
Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the International Solar Alliance
25 September 2023
New Delhi, Republic of India

Summary Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)

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Agenda Item 1. Opening of the Meeting

1. The Hon'ble President of the ISA Assembly opened the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) by extending a warm welcome to the members of the Standing Committee and the ISA Secretariat.
2. The President expressed gratitude for the continued support and efforts of the members towards ISA and its initiatives, emphasizing the global significance of solar energy.
3. Noting global challenges like climate change and energy access, the President highlighted that solar energy played a pivotal role in transitioning to low-emission energy systems. He cited impressive global solar energy statistics and acknowledged that while progress had been made, challenges in energy access remained significant, particularly in developing regions.
4. The mission of the ISA to provide affordable, sustainable energy to all was reaffirmed, with ambitious targets set: mobilizing \$1 trillion in solar investments and deploying 1,000 GW of solar capacity by 2030. The President mentioned the ISA initiatives and programmes spanning various sectors.
5. Despite challenges, the President expressed confidence in the ability of the ISA to lead the way toward a sustainable and equitable energy future.
6. ***Decision: As the Chair of the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee, the President officially declared the meeting open and in session.***

Agenda Item 2. Adoption of the Agenda

7. The President invited the Standing Committee to consider the Provisional Agenda for the Ninth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee, contained in the Working Document **ISA/SC.09/WD.01**, seeking their input and guidance.
8. ***Decision: The Standing Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda for the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the ISA as contained in the Working Document.***

Agenda Item 3. Selection of Rapporteur

9. The President informed the Standing Committee that the People's Republic of Bangladesh had agreed to serve as the Rapporteur, expressing gratitude for their support.
10. **Decision: The Standing Committee appointed the People's Republic of Bangladesh as the Rapporteur for the Ninth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee.**

Agenda Item 4. Confirmation of the report of the Eighth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee

11. Pursuant to Rule 23 of Annexure 2 of the Rules of Procedure, the President presented the report of the Eighth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee contained in the working document **ISA/SC.09/WD.03**
12. **Decision: The Standing Committee confirmed the report of the Eighth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee as contained in the working document ISA/SC.09/WD.03.**

Agenda Item 5. Action Taken Report of the Eighth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee

13. The President invited the ISA Secretariat to consider the Action Taken Report of the Eighth Meeting as contained in the working document **ISA/SC.09/WD.04.**
14. **Decision: The Standing Committee noted the action taken by the ISA Secretariat as contained in the working document ISA/SC.09/WD.04.**

Agenda Item 6. Revised ISA Viability Gap Funding Mechanism

15. The President noted that during the Eighth Meeting of the ISA Standing Committee, the ISA Secretariat had proposed to revise the ISA Viability Gap Funding (VGF) mechanism since no proposals for VGF had been received from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDs). Member countries had expressed concerns that the maximum available Viability Gap Funding (VGF) was inadequate for their projects. As a result, the ISA Secretariat was tasked with restructuring the VGF mechanism to address these challenges.
16. The Director General of the ISA presented the revised VGF mechanism in the current meeting. Under the revised mechanism, the VGF amount would range from 10% to 35% of the project cost, depending on the capacity and needs of the countries and their respective projects. The validity of the scheme was proposed to be three years, starting from CY 2024, with a shift of the current budget provision of USD 1.5 million from 2023 to 2024. Proposals would be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis, subject to the availability of budget provisions, and detailed guidelines would be presented to the next Standing Committee.

17. The President agreed that the revised VGF mechanism would afford more time to the Member Countries to avail the VGF, which would be helpful to the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and make the mechanism workable.
18. ***Decision: The Standing committee recommended the revised ISA Viability Gap Funding Mechanism to be placed in the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its consideration and approval.***

Agenda Item 7. Summary of the Annual Report for CY 2023

19. The President stated that the Annual Report comprehensively showcases ongoing and completed projects, significant milestones achieved, and success stories of the ISA. Furthermore, he emphasised that the Annual Report for CY 2023 will highlight key aspects, including an overview of ISA programmes, projects, initiatives, accomplishments and impact, and future goals.
20. The Director General provided an overview of the Annual Report for CY 2023, emphasizing key areas, initiatives, and strategic approaches.
21. The ISA Secretariat presented the Standing Committee the Summary of the Annual Report for CY 2023 with proposed changes to the approach in preparation and circulation of the ISA Annual Report 2023 as contained in the working document **ISA/SC.09/WD.06**.
22. **The President directed the ISA Secretariat to circulate the Annual Report 2023 as proposed to the Member Countries well ahead of the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly.**
23. ***Decision: The Standing Committee considered the proposed changes for the preparation and circulation of the ISA Annual Report 2023 and recommended the proposed report to be placed in the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its consideration and approval.***

Agenda Item 8. Audited Financial Statement of the ISA

24. The President stated that the audited financial statement of the ISA for CY 2022 had been prepared in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the ISA Assembly and that the statement would be presented during the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its review and approval.
25. The Director General informed that the completed Audited Financial Statement for CY 2022 has been circulated to all Members in the working document **ISA/SC.09/WD.07**.

