Briefing Paper – Security Council

**The Issue of Energy Security and the Ethics of Energy Procurement**

Energy security is the association between national security and the availability of natural resources for energy consumption. Access to cheaper, uninterrupted available energy has become essential to the functioning of modern economies. The definition of energy security has expanded beyond the initial focus on security of supply to include a wider range of factors, often referred to as the “four As” of energy security: availability, affordability, accessibility and acceptability. Renewable energy procurement is the strategic process of sourcing renewable energy to meet the needs of your organisation through a third-party energy supplier or distribution company. The United Nations must address this issue in order to reach projected aims of ethical procurement while ensuring energy is reliable and efficient.

Background information:

National energy security is viewed as a state action aimed at guaranteeing the availability of energy in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner, through external supplies and the generation of indigenous sources, within the framework of international commitments. The British Energy Security Strategy set out the Government's ambition for deploying up to 24 gigawatts of nuclear generated energy by 2050. Furthermore, the British government have recently set new targets for domestic energy efficiency. They projected that by 2025, homes should produce 75-80% less CO2 compared to current levels.

Many countries believe that a closer focus and prioritisation on ensuring energy efficiency and security would lead to economic prosperity, attract future investment and support our industrial heartlands. Energy security is crucial for the continuing function of businesses and jobs in many employment sectors. Apart from African countries, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Philippines had the lowest energy consumption per capita in 2021. Bangladesh and Pakistan are taking steps to reduce their use of fossil fuels by building nuclear power plants.

China, as the world’s biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, approved more coal power in the first three months of 2023 than in the whole of 2021. Coal accounted for 56.2% of total energy consumption last year, however only 25.9% was used from renewable energy sources including nuclear energy. Evidently this is a serious issue for China, which they have attempted to combat with the introduction of hydroelectric power plants and wind and solar farms. Their efforts have been so great that though their greenhouse gas emissions are extremely high, they have also become the world’s highest investments in clean energy. Despite these efforts, in recent years, record heatwaves and drought crippled hydropower stations, resulting in power crunches that brought factories to a halt. An outdated electricity grid and inflexibility in transferring energy between regions add to the uncertainty.

Ethical procurement refers to a wide range of issues that can impact the ethical and sustainability goals of a business. Examples include the monitoring of unethical or illegal supplier business procedures and practices that can impact an organisation’s procurement efficiency and reputation. Ethical energy procurement ensures equity, accountability and reporting, value for money, open and effective competition and fair dealing reducing common problems arising from a conflict of issues.

Potential solutions:

* Moving from fossil fuels to home-grown, clean energy to eliminate emissions to ensure secure, low- cost and clean electricity
* Implement policies with subsidies to incentivise developers
* Enforce regulations to pressurise provincial governments and generating companies
* Improving the energy efficiency of buildings, vehicles, appliances, and electronics
* Increasing energy storage capacity

Questions to consider:

* What are the objectives of energy security?
* Why is energy security so important for your country’s requirements?
* Does your country have strategies and policies in place to help ensure energy security?
* How can we make energy consumption more efficient and sustainable?
* How can countries promote ethical energy procurement?

Useful links:

* [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file /69421/ethical-procurement-policy-statement.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file%20/69421/ethical-procurement-policy-statement.pdf)
* [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file /1148252/powering-up-britain-energy-security-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file%20/1148252/powering-up-britain-energy-security-plan.pdf)
* [https://www.fdiintelligence.com/content/data-trends/top-10-countries-with-lowest-energy- consumption-per-capita-81642](https://www.fdiintelligence.com/content/data-trends/top-10-countries-with-lowest-energy-%20consumption-per-capita-81642)
* <https://www.ecsourcinggroup.com/ethics-in-procurement-management#:~:text=Fundamentals%20of%20Ethics%20and%20the,keeping%2C%20beneficence%2C%20and%20autonomy>
* <https://watchwire.ai/energy-procurement/#:~:text=power%20their%20operations.-,Energy%20procurement%20is%20the%20strategic%20process%20of%20sourcing%20your%20energy,in%20the%20world%20right%20now>