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КОМИССИЯ**

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION
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International Conference on the Investment
Climate for Developing Renewable Energy
Sources in Central Asia
(Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 18-19 May 2000)

Original: ENGLISH

INFORMATION NOTICE

1. This Information Notice contains details concerning the organization of, and participation in, the International Conference on the Investment Climate for Developing Renewable Energy Sources in Central Asia to be held in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) from 18 to 19 May 2000. It is being organized jointly by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities) and the Central Asia Energy Advisory Group (initiative of the European Commission's Synergy Programme), with the support of the Government of Kyrgyzstan; the Centre for Renewable Energy Utilization Problems of the Kyrgyz Government (KUN); the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Kyrgyzstan; the State Energy Agency of Kyrgyzstan; the Ministry of the Environment of Kyrgyzstan; the Joint Stock Company "Kyrgyzenergo"; the Kyrgyz Association for Renewable Energy; and in cooperation with the International Centre for Energy and Environmental Technology, Germany/Belgium. The Chairman of the National Organizing Committee is Mr. E.K. Omuraliev, Vice Prime Minister of the Government of Kyrgyzstan; the Vice-Chairman is Mr. Alaibek Obozov, Director, the Centre for Renewable Energy Utilization Problems of the Kyrgyz Government (KUN).

BACKGROUND

2. The Conference forms part of an international cooperative project to strengthen and expand renewable energy activities in Central Asia. It is also part of the work plan of the Central Asia Energy Advisory Group and a

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follow-up to the joint UN/ECE and EC Workshop on Financing Mechanisms for Renewable Energy Projects held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in September-October 1998. Recent studies of the energy markets of that region reveal that many countries in Central Asia have a good potential and urgent need for renewable energy applications as well as a strong interest in advancing the domestic use of these technologies. The studies recognize that energy shortages, inefficiencies and import dependencies could be mitigated through the use of domestic renewable energy sources, in particular solar, wind and small hydropower. Solving ecological problems and complying with internationally agreed protection standards such as those of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, are further important driving forces for the local production and use of renewable energy. In the view of most experts, the main obstacle to the implementation of renewable energy projects is the lack of access to financing and information. Therefore, the Conference is intended to contribute to overcoming these constraints and working out recommendations for attracting investment for RES development to secure sustainable development and a better quality of life for the people in Central Asia and other parts of the world.

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

3. The main purpose of the Conference is to bring together representatives of government departments, financing institutions, electric utilities, manufacturing and trading companies, equipment installers and engineering firms, information and promotion agencies, energy consumers and other interested entities involved in promoting, financing, producing and using renewable energy technologies. The Conference will provide an opportunity for:

- (a) Following up on the recommendations of the international Workshop on Financing Mechanisms for Renewable Energy Projects, which was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in September-October 1998;
- (b) Updating assessments of the market for renewable energy in Central Asia;
- (c) Exchanging experiences already gained with various financing schemes and partnership arrangements for renewable energy projects in Europe, North America and other parts of the world;
- (d) Promoting the imitation in Central Asia of success stories of investments in renewable energy projects recorded in other regions;
- (e) Discussing obstacles in the legal, regulatory, fiscal, institutional framework as well as barriers relating to the overall macroeconomic and structural situation of the Central Asian countries;
- (f) Presenting project proposals and investment opportunities in small hydropower, wind and solar energies; and
- (g) Furthering international cooperation and contacts in general for advancing the use of renewable energy sources in Central Asia.

VENUE

4. The Conference will be held from Thursday, 18 May to Friday, 19 May 1998 at the Conference Hall of the State History Museum at the following address: Square "Ala-Too", Bishkek. Weather conditions are usually pleasant at this time of the year, with temperatures between 5° (night) and 20° (day).

TOPICS OF THE CONFERENCE

5. The following topics will be considered in three working sessions: (a) possibilities and perspectives for RES utilization in Central Asian countries, market development and priorities for investments in the near future; (b) investment climate; legal, regulatory, fiscal, financing and institutional framework for renewable energy projects; international experience and recommendations for further RES development in Central Asian countries; and (c) presentation and discussion of concrete investment project proposals. The principal conclusions and recommendations resulting from the Conference will be adopted at the closing session. The programme will include technical visits to: a small hydro power plant in the suburbs of Bishkek; the Centre for Renewable Energy Utilization Problems of the Kyrgyz Government; and an exhibition featuring renewable energy installations.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

6. Wednesday, 17 May

Arrival of participants at Bishkek. Meeting at airport. Transfer to "Dostuk" Hotel (Bishkek, 429 "B" Frunze Str., Tel: 28-42-51, 28-42-78). Registration and accommodation.

Thursday, 18 May

09.00 Registration
09.30 Opening session
09.45 Working session I:

This session will be devoted to discussing practical possibilities and perspectives for RES utilization in Central Asian countries; achievements and experience gained in this direction; problems and barriers to successful RES development and ways to overcome them; legal basis for attracting investment and other financial means; and mechanisms for RES project implementation.

14.30 Working session II:

This session will be devoted to discussing international experience in attracting investments to RES utilization projects and implementation of these projects; mechanisms for creating joint ventures; national and regional programmes on the utilization of solar, wind, geothermal, small mountain hydropower energy sources for commercial purposes.