26. The ISA Secretariat presented the Audited Financial Statement for CY 2022 and informed the Standing Committee that the external auditors noted no material issue or risk.

27. ***Decision: The Standing Committee recommended the Audited Financial Statement of ISA for CY 2022 to be placed in the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its consideration.***

Agenda Item 9. Revised Organisational Structure and proposal for new positions at the ISA Secretariat

28. The President stated that the ISA Secretariat had proposed new staff positions, some of which were in accordance with Article 10 (Internal Oversight) of the Manual of Regulations of the ISA Secretariat.

29. The President invited the ISA Secretariat to brief the Standing Committee on the proposed new positions and the revised organisational structure.

30. The Director-General provided an update on the revised organisational structure and new positions at the ISA Secretariat. Article 10 mandated the Director General to establish an internal oversight mechanism, leading to the proposal of 4 new fixed-term positions at the Internal Oversight Unit, including the Chief of Unit, Audit Specialist, Evaluation Specialist, and Grievance Officer. Additionally, one Programme Analyst position each in the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and the Governance and Partnerships Unit were proposed.

31. The representative of the French Republic expressed gratitude for the consideration of their proposal to include the seconded experts in the ISA Secretariat organogram.

32. The President sought clarification on the necessity of a Grievance Officer, given the proposed Chief of Unit, Audit Specialist, and Evaluation Specialist positions. He also sought clarification on the distinction between the roles of Audit and Evaluation Specialists.

33. The Director General explained that the Audit Specialist focused on financial matters, while the Evaluation Specialist ensured evaluations followed established work processes. The Grievance Officer's role pertained to handling complaints made by staff members, particularly concerning actions taken against them. This responsibility would be predominantly managed by the legal section of the ISA, with a relatively junior Grievance Officer assigned for coordination purposes.

34. The President underlined the greater capacity of the Chief of the Internal Oversight Unit, as a senior staff member, to effectively handle staff grievances compared to a junior Grievance Officer. Additionally, he stated that all Chief of Units should be responsible for addressing

grievances within their respective units. If any grievance cannot be resolved at the unit level, only then it should be brought to the Chief of the Internal Oversight Unit.

35. The President commended the ISA Secretariat for setting up the Internal Oversight Unit and working towards strengthening the necessary oversight function of the ISA.

36. ***Decision: The Standing Committee recommended the revised organisational structure and proposal for new positions at the ISA Secretariat, excluding the position of the proposed Grievance Officer as contained in the working document ISA/SC.09/WD.08 to be placed in the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its consideration and approval.***

Agenda Item 10. Update on the work plan and budget for CY 2023 and proposed work plan and budget for CY 2024

37. The President invited the ISA Secretariat to present the update on the ISA work plan and budget for CY 2023 and the proposed work plan and budget for CY 2024 as contained in the working document **ISA/SC.09/WD.09**.

38. The ISA Secretariat presented updates on the work plan and budget for CY 2023 and the proposed work plan and budget for CY 2024.

39. The President inquired about a halted project in Sudan due to political instability. The Director General explained the delay and agreed to consider relocating the project once the political situation stabilised.

40. The President sought clarification on the expenses for Management Support Communications and Outreach, suggesting a review. He found Programmatic Support expenses justifiable and ambitious, indicating timely project completion.

41. The representative of France expressed interest in the "Solar for She" initiative, the Solar for Green Hydrogen initiative, and private sector engagement within the ISA Corporate Advisory group and sought an update on the GGI-OSOWOG initiative.

42. The Director General appreciated the support of the French Republic, highlighted "Solar for She" as a pioneering initiative, and reported the progress on the OSOWOG initiative.

43. The President further reported that the OSOWOG initiative had begun, with studies and discussions on grid interconnections across continents. Negotiations for interconnecting the Indian subcontinent with the Middle East Grid were underway, fostering energy connections across regions. The President mentioned connections with Bangladesh, Nepal, and plans for Sri Lanka. He emphasized the potential of synchronised energy generation across time zones.

He concluded by mentioning plans to formalise an organisation for overseeing the international grid and having an inter-governmental agreement.

44. The Minister of Bangladesh, joining virtually, expressed commitment to solar deployment, with achievements in renewable energy capacity and ongoing solar projects. Bangladesh aimed to revise its solar roadmap and expand solar initiatives. The Minister discussed solar projects, committees, and the STAR Centre's role in enhancing solar technology and knowledge exchange.
45. The President thanked the Minister for his remarks.
46. The representative of Sweden inquired about the Global Solar Facility and the budget disparity between USD 7 million for the Assembly and USD 100 million for the Facility.
47. The President clarified that the USD 7 million covered ISA operational expenses, while the Global Solar Facility would function as a Global Fund financed by contributions from entities like the Green Climate Fund and various financial institutions.
48. The Director General explained the rationale for the Global Solar Facility, aiming to address the imbalance in solar investments, particularly in Africa.
49. The President highlighted India's renewable capacity and private sector investments, emphasizing the need to support African countries facing investment barriers. The Global Solar Facility would help address these barriers by de-risking investments.
50. The President applauded the ISA for its concerted efforts in operationalising the Facility and stressed the importance of developed countries assisting the African countries by contributing to the fund.
51. ***Decision: The Standing Committee recommended the update on the ISA work plan and budget for CY 2023 and the proposed work plan and budget for CY 2024 to be placed in the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its consideration and approval.***

Agenda Item 11. Granting of Partner Organisation Status

52. The President informed the Standing Committee that since the Fifth Session of the ISA Assembly, the ISA had established three new partnerships with International Organisations in accordance with Article VIII of the ISA Framework Agreement. These partnerships included the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the West African Development Bank (BOAD) and Africa50.

53. The President invited the Standing Committee to review the working document containing the Memorandum of Understanding between the ISA and the three organisations and to recommend the organisations (ICAO, BOAD and Africa50) to the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for grant of Partner Organisation status.
54. ***Decision: The Standing Committee recommended placing the proposal of the ISA Secretariat to grant Partner Organisation status to ICAO, BOAD and Africa50 in the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly for its approval.***

Agenda Item 12. Provisional Agenda for the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly

55. The President stated that the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly was scheduled from 30 October to 1 November 2023 in New Delhi. The ISA Secretariat has already prepared the Provisional Agenda for this session, considering the agenda items discussed during the Eighth and Ninth Meetings of the ISA Standing Committee.
56. The representative from the French Republic expressed their agreement with the Draft Agenda and requested that the list of Prospective Members and candidates for Observer Status be shared. The French Republic informed that a new secondee from their country would join the ISA Secretariat by mid-October. He also requested that an update on the One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG) initiative be included in the agenda for the upcoming session.
57. The President directed the ISA Secretariat to circulate an update on the OSOWOG initiative to the members.
58. ***Decision: The Standing Committee recommended the Provisional Agenda for the Sixth Session of the ISA Assembly to be placed in the ISA Assembly for its adoption.***

Agenda Item 13. Interventions by the Member Countries

59. The President invited interventions from the members of the Standing Committee.
60. The representative from the Kingdom of Denmark expressed their delight at collaborating with the ISA as a Regional Vice President, along with their involvement in various other initiatives. He shared that they are currently in the process of preparing for their secondment. Additionally, he informed the Standing Committee about their progress in developing a project report for Africa centred around Green Hydrogen, supported by wind and solar energy sources. He reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to the ISA and their dedication to expanding their support in the future.
61. ***The President thanked the Kingdom of Denmark for their interventions.***

Agenda Item 14. Any other business

62. The President invited the Members to table any other business they would want to discuss.

63. ***No other business was proposed for discussion.***

Agenda Item 15. Closing of the Meeting

64. The President of ISA expressed gratitude to the members of the Standing Committee, commended the work of the ISA Secretariat, urging the Secretariat to continue to expand the footprint and reach of the ISA to even more countries with solutions across the realm of technology, regulatory frameworks, and funding. He strongly advocated for a dedicated Fund to help de-risk investments in Solar.

65. The President requested the Depository for an update on the Membership status. The Depository updated the Committee that there are currently 116 countries that have signed the ISA Framework Agreement.

66. The President thanked the Standing Committee for their steadfast support and cooperation and urged the members to actively participate in advancing the mission of the ISA through Annual Voluntary Contributions to the ISA.

67. The President thanked the Director General and the ISA Secretariat for organising and facilitating the meeting.

68. ***The President declared the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the ISA closed.***
