assembly, at its sixteenth session, the adoption of the draft decision revising the Terms of Reference of the Ethics Advisory Board. She recalled that the Assembly at its fifteenth session requested the EAB, working with the Secretariat, to review other regulatory instruments to ensure consistency across the Agency's framework. Owing to the limited implementation of the new policies, this exercise could not be completed prior to the preparation of the present report. She stated that the EAB therefore

recommends that its successor, with the support of the Secretariat, prioritise this task and provide a comprehensive analysis to the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

266. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany stated that the EAB underscores that effective implementation and compliance with the ethics policies are indispensable to strengthening the Agency's operations, ensuring a fair and supportive work environment, and safeguarding against reputational and legal risks.

267. The Council took note of the Report of the Ethics Advisory Board, contained in document C/29/11, and agreed to transmit the revised Terms of Reference for the Ethics Advisory Board, contained in document C/29/11/Add.1, to the Assembly at its sixteenth session for its consideration and adoption.

ii. Proposal on the Establishment of the Disciplinary Committee (C/29/12)

268. The Chair of the Ethics Advisory Board, H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany recalled that, at its twenty-seventh meeting, the Council took note of the Review of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for IRENA, as well as the recommendations of the Ethics Advisory Board contained in document C/27/8, and agreed that the Secretariat would work with the Ethics Advisory Board (EAB) to develop policies on the specific issues outlined in that document. She further recalled that, at its twenty-eighth meeting, the Council received four ethics-related policies for its consideration, which were subsequently adopted by the Assembly at its fifteenth session through decision A/15/DC/5. This included the Policy on Handling Allegations of Unsatisfactory Conduct and Misconduct against the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency, and on Investigations and the Disciplinary Process for such Conduct (A/15/12).

269. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany noted that Section 2.1.11 of the abovementioned Policy calls for the establishment of an IRENA Council Disciplinary Committee to advise the President of the Assembly on matters concerning disciplinary proceedings against the Director-General for alleged misconduct, and further provides that the Committee shall be composed of the Chair of the Council and four members designated by the Council, one from each of the four regional groups mentioned in Rule 69 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

270. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany recalled that the Assembly, through its decision A/15/DC/5, requested the Council to initiate discussions at its twenty-ninth meeting to establish the Committee. In this context, she invited the Council to consider, in its discussions, the process for designation of the four Council members who, together with the Chair of the Council, will comprise the Committee, and their alternates; as well as the preparation of the Rules of Procedure for the Committee setting out the procedures to govern the meetings and proceedings of the Committee, incorporating appropriate safeguards to ensure due process and the protection of privacy rights of the parties involved, and the confidentiality of information. She further invited the Council to request the Secretariat, in consultation with the EAB, to prepare draft Rules of Procedure for the Committee, for consideration by the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

271. The Council took note of the Proposal on the Establishment of the Disciplinary Committee, contained in document C/29/12, as presented by the Chair of the Ethics Advisory Board.

272. The Council requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Ethics Advisory Board, to prepare draft Rules of Procedure for the Disciplinary Committee, for consideration by the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

iii. Draft Policy Against Fraud, Corruption or other Financial Misconduct (C/29/13)

273. The Chair of the Ethics Advisory Board, H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany recalled that the Council, at its twenty-seventh meeting, received from the Ethics Advisory Board (EAB) a review of IRENA's Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest (C/27/8). She further recalled that, in that review, the EAB identified several gaps in IRENA's regulatory framework and recommended the development of additional policies to strengthen the Agency's ethics and accountability standards. Subsequently, at its twenty-eighth meeting, the Council received four ethics-related policies, which were recommended to and adopted by the Assembly at its fifteenth session.

274. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany informed that, in order to address the EAB's remaining recommendation relating to the establishment of provisions on proper financial conduct and anti-fraud measures, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Ethics Advisory Board, prepared the draft Policy Against Fraud, Corruption and Other Financial Misconduct. She stated that the draft Policy is comprehensive and is designed to ensure that all staff members and non-staff personnel, as well as all vendors, implementing partners and other persons and entities interacting with IRENA, are fully aware that fraud, corruption, and other forms of financial misconduct are strictly prohibited and must be prevented. It further provides that any such incidents are to be reported, assessed, and, where warranted, investigated in accordance with IRENA's regulations, rules, and procedures, so that timely and appropriate corrective action can be taken to safeguard the Agency's assets, interests, and reputation.

275. H.E. Dr Nawal Al Hosany stated that, in presenting this draft Policy, the EAB underscores the Agency's ongoing commitment to the highest standards of integrity and sound financial management.

276. The Council took note of the Draft Policy Against Fraud, Corruption or other Financial Misconduct, contained in document C/29/13, and agreed to transmit it to the Assembly at its sixteenth session.

iv. Appointment of members of the Ethics Advisory Board

277. The Chair of the Council recalled that at its twenty-fifth meeting in May 2023, the Council appointed Germany, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America to the Ethics Advisory Board for a two-year term, until the end of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council.

278. The Chair of the Council informed that, in response to the call for expressions of interest that was circulated on 2 September 2025, the nominations of Togo, the United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe are proposed to serve on the Ethics Advisory Board for a two-year term, from 2025 to 2027.

279. The Council appointed Togo, the United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe as members of the Ethics Advisory Board for a two-year term, from 2025 to 2027.

280. The Chair of the Council congratulated Togo, the United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe on their appointment to the Ethics Advisory Board and expressed confidence in their ability to fulfil this responsibility.

281. A delegation congratulated the newly appointed members of the Ethics Advisory Board and noted that it did not receive the call for expressions of interest. The Secretariat clarified that Council members serving for 2025 and for 2026 are eligible for nomination to the Ethics Advisory Board, and that the call for expressions of interest was sent only to those Members who were eligible.

g. Matters relating to Internal Audit

i. Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken (C/29/14)

282. The Deputy Director-General presented the report on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken (C/29/14) and informed that during the period from 21 September 2024 to 22 August 2025, the Internal Audit Office (IAO) submitted its Annual Audit Report to the Director-General, and a Comprehensive Audit Report to the External Auditor, both pertaining to the year 2024.

283. The Deputy Director-General reported that the IAO finalised its audit on the procurement processes of the Agency, with the objective of assessing whether the procurement of goods and services are managed in an effective and efficient manner to obtain the best value for money for the Agency. She informed that this audit covered the areas of procurement governance, operations, contractual management, and ethics, and that recommendations were made by the IAO to help improve the procurement processes, bridge gaps between policy and operational practices, address specific risk areas, and enhance governance processes relating to procurement activities. She further informed that key recommendations from the audit on procurement processes, along with related management comments, are presented in document C/29/14.

284. The Deputy Director-General reported that during the same period, the IAO also followed up on past internal audit recommendations, and informed that the annex to document C/29/14 provides a summary of information on management actions taken to address previous internal audit recommendations, as well as a status of their implementation, accompanied by relevant statistics.

285. The Council took note of the Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken, contained in document C/29/14.

ii. Proposal for developing an Oversight Audit Committee and the Self-assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) Report (C/29/15; C/29/INF/2)

286. The Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC), Tonga, represented by H.E. Mr 'Akau'ola, informed the Council of the AFC's deliberations on the matter, as contained in C/29/CRP/3. He recalled that the Council, at its twenty-eighth meeting, identified key governance gaps relating to 'Direct Reporting Line' and 'Audit Committee', and tasked the Secretariat to suggest regulatory changes and a governance model for enhanced audit oversight and independence, in line with best practices across similar international organisations.

287. H.E. Mr 'Akau'ola reported that on 10 September 2025, the AFC discussed the matter on the establishment of an Oversight Audit Committee, outlined in document C/29/15, and that following these discussions at the AFC, consultations were held to provide a final recommendation to the Council.

288. H.E. Mr 'Akau'ola informed the Council that these consultations resulted in the recommendation to establish an independent Oversight Audit Committee, reporting directly to the Council. The Committee will be composed of four IRENA Members and may engage subject-matter experts, as required. He stated that this model, based on the Ethics Advisory Board, was selected to ensure independence, strengthen accountability, and reinforce the Council's commitment to transparency and sound governance.

289. H.E. Mr 'Akau'ola stated that the AFC is therefore recommending that the Council considers the establishment of an independent Oversight Audit Committee, reporting directly to the Council and composed of four IRENA Members, for further development at the thirtieth Council meeting, with the view to presenting a decision on this matter at the sixteenth session of the Assembly.

290. The Council took note of the Proposal for developing an Oversight Audit Committee, contained in documents C/29/15 and C/29/INF/2, as well as issues raised on this matter in the Report of the Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, contained in C/29/CRP/3.

291. The Council agreed with the recommendation of the Administration and Finance Committee on the establishment of an independent Oversight Audit Committee, reporting directly to the Council and composed of four IRENA Members, for further development at the thirtieth meeting of the Council, with the view to presenting a decision on this matter at the sixteenth session of the Assembly.

h. Committee membership and chairmanship (Administration and Finance Committee and Programme and Strategy Committee)

292. The Chair announced that the term of the current members of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC) and the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC) will come to an end at the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council. To this end, the Secretariat invited expressions of interest from the IRENA Membership with a deadline of 3 September 2025.

293. The Chair recalled that the Council² encouraged the two Committees to continue conducting their business in a transparent, inclusive, and participatory manner, thus providing all Members of the Agency the opportunity to participate equally in all Committee activities.

294. The Chair informed that Council that, with the support of the Vice-Chair, Cyprus, he had consulted with several delegations on the composition of the Committees.

295. The Chair announced that the proposal for the membership of the AFC for 2025 to 2027 is Bahamas, China, Costa Rica, Commonwealth of Dominica, Germany, Iran, Italy, Peru and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

296. The Chair further announced that the proposal for the membership of the PSC for 2025 to 2027 is Bangladesh, Barbados, China, El Salvador, Germany, Iran, Italy, Japan and Zimbabwe, and sought the agreement of the Council to his proposal on the membership of the AFC and the PSC.

² C/3/DC/3, available [at this link](#).

297. The Chair informed the Council that there is a Member, Saint Lucia, that raised the issue that they did not receive the expression, similar to the situation of Germany. The Chair also stated that Tuvalu sent an expression of interest after the deadline.

298. The Chair stated that, if the Council would agree, and if there is no opposition, he would take that Saint Lucia would be member 10 of the AFC, and Tuvalu as member 10 of the PSC, in which case there are 10 and 10 in respect to Tuvalu and the concern of Saint Lucia that they did not receive the expression of interest, in the same line that Germany had expressed previously. The Chair stated that if there is no opposition to this, it is so decided.

299. The Chair conveyed that an expression of interest was received from the Commonwealth of Dominica to serve as Chair of the AFC, and from the UAE to serve as Vice-Chair. He further conveyed that an expression of interest was received from Italy to serve as Chair of the PSC, and from Zimbabwe to serve as Vice-Chair.

300. The Council appointed Bahamas, China, Costa Rica, Commonwealth of Dominica, Germany, Iran, Italy, Peru, Saint Lucia, and the United Arab Emirates as the members of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC) for 2025 to 2027.

301. The Council agreed and appointed the Commonwealth of Dominica as Chair, and the United Arab Emirates as Vice-Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC).

302. The Council appointed Bangladesh, Barbados, China, El Salvador, Germany, Iran, Italy, Japan, Tuvalu, and Zimbabwe as members of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC) for 2025 to 2027.

303. The Council agreed and appointed Italy as Chair, and Zimbabwe as Vice-Chair of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC).

304. The Chair congratulated the new members of the Committees and wished them success in their deliberations. He thanked the outgoing Committee members for their insightful and constructive discussions, as well as for the valuable feedback and guidance in the implementation of the work of the Agency.

Agenda Item 9: Report of the Open-Ended Group on the Establishment of Regional Offices of IRENA (C/29/16)

305. The Chair of the Council introduced the item and informed that the Open-Ended Group on the Establishment of Regional Offices of IRENA held its fifth meeting on 29 April 2025. The Chair invited Egypt, Facilitator of the Open-Ended Group, to report on the outcome of the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Group (OEG).

306. Egypt recalled that the Council, at its twenty-eighth meeting, took note of the Report by the Facilitator of the Open-Ended Group and the interventions made and invited Egypt, as Facilitator, to provide a reflection on the matter for consideration by the Council at its twenty-ninth meeting. The Council also agreed to request the Secretariat to address the issues raised by Members. Egypt reported that the fifth OEG meeting, held in virtual format, was attended by 21 participants representing 15 IRENA Members, and thanked them for the feedback and insights provided.

307. Egypt outlined that the fifth meeting focused on exchanging views and advancing the discussion in a structured and inclusive manner, towards a final reflection on this matter for consideration by Council at its twenty-ninth meeting. He informed the Council that a detailed summary of the discussions was prepared with the support of the Secretariat, and transmitted to the Membership in document C/29/16.

308. Egypt reported that participants expressed appreciation for the compilation document and stated their expectations for detailed information and clarity from the Secretariat on various issues such as the vision and strategy of IRENA for the coming years, particularly in relation to regional engagement; the strategic, functional and financial aspects of the establishment of regional offices; budgetary implications; formal decision-making process; and overall direction guiding regional engagement.

309. Egypt further highlighted that one participant recalled the informal meeting of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC) held in March 2025, where requests were made for additional information on regional initiatives and clarity on intended objectives and implementation plans. Egypt further reported that another participant noted that discussions on regional offices have remained vague and lacked direction since the first OEG meeting and suggested re-directing the discussion on regional offices towards a review of existing and planned regional initiatives, with the Director-General reporting back to Members on a detailed account of ongoing regional activities, including their implementation, strategic objectives and budgetary implications.

310. Egypt shared the proposal made by that participant to conclude the current Agenda Item on regional offices and replace it with a new item, requesting the Secretariat to present detailed updates on current and future regional initiatives. The delegation also highlighted that participants underlined that investment gaps remain, particularly in Southeast Asia, where significant modernisation and scaling up of solar, wind and geothermal projects are still needed, and highlighted the value of IRENA's reports in guiding access to financing and mobilising broader stakeholder engagement in the region's energy transition.

311. Egypt conveyed to the Council the recommendation of the Open-Ended Group to conclude the discussion on the establishment of the regional offices and replace it with a new item requesting the Secretariat to present detailed updates on current and future regional initiatives.

312. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for the report by the Facilitator on the outcome of the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Group.

313. One delegation reiterated its longstanding opposition to the creation of any regional office, emphasising that such offices would dilute the Headquarters of the Agency and have financial implications. Delegations urged that the mandate of the Open-Ended Group be terminated and the agenda item on regional offices be removed, underlining that time should be spent on more important matters such as access to funding for developing economies.

314. Another delegation noted that the discussion on regional offices has engaged Members for over two years with very little tangible progress, and proposed concluding this Agenda Item to focus efforts on existing initiatives that show momentum, rather than pursuing the establishment of regional offices. Delegations requested the Secretariat to provide comprehensive, transparent plans on current and forthcoming regional strategies, initiatives, and partnerships, including organisational structures, governance mechanisms, objectives, and associated budgets, using established formats such the Programme and Strategy Committee or the Council, under a dedicated item or under the reporting on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget.

315. One delegation requested that Members supporting the establishment of regional offices provide a written proposal outlining the reasoning, intended aims, and overall framework, to allow the Council to consider the matter comprehensively and in an informed manner. The delegation noted that the consideration of this item in its current form has not proven useful, and that to ensure efficiency and constructive progress, discussions should be redirected toward a clear, evidence-based proposal that aligns with IRENA's strategic priorities.

316. One delegation emphasised that international co-operation is central to building a sustainable and resilient energy future, and that IRENA's expertise can help unlock financing for all regions through analytical and advisory work. The delegation stressed the importance of strengthening IRENA's regional outreach through initiatives and partnerships such as the Singapore–IRENA High-Level Forum and Regional Energy Transition Outlooks, reaffirming its support for deepening IRENA's regional presence.

317. One delegation expressed concern regarding re-opening the issue whenever new interest arises, emphasising that the topic should now be closed. The delegation recalled that the Secretariat was requested to provide information on current initiatives and strategic priorities, and reiterated that if there is a future need for regional offices, it should be guided by a clear strategy before considering new proposals.

318. One delegation requested clarification on the inception of the discussion on regional offices.

319. The Secretariat explained that the Council, at its twenty-fourth meeting considered a proposal made by Singapore to host a regional office of IRENA. After its deliberations, the Council agreed to create an Open-Ended Group in 2022 to discuss the viability of establishing regional offices of IRENA, including issues relating to strategic objectives, regional benefits, selection rules, and funding, among others. Following five meetings of the Open-Ended Group, Egypt, as the Facilitator of the Open-Ended Group, reported on the outcomes of each one of these meetings and informed the Council that at the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Group, there was a recommendation to conclude these discussions on the establishment of regional offices of IRENA and replace it with a new item requesting the Secretariat to present detailed updates on current and future regional initiatives.

320. The Chair thanked delegations and concluded that since the matter has been substantively discussed, the topic would remain dormant until interested Members present a concrete and financially viable proposal. The Chair underlined that discussions have been hypothetical and without a financial structure, emphasising that it is not useful to repeatedly re-visit a topic without substance or resources.

321. The Council agreed to conclude the discussions on the establishment of regional offices of IRENA. The Council also agreed to include an agenda item on Report on IRENA's Regional Partnerships and requested the Secretariat to present detailed updates on current and future regional initiatives under this item, for consideration by the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

Agenda Item 10: Issues relating to Process and Timelines for the Selection and Appointment of the next Director-General of IRENA (C/29/17; C/29/17/Add.1; C/29/17/Add.2)

322. The Chair informed the Council that in addition to document C/29/17, he had requested the Secretariat to prepare a note outlining key issues requiring clarity, including the composition of the Director-General Selection Committee (DGSC) and guidelines for its work, contained in C/29/17/Add.1. The Chair further noted that, at the request of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC), the Secretariat also prepared an overview of the conditions of service applied to the Director-General, contained in document C/29/17/Add.2.

323. The Chair underlined that the official launch of the process for the selection and appointment of the Director-General will take place at the sixteenth session of the Assembly in January 2026, and stressed the importance of initiating the planning process as soon as possible. As a first step, the Chair suggested that the Council considers the establishment of the Director-General Selection Committee (DGSC), composed of eight members and four alternates from among members of the Council in 2026. In this regard, the Chair proposed that, to facilitate early planning by the Regional Groups, a communication be sent to members of the Council in 2026 inviting expressions of interest to become members or alternates of the DGSC by the deadline of 15 October 2025.

324. The Chair sought clarification on whether the terms of reference of the DGSC should be discussed by the Council at its thirtieth meeting, followed by the Assembly, or is to be considered as the first task of the DGSC, when appointed.

325. The Secretariat clarified that the DGSC would be entrusted with determining its terms of reference, guided by the provisions included in the addendum to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council of IRENA (A/5/5). The Secretariat further underlined that it remains incumbent upon the Council to provide any guidance to the DGSC for that Committee to take into consideration once officially launched.

326. Delegations thanked the Secretariat for preparing the guiding document, stating that it provides a very good basis for discussion and outlining various issues relating to the process and timelines for the selection and appointment of the next Director-General. Delegations noted that the work undertaken provides a good general understanding of the overall framework and process of the selection, including how other international organisations have set up their selection process.

327. Delegations also expressed appreciation to the Chair of the Council and the Secretariat for the background information and the detailed work on this matter, as well as for the opportunity to provide written submissions on the selection and appointment process of the next Director-General.

328. Noting that the current era of the renewable energy sector is different from that when IRENA was founded, one delegation expressed that it is timely to reflect on the process of selecting the Agency's next Director-General. Delegations highlighted that the choice of Director-General is critical to IRENA's future direction, global influence, and role in advancing renewable energy, and will represent a key moment in its history.

329. Delegations emphasised that the selection of the next Director-General must remain strictly merit-based, focusing on qualifications, vision, and suitability for the role rather than political considerations. Delegations also underscored the need for a transparent, well-organised, and inclusive process, ensuring that all Members, including those not serving on the Council or on the

DGSC, are kept fully informed of the various steps and progress throughout 2026, leading to the appointment of the next Director-General at the Assembly in 2027.

330. One delegation, as host of the IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre (IITC), expressed its special interest in ensuring that a highly qualified candidate is selected. Other delegations echoed the importance of a selection process based on relevant skills and competencies, and in this regard, highlighted the need to ensure that the vacancy announcement and the various channels of its dissemination and timely circulation attract a pool of candidates that, in addition to the required competencies, reflect geography and gender diversity.

331. One delegation welcomed the early planning of this process and underlined that the timelines for selecting and appointing the next Director-General of IRENA, concluding with the Assembly in January 2027, provide sufficient time to ensure a robust process. Another delegation highlighted that existing consultation mechanisms within Regional Groups and beyond may be outdated and too rigid, and called for more flexible and interactive approaches that would allow for open discussions in different forums so that the best candidate is selected. A delegation encouraged consultations among Members to facilitate consensus, and recommended that the proposed timeline include sufficient flexibility to allow such consultations to take place, particularly within the Latin America and the Caribbean Group.

332. One delegation also stressed the importance of balancing confidentiality with transparency in the modalities of interviews and the work of the DGSC, noting that these elements are essential to ensuring a process that is fully credible and trusted by all Members.

333. One delegation highlighted IRENA's near-universal Membership and its distinct voice in promoting the large-scale deployment of renewables, and noted that the Agency's continued success and relevance will depend on its ability to assert its prominence and convening power in a more crowded international landscape.

334. One delegation underscored the significance of the appointment of the next Director-General of IRENA, referring to it as a decisive moment for the Agency. Delegations highlighted the need for a Director-General with strong strategic leadership, technical expertise, and proven management skills in multilateral organisations, including experience in geopolitical and foreign policy dimensions of energy and climate protection.

335. Recognising the key role of the Director-General of IRENA in promoting a global, fair energy transition at a time when multilateral co-operation is more crucial than ever, delegations underlined the importance of a leader who can navigate complex multilateral negotiations, such as those within the contexts of G7, G20, and COP, and possesses strong crisis management capabilities as well as experience in emerging economies and SIDS, given their importance within IRENA.

336. Advocating for a transparent, inclusive, and fair process, delegations stressed that the selection criteria must ensure that the candidate with the competencies required for the position is chosen for this critical role. One delegation stated that the assessment of candidates should focus on competencies such as outstanding communication skills, vision, thought leadership, and diplomatic skills. Another delegation noted that the ideal candidate should understand IRENA's dual role as both a think tank and a source of policy advice.

337. Delegations noted the low number of female applicants in the past and suggested encouraging qualified female candidates to apply. In addition to ensuring gender balance, delegations further called for a selection process that actively ensures more equitable geographical distribution of leadership roles within IRENA. One delegation highlighted the need for a well-balanced

distribution, pointing out that countries from the Latin America and the Caribbean Group have never held senior positions within IRENA, and suggested that these positions be rotated to promote equality.

338. Referring to the issue of geographical balance, one delegation noted that in the previous Director-General selection process, the Asia and the Pacific Group was not represented among the final candidates and underlined that the appointment should be merit-based rather than political, since IRENA is a technical organisation.

339. One delegation underlined the importance of promptly engaging the members of the Council in 2026 to invite nominations for the DGSC. The delegation further noted that, once established, the DGSC should appoint its Chair and Vice-Chair without delay and convene informally, in virtual format, before the Assembly to agree on a timeline, roles, and safeguards for confidentiality and conflict of interest in preparation for its official launch. One delegation supported the proposal that the DGSC members be designated at the next Council meeting and that a structured timeline, modalities, and guidelines for the DGSC's work be put forward shortly thereafter.

340. One delegation requested clarification on whether the nomination process would be initiated by the Vice-Presidents representing the Regional Groups, and on the timing of the DGSC's official launch. In response, the Secretariat confirmed that nominations received for the DGSC would be submitted to the Vice-Presidents of the fifteenth Assembly who will then present the official nominations from each Regional Group. The Secretariat further clarified that while the DGSC is to be officially launched at the close of the sixteenth Assembly session in January 2026, informal work can begin earlier, as suggested by some delegations, building on the process initiated in October 2024. The Secretariat also confirmed that a deadline of 15 October 2025 was agreed by the Council for the submission of expressions of interest to the DGSC.

341. One delegation further highlighted that a number of aspects of the Committee's work remain to be defined, including the criteria and methodology for shortlisting candidates. Another delegation underlined the importance of continued support by the Secretariat to the Assembly, the Council, and the DGSC in order to ensure a smooth, transparent, and fair process for the selection of IRENA's next Director-General. One delegation also acknowledged the critical role of the DGSC in preparing and facilitating the process, noting that the Assembly remains the final decision-making body, while the Council maintains a core oversight and recommendation role.

342. One delegation also stressed the need for the Council, at its thirtieth meeting, to provide clarification and recommendations on outstanding issues, alongside consideration of the proposed members of the DGSC. In this regard, the delegation called on the Secretariat to bring forward clear guidance and modalities presented by Members, with a view to enabling the DGSC to begin its work informally after the thirtieth Council meeting, and formally in January 2026, with a well-defined mandate.

343. Delegations encouraged the preparation and adoption of a Code of Conduct to guide the work of the DGSC and the Governing Bodies, with several delegations suggesting that it be modelled on the experience of the World Health Organization (WHO), to ensure clear mechanisms for confidentiality and integrity throughout the process. One delegation also proposed that historical documents from previous Director-General selection processes be made available as useful references for Members.

344. Delegations underlined the importance of providing sufficient time for Members to process the relevant documents, and proposed that, following the conclusion of the twenty-ninth Council meeting, Members be invited to submit written comments or questions on the selection process,

as well as on the qualifications of candidates. In this regard, the Secretariat proposed 30 September 2025 as the deadline for Members to provide written submissions on the selection process.

345. Delegations further emphasised the importance of engaging the full IRENA Membership, including those not serving on the Council in 2026 or on the DGSC. Delegations also called for mechanisms to ensure regular reporting from the DGSC to Regional Groups and encouraged the publication of candidate summaries and curricula vitae, and the organisation of open forums to introduce candidates to the Membership to reinforce transparency. One delegation also stated the importance of the active participation of the Latin America and the Caribbean Group in all stages of the process.

346. The Council invited Members to send in written submissions on the Process and Timelines for the Selection and Appointment of the next Director-General of IRENA by 30 September 2025, for compilation and consideration by the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

347. The Council also invited members of the Council in 2026 to submit their expressions of interest to become members or alternates of the Director-General Selection Committee to the Secretariat by 15 October 2025.

348. The Council also requested the Vice-Presidents of the four Regional Groups to provide the final nominations for members and alternates of the Director-General Selection Committee prior to the thirtieth meeting of the Council.

Agenda item 11: Arrangements for the thirtieth meeting of the Council

349. The Chair noted the Secretariat's proposal to hold the thirtieth meeting of the Council on 30-31 October 2025 in Abu Dhabi, with the related meetings of the subsidiary organs, the AFC and the PSC, scheduled to take place on 29 October 2025.

350. Delegations exchanged views on the proposed dates for the thirtieth Council and related meetings. One delegation noted that the proposed dates coincide with the G7 Ministerial on Energy and Environment, which it will host as G7 President, and suggested exploring alternative options such as 23-24 October 2025 or 6-7 November 2025, while acknowledging the potential proximity to COP30. Another delegation emphasised that the proposed dates would leave insufficient time for Members to review and consider written comments on the Director-General selection process, which are due by 30 September 2025, and therefore suggested holding the thirtieth Council meeting at a later date to allow adequate time for preparations.

351. A further proposal was made by one delegation to convene the thirtieth Council meeting on 13-14 November 2025, to give Members and the Secretariat adequate time to prepare relevant documentation. Another delegation suggested that the thirtieth Council and related meetings be held immediately after ADIPEC to ensure logistical ease, noting that dates later in November 2025 would coincide with COP30 and related commitments.

352. One delegation requested clarification on whether the proposed interval of 45 days between the current and upcoming Council meetings was sufficient for preparations. Another delegation stated that while later dates would be acceptable, they would not be in favour of dates prior to the end of October 2025. One delegation requested that the thirtieth Council and related meetings be held in mid-October 2025, as the proposed period from 27 October 2025 to early November 2025 conflicts with national engagements.

353. The Chair called upon the Secretariat to propose dates for the Council meetings in 2026, for consideration by the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

354. The Chair informed the Council that in line with the geographic representation and rotation, members of Asia and the Pacific Group would be eligible for the Chairmanship of the Council for 2026, and members of the Africa Group would be eligible for the Vice-Chairmanship of the Council for 2026.

355. The Chair requested the Secretariat to circulate a final proposal on the dates for the thirtieth Council meeting by 19 September 2025, taking into account the interventions made by Members.

356. Following a proposal made by Members, the Council considered and approved the proposed arrangements for the designation of Costa Rica as Chair and Cyprus as Vice-Chair of the thirtieth meeting of the Council.

Agenda Item 12: Any other business

357. The Chair introduced the item and recalled that Austria had informed of its intention to raise an issue under ‘Any other Business’, on the establishment of an Open-ended Group to review and adapt IRENA’s Rules of Procedure.

358. Austria recalled that at the fifteenth session of the Assembly, the Director-General proposed that the next meeting of the Council considers the establishment of an Open-ended Group to review and adapt IRENA’s Rules of Procedure, particularly the rules governing sessions of the Assembly. The delegation expressed its support for the Director-General’s call and noted that the deadlock experienced by the Agency regarding the designation and election of the Assembly President and Vice-Presidents, as well as the election of the Council membership, have shown that the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council need to be adapted.

359. In this regard, Austria requested this matter to be added for discussion under Any other Business with the objective of actively initiating the process of reforming the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council and allowing IRENA’s continuous and smooth functioning in the future. Austria thanked Members for their consideration and welcomed their support of this matter.

360. While acknowledging that it was not an appropriate item for this matter, Austria briefly updated the Council on the establishment of the IRENA Liaison Office in Vienna. The delegation mentioned ongoing consultations with the Secretariat and expressed its hope that the Liaison Office will be operationalised in 2026, as initially scheduled.

361. Based on the intervention by Austria, the Chair invited the Council to consider the establishment of an Open-ended Group to review and adapt the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council.

362. Delegations thanked Austria for the proposal to establish an Open-ended Group to review IRENA’s Rules of Procedure. Delegations also highlighted the urgency and necessity of this initiative, noting that previous deadlocks and serious impasses have prevented Members from in depth participation in the governance of the Agency. In this regard, some delegations thanked Ukraine for its flexibility, stating that this enabled overcoming the deadlock and convening the Council meeting.

363. Some delegations welcomed Austria's proposal to establish an Open-ended Group to review IRENA's Rules of Procedure, recognising the importance of addressing procedural challenges experienced recently. Other delegations requested that Austria provide a document clearly outlining the terms of reference, rationale, objectives, and scope of the proposed review, to enable the Council to make an informed decision on the way forward.

364. One delegation also highlighted the need for greater clarity on the proposal before engaging in substantive discussions, noting that Members currently lack sufficient information regarding the mandate, scope, and expected outcomes of the proposed Open-ended Group. One delegation also called for a clearer definition of the scope of the proposed review, including which provisions would be open for consideration and which would remain unchanged, to ensure a transparent and equitable process.

365. One delegation raised concern that differences in resource capacity among regions could result in unequal participation, potentially allowing Members with greater resources to exert disproportionate influence. To address this, it proposed that initial informal consultations take place within Regional Groups, co-ordinated through their respective Vice-Presidents, to facilitate balanced contributions and the development of consolidated regional perspectives.

366. One delegation recognised that while this proposal may need to be further refined, the proposal to establish an Open-ended Group to review IRENA's Rules of Procedure was initiated by the Director-General. The delegation requested the Secretariat to support the preparation of such a document and expressed its readiness to assist Austria in this regard. Several delegations recalled that this proposal was initiated by a suggestion made by the Director-General at the fifteenth session of the Assembly and further encouraged the Secretariat's engagement in supporting this process. One delegation requested the circulation to IRENA Members of the proposal by the Director-General on establish an Open-ended Group to review IRENA's Rules of Procedure.

367. One delegation emphasised its support for the proposal to undertake a review of IRENA's Rules of Procedure, to be led by the Legal team of the Secretariat, in line with the Agency's mandate. The delegation noted that this review should provide Members with a clear overview of the rules that may have facilitated past issues experienced, and should outline possible options and scope that such an Open-ended Group could entail. The delegation encouraged looking into the rules of other multilateral organisations and stressed the need to initiate a comprehensive review process promptly, as a starting point, to prevent similar issues in the future.

368. One delegation emphasised the need for greater clarity before proceeding with the establishment of an Open-ended Group and cautioned that, without a clear understanding of its scope, objectives, and expected outcomes, it would be premature for the Council to take a decision on its creation. Another delegation, however, supported the proposal to establish an Open-ended Group to discuss the Statute and the Rules of Procedure and to consider possible necessary modifications in this regard.

369. Delegations underscored the importance of strengthening IRENA's institutional framework to ensure that the Agency remains professional and free from politicisation. One delegation expressed appreciation for its co-operation with IRENA, describing the Agency as a professional organisation committed to advancing renewable energy. One delegation emphasised the importance of undertaking an analytical review of IRENA's Rules of Procedure, free from the politicisation that led the Agency's governance into paralysis, and suggested a process of informal consultations to identify practical solutions to challenges experienced recently, which could

become more a formal structure if progress is made. The delegation further encouraged reflection on the composition and functioning of IRENA's Regional Groups and a method for achieving consensus.

370. The Chair acknowledged the value of such reflections, noting that any effort to strengthen the Agency's governance should begin with an open and inclusive discussion.

371. Delegations supported the idea of beginning with informal consultations to explore possible areas for review and to allow Members time to consult with their capitals. One delegation clarified that its intention was to initiate a conversation based on the proposal by the Director-General at the Assembly, and agreed that informal consultations could serve as a constructive first step.

372. The Chair noted the broad agreement with this approach and proposed that Mexico lead informal discussions with interested Members, without establishing a formal Open-ended Group at this stage.

373. One delegation expressed concern regarding the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), noting a potential similar initiative for Asia. Referring to the signing of an upcoming Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the delegation called for a detailed review of the initiative before any further action is taken. The delegation requested a detailed report outlining the inception, rationale, stakeholders, objectives, financial implications, and human resource requirements of the initiative. It was further emphasised that any decision on the matter should be taken by the Assembly, as IRENA's only governing body entitled to take such decisions.

374. The delegation reiterated that no further action should be taken while a full review is undertaken and outlined the following three steps: first, to freeze all related activities, including the planned signature of the Memorandum of Understanding; second, for the Secretariat to prepare a detailed report explaining the inception, rationale, and proponents of the initiative, including all associated financial and institutional aspects; and third, to submit the matter for consideration and decision by the Assembly. The delegation further expressed disagreement with the Secretariat's approach, stressing that the initiative had political implications involving multiple regions and therefore required decision-making by Members rather than the Secretariat.

375. Another delegation sought clarification regarding the information about an upcoming Memorandum of Understanding to be signed with UNOPS in October 2025. The delegation expressed surprise at learning of this development during the Council meeting and questioned how such an initiative could proceed without prior information or consultation with either the Council or the Assembly. The delegation supported the call for further clarification and discussion on the matter before any agreement is finalised.

376. One delegation recalled the numerous requests for detailed information on IRENA's partnerships and memoranda of understanding, which had consistently been raised at previous Council meetings and Assembly sessions. The delegation emphasised that the current request was not new, and reiterated the importance of continued transparency and regular reporting on such agreements and their outcomes.

377. The Secretariat clarified that, in implementing the Work Programme and Budget approved by the Council and the Assembly, IRENA regularly enters into technical Memoranda of Understanding with various partners to support delivery of work. The Secretariat explained that these partnerships, co-ordinated through the Country Engagement and Partnerships (CEP) division, often involve technical institutions or regional organisations to advance renewable energy

collaboration, such as the Memorandum of Understanding with the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE). The Secretariat further noted that all memoranda of understanding are reported to the Assembly annually and assured Members that, given the specific concerns raised, the forthcoming Memorandum of Understanding with UNOPS would be presented to the thirtieth Council meeting, for transparency and discussion.

378. The Chair noted that several delegations raised concerns regarding the proposed signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between IRENA and UNOPS. The Chair emphasised the importance of ensuring that all Members are fully informed about such agreements, underlining that transparency and communication are essential to the functioning of the Agency.

379. The Secretariat explained that the requests regarding IRENA's partnerships and memoranda of understanding had initially been discussed at the previous meeting of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC). The Secretariat informed that, subsequently, it had prepared a Note on the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), and on the Accelerated Partnership for Renewable Energy in Central Asia (APRECA), together with an overview of IRENA's broader partnership framework. The Secretariat informed that this List of IRENA's Partnerships and Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) outlined more than one hundred active bilateral and multi-stakeholder partnerships, as well as specific initiatives under APRA and APRECA. The Secretariat acknowledged that the note may require additional details and confirmed that further information would be provided. Regarding the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with UNOPS, the Secretariat clarified that it only pertains specifically to APRA, and not to the initiative for Central Asia (APRECA), and that the concerns expressed by Members would be conveyed to the Director-General.

380. While acknowledging that the List of IRENA's Partnerships and Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) had been received, one delegation noted that it was shared late, and lacked sufficient detail. The delegation reiterated its request for more comprehensive information, particularly on partnerships, and offered to re-submit its questions to the Secretariat to guide the preparation of additional documentation for the Membership in this regard.

381. One delegation clarified that its intervention had not been made in its capacity as Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, but to raise a governance-related question. The delegation asked under what authority the Secretariat could proceed with signing such an agreement without prior information to the Council or the Assembly. Referring to the earlier statement recommending that the signing of the MOU with UNOPS be halted, the delegation sought clarification from the Secretariat on whether the signing would indeed be postponed.

382. The Secretariat reiterated that while a proposal to sign an MOU with UNOPS exists, the Secretariat had duly taken note of Members' concerns, and confirmed that the signing would not proceed until these concerns had been fully addressed at the thirtieth Council meeting.

383. One delegation requested that the Secretariat, in the summary of the Council meeting, provide a clear background on the inception of APRA, including its partners, objectives and activities, particularly those external to IRENA's Work Programme. The delegation recalled that initial discussions with potential partners took place as early as COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, where these partners expressed interest in accelerating electrification in Africa, noting that the continent remains the least electrified globally, with over 600 million people still lacking access to modern energy.

384. One delegation expressed its honour in Presiding the next session of the IRENA Assembly, to be held in January 2026 and reaffirmed its commitment to promoting an inclusive, fair, and

resilient energy transition with the active participation of Members, and a focus on diverse realities in developing countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The delegation mentioned the following as key principles of its Presidency: first, to reinforce the position of the Latin America and the Caribbean Group, through a greater and more active participation; second, to reinforce the institutional governance of IRENA and consolidate it as a central space for co-operation in the field of renewable energy; and third, to boost regional initiatives to guarantee that the commitments are translated into specific actions.

385. The delegation drew attention to the massive proliferation of sargassum in the Caribbean and its significant threats to fisheries, tourism, and food security. Referring to the latest report presented at the United Nations Ocean Conference, up to one million metric tons of sargassum could accumulate, creating an environmental catastrophe. The delegation emphasised, however, that sargassum also presents an opportunity as a potential renewable energy source that can contribute to diversifying the energy mix, reducing emissions, and supporting sustainable environments.

386. The delegation informed that it has already made advancements in monitoring, research, and capacity-building efforts, and underscored the need for international co-operation and support from international organisations such as IRENA to further scale-up these solutions. The delegation requested the Agency to consider sargassum as a renewable energy source and to enable Members to exchange best practices and explore pilot projects to help transform sargassum from a threat into an innovative symbol.

387. The delegation further called on IRENA to formally incorporate the valorisation of sargassum as a renewable energy source into its strategic programming, encouraging research and technological development for its energy use.

388. The delegation encouraged IRENA to convene a technical meeting with interested Members to share experiences, lessons learned, and projects related to the energy use of sargassum, fostering a shared co-operation agenda. The delegation also requested IRENA to consider providing assistance in the launching of a semi-industrials scale pilot project, with technical and financial support from IRENA and its strategic partners, to demonstrate the practical viability of transforming this threat into a sustainable opportunity for the region. The delegation further encouraged the integration of emerging technologies such as quantum computing, blockchain, artificial intelligence, and data analytics to promote efficient and innovative solutions that can ensure the best use of sargassum and reinforce Members' capacities.

389. The delegation reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with all Members, the Secretariat, and relevant stakeholders to transform sargassum into a renewable resource and to consolidate IRENA as the epicentre of the global energy transition.

390. One delegation expressed concerns regarding the way the Membership is being served and treated, noting recurring delays in the circulation of documentation as well as in responding to Members' requests. The delegation highlighted that these delays hinder Members' ability to engage fully and to exercise their responsibilities in a timely and informed manner. The delegation also expressed regret to note the absence of the Director-General during part of the Council meeting due to travel commitments. While recognising the many demands on the Director-General's schedule, the delegation stressed that his presence at the Council meetings is essential, both to engage directly with the Membership and to demonstrate full respect for the body. The delegation explained that it was raising these points in the spirit of strengthening mutual trust and accountability between the Secretariat and the Membership and expressed that it respectfully asks

that greater attention be given to timely communication and to ensuring the Director-General's full participation in all Governing Body meetings.

391. The Deputy Director-General thanked the delegation for its intervention and informed that further efforts will be dedicated to ensuring timely circulation of documentation to the Membership as well as responding to all Members' requests. The Deputy Director-General also informed that the concerns regarding the Director-General's presence during meetings of the Governing Bodies will be conveyed accordingly.

392. The Council agreed that as an initial step, Mexico would conduct informal consultations with interested Members on the matter regarding the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council.

393. The Council took note of the interventions and agreed to request the Secretariat to provide further information on IRENA's partnerships, including on the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), for consideration by the Council at its thirtieth meeting.

394. The Council took note of the intervention by the Dominican Republic and requested the Secretariat to work with the Dominican Republic in preparation for the sixteenth session of the Assembly.

395. The Council took note of the intervention made.

Agenda Item 13: Closing of the meeting

396. The Deputy Director-General expressed gratitude for the engaging discussions at the twenty-ninth Council and related meetings, noting that the Secretariat has gathered clarity on the priorities of the Membership, and rich insights for consideration as it moves into the very important phase of preparing the Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027. She stated that the Secretariat has taken note of the guidance provided by Members on financial matters and in sharpening and elaborating on such presentations, and expressed anticipation to continue engaging with the Membership on the road to getting the Work Programme and Budget for the next biennium approved. In this regard, she agreed with the suggestions that discussions with the Membership on the various budget scenarios of Zero Real Growth, Zero Nominal Growth, and Moderate Increase would be essential, and stated that the Secretariat would take the opportunity to engage in bilateral and other discussions with the Membership to provide greater clarity on the issues raised.

397. The Deputy Director-General further expressed gratitude for the discussions, comments, and suggestions made on the Programmatic Discussions on Sustainable Aviation Fuels and on Energy Security and Renewable Energy Supply Chains. She expressed that the Secretariat is also very grateful for the strengthening of ethics and the gaps that have been addressed in that regard, including through the drafting of policies and related implementing mechanisms.

398. Noting that the Chair had requested information on IRENA's work in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, the Deputy Director-General informed that IRENA has published 17 reports on the LAC region, with eight forthcoming reports on topics such as the Regional Energy Transition Outlook for South America, and the Regional Renewable Energy Pathways for SIDS. She further informed that in the current biennium, IRENA has prepared 42 technical advisory and information products for the LAC region, and organised over 40 missions and events

with partners in the region. She highlighted that the Secretariat looks forward to continuous engagement with the Membership on the road towards the sixteenth session of the Assembly.

399. The Chair thanked the Council and the IRENA Membership for the smooth and efficient discussions on a wide range of topics, and expressed hope for equally smooth proceedings at the thirtieth meeting of the Council. He extended thanks to Cyprus, as Vice-Chair, for the excellent teamwork and stated that he looks forward to continuing the strong partnership at the next Council meeting.

400. The Chair declared the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council closed.

Twenty-ninth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 11-12 September 2025

Agenda

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Organisation of work**
 - a. Election of officials
 - b. Adoption of the agenda
- 3. Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025**
- 4. Preliminary Framework for the Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027**
- 5. General Member Statements – National Experiences on the Energy Transition**
- 6. Programmatic Discussion on Advancing Investments in Sustainable Aviation Fuels by ETAF (Energy Transition Accelerator Financing) Platform**
- 7. Programmatic Discussion on Energy Security – The Role of Renewables Supply Chains**
- 8. Administrative and Institutional matters**
 - a. Matters relating to Human Resources Management
 - i. Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends
 - ii. Draft Policy on Individual Consultants
 - b. Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024
 - c. 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA
 - d. Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor
 - e. Matters relating to Arbitration
 - i. Report of the Director-General on Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel
 - ii. Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA
 - f. Matters relating to Ethics
 - i. Report of the Ethics Advisory Board
 - ii. Proposal on the Establishment of the Disciplinary Committee
 - iii. Draft Policy Against Fraud, Corruption or other Financial Misconduct
 - iv. Appointment of members of the Ethics Advisory Board

- g. Matters relating to Internal Audit
 - i. Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken
 - ii. Proposal for developing an Oversight Audit Committee and the Self-assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) Report
 - h. Committee membership and chairmanship (Administration and Finance Committee and Programme and Strategy Committee)
- 9. Report of the Open-Ended Group on the Establishment of Regional Offices of IRENA**
- 10. Issues relating to Process and Timelines for the Selection and Appointment of the next Director-General of IRENA**
- 11. Arrangements for the thirtieth meeting of the Council**
- 12. Any other business**
- 13. Closing of the meeting**

Context: Pursuant to decision C/3/DC/3, the Administration and Finance Committee (hereafter “AFC” or “Committee”) met on 4 August 2025 to ensure that the work of the Agency continues. It reviewed matters related to the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025, Human Resources, Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024, 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund, Proposed Process for the Selection of the External Auditor, and Matters relating to Arbitration and Internal Audit.

Outcome: A set of views and comments captured by the Chair in his summary below to be presented to the Council at its twenty-ninth meeting.

During the meeting, the Chair invited the Membership to undertake a further review of these documents and send their ideas, proposals and comments through written submissions

Chair’s Summary of the outcome of the Administration and Finance Committee Meeting

The following comments and recommendations were made:

1. Annual Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025

- The Director-General introduced the ‘Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025. The Director-General expressed his appreciation to Tonga and The United Arab Emirates for their leadership and dedication as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee. He reaffirmed Secretariat's full commitment to working with Members in a spirit of transparency, accountability and mutual trust.
- The Director-General congratulated Members on the confirmation of the IRENA Council membership for 2025–2026, recognizing this as a significant milestone achieved through the dedication, spirit of compromise, and flexibility of the Assembly Bureau and all Members involved.
- The agenda before the Committee was noted to cover several substantive matters, and the Director-General highlighted that feedback from previous AFC discussions had been incorporated into the documents presented.
- The Director-General provided an overview of the Progress Report on the Work Programme and Budget for 2024–2025, noting that the report offers a clear assessment of delivery and resource utilization to date. He underlined the Secretariat’s priority to continue operations effectively, ensuring that both core and voluntary resources are deployed transparently and strategically.

- The Director-General informed Members of ongoing preparations for the Work Programme and Budget for 2026–2027, indicating that a preliminary proposal would be shared ahead of the next Council session to allow enough time for Member engagement and feedback. The final proposal, incorporating Member input, will be presented at the second Council session later in the year.
- A Member expressed appreciation to the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretariat for convening the meeting and acknowledged the successful adoption of the Council membership, as well as commending IRENA's efforts to enhance budgetary transparency and noted the positive outcomes achieved through cost optimization and efficiency measures. Member raised a concern regarding the Agency's recent expansion into climate-related areas, cautioning that this could dilute IRENA's core mission in renewable energy development and recommended that IRENA reaffirms and prioritize its objectives within the renewable energy sector to ensure efficiency and effective implementation of its Medium-Term Strategy priorities.

2. Human Resources Management

i. Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends

- The Director-General introduced the 'Report of the Director-General – Human Resources Management and Trends', contained in the Advanced Copy of HRM & Trends Report. He highlighted that the Human Resources Management and Trends report incorporated recent developments in the workforce and planning measures.
- The Secretariat made a presentation of the report, emphasizing its alignment with IRENA's mission to attract and retain talent, foster diversity, and improve organizational effectiveness. The link is available [here](#).
- A participant welcomed the overall stabilisation in staffing and vacancy levels and sought clarification on 'external hires with an asterisk' in Table 1.E.3 ("Staff Recruitment Overview").
- The Secretariat explained that this referred to employees considered as non-staff (for example, service contract holders and associate professionals) who were appointed to staff positions following a successful competitive recruitment process.
- The participant further raised concern regarding the increasing number of consultants and lack of clarity regarding their budget implications and questioned potential inefficiencies given increasing numbers of staff and consultants and inquired about leveraging internal staff expertise to minimize the use of consultants, estimates for potential savings, and the number of former staff re-hired as consultants.

- The Secretariat committed to providing more information on the number, instances, and costs of consultants in future reports, specifically for the next AFC meeting. The Secretariat further noted that consultants are utilized for specific projects and short-term needs (e.g., procurement, ICT services) as a cost-saving measure compared to full-time staff.
- Another participant suggested adding the total costs for the long-term consultants. The request included cost comparison on a periodic basis, including for both consultants and regular staff, to provide better insight into financial trends. The participant offered to share further suggestions bilaterally. The Chair emphasized that the bare minimum for the next AFC meeting should be the actual financial costs, if no analysis is available.
- The Secretariat clarified that total consultancy costs are disclosed in the Financial Statements and that the HR Trends Report lists all engaged consultants and their functions. The Secretariat further indicated that while a full cost analysis may be difficult to be provided by the next AFC meeting, every effort will be made to provide the actual financial costs.

ii. Draft Policy on Individual Consultants

- The Secretariat briefly [presented](#) the key points of the draft policy on individual consultants which was originally presented at the 28th Council highlighting its aim to align IRENA's approach with the UN common standards, ensuring clarity, transparency, and operational agility. The Secretariat noted that the draft policy includes definitions, eligibility, service duration limits, mandatory breaks in service, contract modalities, fee determination, and oversight mechanisms. The Secretariat recalled that during the 28th Council members raised issues concerning the review timeline, impact on existing consultants, and scope of exceptions, and invited further feedback from the membership. No additional written comments were received by the Secretariat following the 28th Council meeting and a summary of previous member comments and Secretariat responses was included in Annex 1 of the HRM and Trends report. The Secretariat reiterated its commitment to finalizing the policy based on Member feedback and recalled that the original purpose of the policy was to provide a coherent and accountable framework for engaging consultants—focused on short-term, specialized assignments in non-staff roles.
- A participant raised a question regarding conditions under which a spouse of the Director-General (DG) may be engaged as a consultant. While the draft policy requires the approval of the Director-General for hiring consultants who are family members of Secretariat staff, it does not specify who is the approving authority if a spouse of the DG were to be hired as a consultant.
- The Secretariat noted that while the scenario is highly unlikely, it welcomed feedback from Members on appropriate governance arrangements, and indicated readiness to include a provision in the revised policy. The AFC Chair suggested that an appropriate provision be added to the policy to address this matter.

- A participant requested clarity on section 2.1.f of the draft policy, which involves hiring individual consultants for "short-term needs to supplement existing staff during peak work hour".
- The Secretariat explained that this refers to periods of high workload (for example, when Secretariat staff are required to support the Governing Bodies meetings or other major events) or instances of sudden staff departures when additional support may be urgently required.
- A participant highlighted the need for detailed data on diversity and geographic representation for consultants in future reports.
- A participant reiterated their earlier request for data on consultant costs and nationality to be able to provide an informed input into the policy.
- The Secretariat acknowledged the need for more transparency and information on consultants, noting that a compilation of member comments and Secretariat answers is already annexed to the HRM & Trends report and restated that the policy aims to address specific technical needs where the use of regular staff is not warranted.
- The Secretariat noted that, in line with prevailing practices across the international organisations, consultant-related data disaggregated by geographic origin and gender is not systematically collected or reported at the level of detail now requested. It was further clarified that, given the varied nature and duration of consultancy engagements, capturing and presenting such data in a comprehensive and meaningful manner may present challenges. However, the Secretariat committed to exploring the feasibility of collating this information specifically for consultants engaged for six months or longer. The Secretariat reaffirmed its commitment to transparency and indicated it would make best efforts to respond to Member expectations, within existing operational constraints.

3. Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024

- The Secretariat [presented](#) the IRENA Audited Financial Statement for the year ended on 31 December 2024.
- One participant inquired about the notable increase in “Payables and Accruals” under current liabilities in 2024 compared to 2023, as presented in the Statement of Financial Position.
- The Secretariat explained that, in line with IPSAS requirements, liabilities are split between current and non-current on the face of the financial statements. It was further clarified, with reference to Note 9 of the Agency’s Financial Statements, that the overall year-on-year increase is modest, and the apparent rise under current liabilities is primarily due to the reclassification of the 2022–2023 biennium cash surplus from non-current to current liabilities.

- A participant inquired about the source of the cash surplus and the mechanism for its refund to Members. The Secretariat explained that a significant portion of the surplus arises from interest earned on existing cash balances, as well as contributions from new Members who joined during the year, further indicating that additional information could be provided in writing upon request.

4. 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA

- Chair of the IRENA Staff Provident Fund Management Board presented the Report of which the AFC took note.

5. Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor

- The Secretariat [presented](#) the topic to the AFC, outlining three models for Members consideration, noting that some options are contingent upon the establishment of an Oversight Audit Committee with a defined mandate.
- One participant welcomed the proposal and its structured approach, inquired about the process for formally adopting a decision on the proposed solutions, and suggested that a draft decision may be necessary for the Assembly's consideration. The participant also recommended that the costs associated with each proposal be clearly presented.
- The Secretariat acknowledged the gaps in the Agency's audit and oversight mechanisms and reiterated its expectation that Members will reach an appropriate decision on the matter. It was also noted that the document on the 'Proposal for Developing an Oversight Audit Committee' outlines the associated costs for operation and external consultants depending on the selected proposal.

6. Matters relating to Arbitration

i. Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel

- The AFC took note of the 'Report of the Director General on Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel' and agreed with the recommendation contained therein.

ii. Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA

- The Secretariat presented on the 'Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA' and the AFC took note of the report and presentation.

7. Matters relating to Internal Audit

i. Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken

- The Deputy Director-General introduced the ‘Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken’.
 - A participant recalled that in the last Council it was mentioned that an audit was being conducted on the procurement processes and that the key recommendations and agreed actions from this audit will be presented to the Council. However, looking at the audit document, the participant outlined that these have not been included.
 - The participant also indicated that there was a request that future report on audit would show year-on-year data and statistics on the implementation of internal audit recommendations, as this information is commonly provided by all international organisations for getting a clear understanding of management’s attention to the audit recommendations. The participant mentioned that, however, what is presented is just a list of what is done and what will be done, therefore, Members are unable to see the outcomes of the audit work.
- ii. Proposed Oversight Audit Committee and the Self-Assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) report**
- The Chair of the AFC indicated that at the 28th meeting of the Council, two key governance gaps relating to direct reporting line and audit committee were identified, and the Secretariat was tasked to suggest regulatory changes and a governance model for enhanced audit oversight and independence in line with best practices across similar international organisations. In addition, the Secretariat was requested to share the Self-Assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) Report with the Membership for its reference.
 - The Deputy Director-General introduced the ‘Proposed Oversight Audit Committee and the Self-Assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) Report’.
 - A participant thanked the Secretariat for the work and for the proposal and pointed out that the current oversight structure at IRENA, on page 4 of the proposal, should also include the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC); as the latter is part of the IRENA governance.
 - The participant referred to the options proposed for creating an Oversight Audit Committee and highlighted the cons in option 1 specifically the one that outlines the limited expertise, which requires additional training for Members. The participant highlighted also the cons in option 2 and referred to the indicated potential duplication between AFC and the Audit Working Group (AWG), stating that any duplication can be limited and can be avoided by having clear roles and responsibilities. In addition, clear communication channels to ensure seamless governance integration can easily be managed by having rules and procedures. Moreover, the participant requested more information on the additional costs related to forming and managing a separate working group.

- The participant pointed out that this document is a good first draft, but needs a little bit more work to make it enough in a form that is suitable to be presented to the Council, and highlighted that, as a member of the Ethics Advisory Board, will be happy to provide any resources to support drafting the document better in this short time.
- The Deputy Director-General thanked the Members for the interventions made and indicated that the points made are duly noted, and that the Secretariat will improve the document, with the comments incorporated, before placing it for the next AFC Meeting.

8. Any other Business

- A participant sought clarification on the Secretariat's approach to diversifying IRENA's resources, particularly regarding multi-year voluntary contributions and the establishment of trust fund. Participant also expressed the need for clear parameters and Member State discussions on the acceptance and management of private sector contributions, ensuring transparency and alignment with IRENA's reporting obligations to the AFC and Council.
- Participant also expressed concerns about initiatives, such as APRA, being managed without prior Council approval or sufficient financial transparency. It was noted that new initiatives incur staffing and consultancy costs without detailed documentation being shared with Members. UAE called for comprehensive listings of all initiatives where IRENA serves as Secretariat, including detailed financial implications. The need for clearer alignment between staffing levels and strategic objectives was also emphasized.
- Participant proposed that, ahead of the 29th Council meeting, the Secretariat conduct a benchmarking exercise to compare how other international organizations report on their budgets. This would inform a draft decision aimed at enhancing IRENA's budgetary reporting structure, to be prepared by the Secretariat and discussed with interested Members under the guidance of the AFC Chair.
- Participant addressed the circulated document on the process for appointing the next Director-General, emphasizing the urgency to establish clear procedures regarding confidentiality, conflict of interest, selection of the DG Selection Committee (DGSC), and roles of the Council, DGSC, and Secretariat. Members were encouraged to review the document thoroughly and submit comments to the Secretariat. It was proposed that a comprehensive discussion and decision on the process be held at the next Council, ensuring transparency and alignment with governance frameworks.
- The Chair thanked the Member for the interventions and proposed that these issues be integrated into the agenda for the next AFC meeting. Members were invited to submit written comments and proposals on the raised topics for further deliberation.
- The Chair tentatively proposed that the next AFC meeting could be convened on 1 September 2025, prior to the upcoming Council session but subject to confirmation, to ensure timely preparation of draft decisions.

Twenty-ninth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 11-12 September 2025

Context: Pursuant to decision C/3/DC/3, the Programme and Strategy Committee (hereafter “PSC” or “Committee”) met on 10 September 2025. 7 Committee members, namely, Cyprus, El Salvador (Chair of the Committee), Japan, Kenya, Türkiye, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe, attended the meeting. The Committee reflected on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025, including updates on Collaborative Frameworks.

Outcome: A set of views and comments captured by the Chair in her summary below to be presented to the Council at its meeting on 10 September 2025.

Chair’s Summary of the outcome of the Programme and Strategy Committee Meeting

1. Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025 (C/29/2), including updates on Collaborative Frameworks

The Secretariat briefed participants on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025 and shared some programmatic highlights. Participants offered the following views and comments:

- The PSC welcomed the report of the Director-General on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget. Some participants urged IRENA to include an executive summary in future Progress and Annual reports, capturing developments and work of the Agency.
- Some participants called on IRENA to expand the programmatic activities targeting the Latin American and Caribbean region, to help the countries address emerging challenges related to the energy transition.
- Some participants urged IRENA to examine and provide policy recommendations on critical issues such as the recycling of solar panels, carbon market creation, data collection harmonisation across countries, and new sources of bioenergy.
- A participant called for deeper strategic-level discussions at Committee meetings, regarding programmatic work and priorities.
- A participant welcomed the implementation of the results-based framework, suggested the creation of an online dashboard to access the data, and expressed interest in learning how the data informs strategic decisions.
- Some participants reiterated suggestions made by others on the inclusion of an executive summary in future Progress reports.

2. Preliminary Framework for the Work Programme and Budget for 2026-2027

- Some participants welcomed the Preliminary Framework as a good basis for the next Work Programme and Budget.
- A participant highlighted the critical work emanating from Collaborative Frameworks and called on IRENA to review their modalities to ensure increased and direct impact on the ground.
- A participant highlighted the need to expand the regional dimension of IRENA's work and suggested the creation of an initiative focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean in the upcoming Work Programme and Budget.
- A participant underlined the need for IRENA to continue being a strong voice for renewables and fostering multilateralism, in light of the current geopolitical climate.
- A participant applauded IRENA's programmatic activities and initiatives but also called on the Agency to ensure prioritisation and careful consideration before establishing new ones and to focus on its core mandate and key strengths.

3. Issues raised by Members at the March 2025 PSC meeting

- Some participants sought clarity on the relationship between IRENA and a partner organisation in the context of the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa.
- Some participants welcomed the work under the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa and invited IRENA to share the work plan, as well as staff and resource allocation and oversight.

Action items:

- A participant requested that the presentation on APRA be shared with Members.
- Participants requested the inclusion of an executive summary in future Progress and Annual reports, capturing developments and work of the Agency.

Twenty-ninth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 11-12 September 2025

Context: Pursuant to decision C/3/DC/3, the Administration and Finance Committee (hereafter “AFC” or “Committee”) met on 10 September 2025. It reviewed matters related to the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025, Human Resources, Draft Policy on Individual Consultants, Audited Financial Statements IRENA for 2024, 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA, Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor, Matters relating to Arbitration Panel and Matters relating to Internal Audit.

Outcome: A set of views and comments captured by the Chair in his summary below to be presented to the Council at its twenty-ninth meeting on 11-12 September 2025.

Chair’s Summary of the outcome of the Administration and Finance Committee Meeting

The following comments and recommendations were made:

1. Progress Report of the Director-General on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025

- The Director-General introduced the Progress Report on the Implementation of the Work Programme and Budget 2024–2025 (C/29/2). He expressed his appreciation to Tonga and the United Arab Emirates, serving as Chair and Vice-Chair, for their stewardship. He reaffirmed the Secretariat’s continued commitment to transparency, accountability, and close cooperation with Members. The Director General further noted that the Secretariat has taken careful account of the Committee’s feedback from previous discussions, which has informed both the presentation of results and the supporting financial disclosures.
- The Secretariat presented an update on the implementation of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024–2025, referencing document (C/29/2) and providing a consolidated financial and programmatic overview as of 31 July 2025.
- The Secretariat provided an update on the status of contributions, including core assessed, core non-assessed, and voluntary contributions. The Secretariat expressed appreciation to Members for their timely contributions and encouraged others to settle outstanding contributions. The Secretariat also underscored the essential role of voluntary contributions in complementing the core budget and in supporting and enabling the full implementation of IRENA’s Work Programme and Budget.
- As of 31 July, The Secretariat reported a core assessed budget execution rate of 94% for the biennium. In response to a request for clarification, the Secretariat confirmed that the execution rate reflects expenditures and open obligations, noting that reported expenditure accounts for staff costs and planned activities until the end of the year. It was further reassured that internal financial controls are in place to prevent overspending and ensure

implementation within approved resources and confirmed that no deficit spending is anticipated under the core budget 2024-2025.

- The Secretariat underscored the persistent challenges posed by rising staff and service costs, emphasizing that activities have thus far been implemented without exceeding approved resources. However, the long-term viability of this approach remains uncertain given ongoing operational pressures.
- A participant raised a question regarding whether vacancies were factored into budget execution and if unfilled positions would require additional resources for recruitment from the core assessed budget. The Secretariat clarified that the vacant posts included both core and voluntary funded positions, and that savings generated from vacancies under the core budget had provided some flexibility in managing financial constraints thus far, though recruitment needs may require further consideration in future planning.
- The Director-General reaffirmed that Members' feedback will continue to guide the development of the next Work Programme and Budget. He reiterated the Secretariat's commitment to delivering a strengthened framework that more clearly links financial resources to programmatic delivery and ensures accountability.
- There has been a proposal by the Chair to update the reporting requirements for the Work Programme and Budget, noting that the current reporting guidelines date back to 2013. At present, the information provided on budget and spending remains overly vague and aggregated.
- As the proposals were only transmitted to the Chair on 4 September, the AFC was not in a position to conclude its deliberations yesterday. We therefore recommend that a draft decision be prepared for consideration at the next AFC, with a view to presenting it to the Council for recommendation to the Assembly.
- A document has already been prepared by the Secretariat, which can be further revised with input from Members at the next AFC to better address their needs. Importantly, there was also a call for a more strategic focus in the progress report. We see this as a valuable step towards enabling Members to take a more forward-looking, strategic view of budget management, moving beyond year-to-year reporting of staff costs and routine expenditure data.

2. Human Resources Management

i. Report of the Director-General on Human Resources Management and Trends

- The Director-General introduced the *Report of the Director-General – Human Resources Management and Trends*, contained in document C/29/4, and highlighted several initiatives in human resources. These included the implementation of the revised Staff Regulations and Rules, roll-out of training on the Performance Management and Appraisal System, procurement of medical insurance and recruitment services, automation of HR processes, training on mediation and conflict resolution, and succession planning.
- The Secretariat provided a presentation with a detailed overview of the report.
- A participant noted budget constraints leading to vacant posts and requested clarity on the criteria used by senior management to determine recruitment priorities. They further observed that over half of the new appointments were internal promotions or transfers

and asked for justification of this practice. The participant additionally raised concern about the heavy reliance on individual consultants, citing financial statements that showed a disproportionate spend on consultancy relative to staff costs.

- A participant requested clarification regarding the recruitment process for the position of Head, Partnerships, noting a discrepancy between the reported appointment dates and the vacancy advertisement period. They further enquired about the status of the recruitment process.
- A delegate raised a question on succession planning, specifically how lessons learned from previous transitions would inform the management of the 25 positions expected to fall vacant as staff reach tenure limits between 2025 and 2027. The delegate further enquired whether the HR risks outlined in Table 1 of the Director-General’s Human Resource Management and Trends Report were factored into budgetary planning and what impact they may have on organizational performance.
- A delegate enquired whether the Agency applies specific criteria for determining mission-critical posts, given the large number of vacancies expected due to tenure limits during 2025–2027. They also sought clarification on whether a mechanism exists in IRENA to identify such posts and if a fast-track recruitment process is available to mitigate attendant risks.
- A participant highlighted staff turnover in IRENA, noting that separation rates remain high at 15 per cent, with an average length of service of 3.2 years for separated staff, significantly below the organizational average of nine years. They requested further clarification of the measures being taken by the Agency to strengthen staff retention and reduce turnover at both the Professional and General Service levels.
- The Secretariat acknowledged the comments made by Members and clarified that staff recruitment is prioritized by senior management based on organizational needs and budgetary realities. All recruitments, including internal promotions, follow a rigorous process involving independent evaluation panels and HR oversight. On reliance on individual consultants, the Secretariat explained that financial limitations do not permit the creation of additional posts and that consultants are engaged for specialized, time-bound assignments. On succession planning, the Secretariat acknowledged the challenges posed by tenure limits and emphasized the need to prioritize critical posts within budget constraints. On staff retention, the Secretariat noted that retention rates are gradually improving and emphasized its continued efforts to strengthen them. It highlighted that many staff are younger professionals, for whom learning opportunities, flexibility, and work–life balance are essential. The Secretariat explained that, given limited resources in the current biennium, the Secretariat has faced challenges to address these challenges.
- On the recruitment of the Head, Partnerships, the Secretariat explained that the post was advertised and filled by an internal candidate on 1 January 2025. However, as the staff member reached their tenure limit in August 2025, the position was re-advertised and the recruitment process remains under way.
- The AFC took note of the report and agreed to submit it to the Council for its consideration.

ii. Draft Policy on Individual Consultants

- The Director-General introduced an update of the draft policy on individual consultants, as outlined in document C/29/5, highlighting that it reflects Member requests, including the provision preventing the engagement of the Director-General's family members as consultants, as well as additional data on the diversity and costs of IRENA consultants.
- The Secretariat made a detailed presentation on the updated draft policy on individual consultants, based on the feedback received from Members in the Administration and Finance Committee meeting of 4 August 2025. Specifically, the updated policy explicitly addresses the question of whether a spouse of the Director-General may be engaged as a consultant. The document also details the geographical and gender distribution, as well as the costs of consultants engaged during the past two years. The policy retains its core purpose, which is to provide a coherent framework that distinguishes consultancy from regular staffing and safeguards against both actual and perceived conflicts of interest. The Secretariat concluded its presentation by noting that the updated document provides Members with the necessary information to conclude the review of the draft policy, thereby enabling the Secretariat to finalize the directive and address outstanding audit recommendations.
- A participant suggested that in-laws and spouses of IRENA staff be considered as other family members mentioned in the policy and subject to the same treatment with regard to consultancy engagements. The participant further noted that, if a consultancy role is located within the immediate office of the Director-General, the Director-General should not serve as the approving authority for the engagement of their in-laws or spouse as a consultant.
- Another delegate expressed support for the suggestion that spouses of IRENA staff should be treated in the same manner as other family members when being considered for consultancy roles.
- The Secretariat clarified that it may be challenging for the Agency to determine the in-law status of candidates for consultancy roles. It was further noted that the relevant provisions of the draft policy are fully in line with similar policies in the United Nations and other international organizations.
- A participant stated that it is important to focus solely on the interests of the Agency in this regard, irrespective of the policies or practices in other international organizations.
- Another delegate expressed support for the position that adopting policies and practices from other international organizations should only be considered if beneficial to the Agency. The delegate noted that most United Nations entities and other international organizations are significantly larger than IRENA, and their approaches may not necessarily be appropriate for the Agency.
- The Secretariat acknowledged the comments from Members and clarified that it is consistently expected to align with the best practices of the United Nations and other international organizations and welcomed further guidance from Members in this regard. With respect to preferential treatment for engaging staff spouses as consultants, the Secretariat recalled that Annex V to document C/29/5 provides: "*Individuals who are mother, father, son, daughter, sister or brother of a staff member may only be considered for consultancy if there are no equally qualified candidates and when there is no conflict or perceived conflict of interest.*" In such

circumstances, preferential treatment is not possible. The intention is that the Agency may consider family members, including spouses of IRENA staff, only if no other qualified candidates are available. Regarding the recruitment of a spouse or family member of the Director-General, the Secretariat further clarified that Annex V contains a new provision stipulating that *“to maintain fairness and avoid conflict of interest, a spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister or brother of the Director-General may not be engaged as a consultant.”*

- The AFC took note of the draft policy and invited Members to provide their written comments before submitting it to the Council for its consideration.

3. Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024

- The Secretariat introduced the ‘Audited Financial Statements of IRENA for 2024’, contained in document C/29/6.
- A participant raised questions about the budget vs. actual variance and resulting deficits for two divisions and on some fund sources in the 2024 financial statements. The Secretariat explained that the actuals presented are the sum of both expenses incurred and any commitments made during 2024, as a result divisions are able to incur commitments in first year of biennium that related expenses expected to be incurred in 2025 causing the over utilization reflected. The Secretariat emphasized that overall expenditure will remain within the approved budget for the biennium and that the Agency cannot exceed its Core budget.
- A Participant noted that travel expenditures had decreased compared to 2023, while operating costs had increased relative to the previous year. The Secretariat explained that the reduction in travel expenditure was the result of measures undertaken to contain travel-related costs, whereas the increase in operating costs reflected continued rises in the prices of goods and services.
- A participant sought clarity on whether deficits in 2024 and 2023 reporting periods on the Statement of Financial Performance related to single years or for biennium. The Secretariat explained that these were for specific year and resulted from timing of accounting entries, including recording of current period expenses against prior-year obligations and timing differences between revenue recognition for multi-year voluntary contributions and the related expenses.
- One Participant sought confirmation of whether meeting costs included delegate travel, and whether only staff travel was reported under travel expenses. The Secretariat confirmed his observations were correct.
- One participant welcomed the inclusion of Note 16 in the Agency Financial statements and recommended adding further disclosure explaining any deficit on Statement on Financial Performance. The Secretariat took note of the participants’ proposal.
- The AFC Chair noted that participants had further queries on specific items and acknowledged the importance of these questions but, given their technical detail and time constraints requested that participants submit them in writing so the Secretariat can provide an adequate response. This suggestion was accepted by the participants.
- The AFC took note of the report and decided to submit it to the Council.

4. 2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA

- The Secretariat introduced the ‘2024 Annual Report of the Provident Fund Management Board on Operations of the Staff Provident Fund of IRENA’, contained in document C/29/7.
- The AFC took note of the report and decided to submit it to the Council.

5. Proposed Process for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor

- The Secretariat presented the topic to the AFC as contained in C/29/8, outlining three models for Members consideration, noting that some options are contingent upon the establishment of an Oversight Audit Committee with a defined mandate
- One participant welcomed the proposal and its structured approach and further noted that there should be a clear separation between operational management and oversight governance whereby the Secretariat maintains operational responsibility and committee conducts review over overall spectrum of selection process. The participant further noted that the outcome of the proposed process is dependent on establishment of Oversight Audit Committee and proposed to defer the decision pending further deliberation after Oversight Audit committee is established.
- One participant acknowledged the added value of oversight committee to the process and noted their preference to either model one or model two.
- The AFC took note of the proposal and the comments of participants.

6. Matters relating to Arbitration

i. Appointment of members of the Arbitration Panel

- The AFC took note of the ‘Report of the Director General on Proposed Membership of the Arbitration Panel’ and agreed with the recommendation contained therein.

ii. Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA

- The Secretariat presented on the ‘Report of the Director-General on the Operation of the Arbitration System for IRENA’ and the AFC took note of the report and agreed with the recommendation on the proposed amendments to the IRENA Provisional Arbitration Rules contained therein.

7. Matters relating to Internal Audit

i. Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken

- The Director-General introduced the ‘Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Internal Audit Office, and Internal Audit Recommendations and Actions Taken’ as contained in document C/29/14.
 - The AFC considered the report and decided to submit it to the Council for its consideration.
- ii. **Proposed Oversight Audit Committee and the Self-Assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) report**
- The AFC Chair recalled the Members of what happened at the 28th Council meeting, and that the Secretariat was requested to share the Self-Assessment with Independent External Validation (SAIV) report, as contained in document C/29/INF/2, with the Membership, for its reference. Besides, that the Council identified two key governance gaps relating to direct reporting line and audit committee and tasked the Secretariat to suggest regulatory changes and a governance model for enhanced audit oversight and independence, in line with best practices across similar international organisations. The AFC Chair added that an expert was engaged early in 2025 to work on a proposal on a governance model to address these gaps, and that three options for establishing an Oversight Audit Committee were proposed, as contained in document C/29/15. The AFC Chair stated that feedback was received that option 3, establishing an independent Oversight Audit Committee reporting to the Council, seems to be a viable solution in moving forward as it ensures maximum audit independence, and therefore, invited the AFC to consider the recommendation to propose option 3 for consideration by the 29th Council meeting and the further development at the 30th Council meeting, with this view to presenting a decision on this matter at the 16th session of the Assembly.
 - A participant asked to get more clarity on option 3; the participant is in favour of option 3 in case it is going to be a committee or a model similar to the Ethics Advisory Board composing of 3 Member States with a Chair that are basically independently operating and having subject matter experts to provide expertise and insights. However, if this is not the case, and option 3 does include only external experts without representation of Member States, then the participant is not in favour of this option.
 - A participant indicated that option 3 seems to be a good option but needs to consider hiring qualified staff members on the committee, to be staffed at the Agency and be independent to operate.
 - The Deputy-Director General welcomed the comments that have been made by Members, but sought the AFC to guide the Secretariat how to proceed on this matter and see how to bring this to the 29th meeting of the Council; as Members provided very different views.
 - A participant came with two questions. First question is regarding the estimate of the additional costs for the options, it is not clear why option 1 requires training, but not option

2. The second question is to get a better understanding of whether the overhead secretariat staff support costs in the three scenarios would be, or should be, part of a working internal audit office, and should be included in the proposal for the next work programme and budget. The participant further supported what has been recommended in the proposal to start with either option 1 or 2 and then reassess to see if this is sufficient, and if not, then initiate the independent Oversight Audit Committee as stated in option 3.

- A participant indicated that it would not be proper to add another set of employees, as Internal Auditors are already in place at the Agency, and further supported that the Oversight Audit Committee should be a committee constituted of Council Members.
- A participant indicated that, given that this recommendation was made by the Ethics Advisory Board, hence, suggested to consult and discuss the 3 proposed options on developing an Oversight Audit Committee with other Members on the Ethics Advisory Board, taking into consideration the comments received from other AFC Members, and will accordingly provide a feedback and a final recommendation to the AFC Chair prior to conducting the 29th meeting of the Council.
- The AFC Chair welcomed the proposal of the participant.
- The AFC took note of the report as well as the remarks of the Deputy Director-General and interventions made by Members

8. Any other Business

- One delegation informed the AFC about an issue regarding a request made for information. The delegation elaborated on the steps taken to receive information on a Chart of Accounts and the Travel Policy of IRENA, including the accounts used in the Agency's accounting system, such as salaries, travel, rent, maintenance and other expenses. It stated that the purpose of this request was to enable a better understanding of the information presented to the Governing Bodies on the Agency's financial statements, among others, and to make an informed contribution to discussions on the Work Programme and Budget of the Agency, as well as administrative and institutional matters during the Council and Assembly.
- In this context, the delegation requested to understand the formal process for Members to request and receive documentation on policies, including basic operational documents such as the chart of accounts and travel policy, which IRENA considered to be internal and restricted. It also requested to understand who determines what information Members can access, and under what legal or procedural framework such decisions are made. The delegation called for greater transparency and efficiency in how IRENA responds to Member requests for operational information, and stated that its experience highlights a need for clearer procedures, better communication, and a cultural shift toward collaboration and accountability.
- The Chair of the AFC concluded the meeting with personal reflections at the end of his two-year tenure. He recalled that, together with the Vice-Chair from the United Arab Emirates, their clear objective had been to strengthen the administrative and institutional framework of IRENA. With the support and contributions of Members, the Committee

had been able to examine issues in depth and submit important recommendations to the Council. He noted that there had been both high moments, of which Members could be proud, and low moments, which he viewed not as failures but as frustrations to be channelled into improvements.

- He explained that his frustrations did not concern the substance of IRENA's work, but the way in which the Committee was able to perform its mandate. He highlighted difficulties arising from late circulation of documentation, which left insufficient time for Members to review and consult their capitals. He also noted challenges in accessing comparative information and described this as working in an "institutional vacuum". He stressed that information is essential to enable Members to fulfil their responsibilities and observed that requests had consistently been for clarity and detail rather than for confidential material. He called on Members to reflect on these issues and to ensure their voices were heard at the Council.
- The Chair then expressed his gratitude to the Director-General, the Director of Administration and Management Services, the Deputy Director-General, as well as to Secretariat staff for their invaluable assistance. He offered special thanks to the Vice-Chair, H.E. Dr Nawal Al-Hosany of the United Arab Emirates, for her guidance and for keeping him on track. He closed by expressing appreciation to all Members for their engagement and formally declared the meeting closed.

ANNEX V

General Member Statements – National Experiences on the Energy Transition

At the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council, Members were invited to share their national experiences on priority actions and challenges related to the deployment of renewable energy, and exchange views on issues related to the energy transition in the coming decade and beyond, under Agenda Item 5: General Member Statements – National Experiences on the Energy Transition.

Delegations were also invited to submit to the Secretariat their statements in written form and in the original language of delivery. Statements received by the Secretariat are contained in this annex, through this [link](#), as per the below alphabetical order by category.

Council members:

Togo and United Arab Emirates.

Council alternates:

Dominican Republic and Türkiye.

IRENA Members:

Eswatini, Malta, Pakistan, Peru, and Philippines.

Twenty-ninth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 11-12 September 2025

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