19.00 Cocktail

Friday, 19 May

09.30 Working session III:

This session will be devoted to presentation and discussion of concrete investment project proposals.

11.30 Closing session of the Conference

14.30 Technical visits

Saturday, 20 May - Departure of participants

7. The detailed programme of the Conference will be determined in the light of responses received from potential participants and be communicated to all registered participants in **April 2000**.

PROCEEDINGS AND DOCUMENTATION

Organization of working sessions

8. The working languages of the Conference will be English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided. The Conference proceedings will be directed by a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and session chairmen. The session chairmen will introduce the topic, animate the discussion and summarize the deliberations on the topic.

9. Presentations of papers will be limited to 15 minutes to allow sufficient time for discussions. Presenters are encouraged to use audiovisual tools to support their presentation. Overhead and slide projectors, and video equipment PAL/SECAM will be available.

Papers

10. Participants willing to present a paper and/or project proposal should send the title, name of author(s) and a short abstract (not longer than one

page) **not later than 15 March 2000** to the addresses indicated in the registration form. Authors should bring with them 50 copies of the full text of their papers and/or project proposals for distribution at the Conference. The name(s), affiliation(s) and addresses of the author(s) should be included in the title page of the abstract and paper/project proposal.

11. Papers are welcome on any of the Conference topics. Papers should be written in English and/or Russian, the working languages of the Conference. The maximum length of papers should be 10 typed pages.

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Registration

12. The registration fee of US\$ 50 will be charged by the National Organizing Committee upon arrival during registration. It will cover the expenses connected with local transportation, meals, coffee breaks and cocktail. Travel, accommodation and other expenses are to be borne by participants except for those participants who are specifically invited by the Organizing Committee. Participants are requested to send one copy of the completed registration form (see annex) **by 15 March 2000** to the addresses given in the registration form.

Travel and transportation

13. Bishkek has an international airport. The following airlines provide service to Bishkek airport: Aeroflot, British Airways, Iran Airlines, Kyrgyzstan Airlines, Sinzyan China Airlines, Turkish Airlines and Uzbekistan Airlines.

14. Participants should arrive in Bishkek by 17 May at the latest. The Organizers propose to transport participants by shuttle bus between Bishkek airport "Manas" and the Hotel "Dostuk", where registration and accommodation of participants will take place. Participants wishing to use the shuttle bus are requested to inform the Organizers about this on the registration form, or separately by fax or e-mail, of their arrival date, time and flight number. Other means of transportation are taxi: approximately USD 5-7 between "Manas" airport and the Hotel "Dostuk". Public bus transport is also available.

Passport and visa requirements

15. Participants must have a valid passport. For participants who require an entry visa, the Conference Organizers will make the necessary arrangements for the issuance of a visa either through the diplomatic representation of Kyrgyzstan in the participant's countries of residence or at "Manas" airport. The visa fee at "Manas" airport is USD 100. **Visas may be issued no sooner**

than two weeks after the person has sent the registration form and provided all passport information to the Conference Organizing Committee.

Accommodation

16. Participants will be accommodated at the Hotel "Dostuk" from 18 to 19 May 2000. The price, per person, per night, is USD 80-100 for a standard room, including breakfast. The total amount is to be paid in local currency, in cash, on arrival at the registration desk.

NB: Kyrgyzstan uses 220 volt power supply.

Local currency

17. The local currency is the Som. It is the only legal tender in Kyrgyzstan. Supporting documents are not required for hard currency importation, hard currency spent, i.e. officially exchanged during the stay in Kyrgyzstan, and hard currency exportation. Money can be exchanged at hotels or at any of the many official exchange offices in Bishkek (passport is required).

NB: Exchange rate is 1 US\$ = 47 Som (November 1999)

ENQUIRIES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. All enquiries and correspondence concerning the Conference should be addressed to:

Centre for Renewable
Energy Utilization Problems
7, Elebaev Str.
720031 Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan
Attn. Mr. M. Kasymov
Responsible secretary

United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe
Coordinating Unit for
Operational Activities
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Attn. Mr. A. Maevski
Economic Affairs Officer

Tel: (996 312) 55 92 03
Fax: (996 312) 55 92 04
E-mail: kun@elcat.kg

(4122) 917 3296
(4122) 917 0178
andrei.maevski@unece.org

ANNEX

REGISTRATION FORM

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE
FOR DEVELOPING RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES IN CENTRAL ASIA
(Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 18 to 19 May 2000)

Each participant in the Conference is requested to complete this form (typewritten or in handwritten block letters, please) and to send it by mail or preferably by telefax as soon as possible, but not later than 15 March 2000 to both of the addresses given below:

Centre for Renewable
Energy Utilization Problems
7, Elebaev Str.
720031 Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan
Attn. Mr. M.Kasymov
Responsible secretary

Fax: (996 312) 55 92 04

United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe
Coordinating Unit for
Operational Activities
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Attn. Mr. A. Maevski
Economic Affairs Officer

Fax: (4122) 917 0178

Family name (Mr./Ms.): _____ First name: _____

Title/function: _____

Country and Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone No.: _____ Fax No.: _____

E-Mail: _____

I intend to present a paper under topic (a), (b) and/or (c) entitled:

