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DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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To: *Hélène LE GAL, Managing Director for Middle-East and North Africa, Kurt Vanderberghe, Director-General (DG CLIMA)*

Subject: Visit of DG ENER Juul-Joergensen in the UAE – 11-12 September 2023

Summary

As part of [redacted] rebound in EU-UAE high-level encounters, DG Juul-Joergensen's visit took place right after and in some regards as a follow-up to the visit of PCOM von der Leyen of 7 September. DG Juul-Jorgensen's meetings with UAE counterparts, including with the Minister of Energy, Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs (MFA) and COP28 DG, confirmed the central role that energy sector increasingly plays in the run-up to COP28 notably regarding the Global Pledge initiative and in bilateral cooperation including economic. Promising areas for engagment include renewables, in particular green hydrogen, but also more strategic energy framework cooperation. In talks with European companies [redacted] was mentioned, which could be a further area for cooperation.

Assessment

1. In the changing geopolitical context with long-term repercussions on the energy sector, particularly in Europe, and with COP28 rapidly approaching, DG Juul-Joergensen's bilateral meetings have demonstrated that, both the EU and UAE have a keen and increasing interest to deepen energy related cooperation with focus on renewables and green hydrogen. Regarding the latter some skeptical comments were also expressed due to the alleged early stage and high cost of the technological solutions currently available while the interest in overcoming the challenges through cooperation was clear. It is also clear that while the UAE realises it is critical to scale up the use of renewables, they will also simultanously continue with investments and extraction from the oil/gas sector [redacted].The Global Pledge initiative on tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030 provides an excellent platform for bilateral enagagment ahead of COP 28 and the two sides agreed to coordinate targeted outreach efforts to mobilize sufficient support on these key common goals.

2. The meetings with EU companies active in the UAE in energy related sectors (Technip Energies, Ansaldo Energia, Siemens Energy) demonstrated the breadth and sophistication of European economic and technological presence in the country and the potential for further engagement as the green energy transition and the decarbonisation of the economy accelerates. [redacted]

[redacted] ambitious policy goals of decarbonisation, increase of renewables (and green hydrogen) in the energy mix. In this regard, sharing the EU's pioneering regulatory achievements and expertise could be very useful.

3. As an outcome of this visit, and also building on earlier discussions, the following deliverables could be foreseen in terms of joint EU-UAE actions: (i) continued coordination on the outreach efforts on the Global Pledge; (ii) establishment of an EU-UAE Working Group on hydrogen, renewable energy and energy efficiency to enhance cooperation in this sector; (iii) seeking engagement to share EU's expertise and best practices in creating a conducive regulatory framework in sectors related to green energy, notably renewables and green hydrogen. With an enforcement of energy and climate action expertise in the EUDEL, the EU will be able to more persistently follow the energy/climate dossier with Emirati partners to contribute ensuring that the bilateral engagement becomes more operational and goes well beyond COP28, and for which the potential was very clear also during this visit.

Details:

4. DG Juul-Jorgensen visited Abu Dhabi last week and met most notably with Dr. Sultan Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, Mr. Saeed Al Hajeri, Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Majid Al Suwaidi, Director-General UAE COP 28 Presidency Team. She furthermore visited Masdar, met with IRENA Director General Francesco La Camera, and a number of energy companies.

4. During the meeting with the **UAE Minister of Energy and Infrastructure Dr. Sultan Al Mazrouei**, DG Juul-Joergensen spoke about the great potential of deepening the bilateral energy transition cooperation with UAE, with a focus on green technology and innovation, and the opportunities for future hydrogen trade between the UAE and the EU. Minister Al Mazrouei praised the EU as an important partner, recalling UAE investments in the EU, but also joint investments with European companies in third countries, such as Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. Al Mazrouei welcomed the strengthening of the current, and the exploration of future, alleys of energy cooperation with the EU while cautioning on the 'pace and resources'. The transition should be gradual, take into account [redacted]. Minister Al Mazrouei highlighted the EU-UAE energy transport infrastructure as a promising areas of cooperation and investment and confirmed UAE readiness to supply hydrogen to the EU. The Minister accepted the invitation to the second EU Energy Day's opening event convened by DG Juul- Joergensen on behalf of Commissioner Simson.

5. At the meeting with **Majid Al Suwaidi, Director-General of the COP 28 Presidency Team**, DG Juul Joergensen thanked the UAE Presidency for their excellent cooperation on the Global Pledges on renewable energy and energy efficiency and highlighted the need to ensure support by major players [redacted] and to work together, including during the forthcoming UNGA, to build a critical mass of countries endorsing the pledges ahead of COP28. She also encouraged joint work on the Global Methane Pledge, launched at COP26, with the aim to be reconfirmed and enhanced with further steps at the COP28. On the bilateral track, the DG noted the potential of cooperation in Africa and private investment in the green energy sector, notably hydrogen and methane. Al Suwaidi noted that the energy transition was one of the expected key outcomes of COP28, [redacted] He presented the COP28 Presidency Agenda along the well known lines, with particular emphasis on climate finance. He called for cooperation with the EU on investments in the energy sector, including in Africa, [redacted]

[redacted] Al Suwaidi called for EU support in communication efforts with the civil society [redacted] DG Juul-Joergensen noted that action and a meaningful outcome of COP28 was the best advocacy strategy and invited Al Suwaidi to attend the ministerial level opening event of the EU Energy Days at COP28.

6. At the MOFA meeting with **Saeed Al Hajeri, the vice-minister in charge of economic affairs and trade,** the UAE side at the outset congratulated the EU for its remarkable achievements in managing the critical energy context last year due to the war in Ukraine. The area of energy is a very important part of bilateral cooperation that does not always get enough spotlight. DG Juul-Joergensen stressed that the UAE is a key partner in energy [redacted] and we should focus on concrete, operational joint action in the context of green transition, including in Africa as well as in the COP28 context marshalling support for the Global Pledge initiative on renewables and energy efficiency. The UAE side underlined the importance of involving fully the relevant private operators in the energy sector such as ADNOC, MASDAR, TAQA in bilateral cooperation adding that European companies have already very strong presence in the country. Mr. Al Hajeri also referred to [redacted] and parties agreed that the recent successful meeting the President of the European Commission with the UAE President has given impetus [redacted]. DG Juul-Joergensen also underlined the importance of green hydrogen in the EU's efforts to accelerate green energy transition and explained the enabling regulatory framework created in Europe in this area (definition, certification) creating stable, predictable market conditions. The UAE side expressed readiness to engage in this area, involving ADNOC who is the main player in this context, adding though that there are still some elements [redacted] to be clarified. But for instance on ammonia there is already an existing cooperation with Germany. Mr. Al Hajeri also referred to recent investment by the Masdar in off-shore wind in the Baltic Sea adding that for the UAE the EU is one of the most predictable markets. The UAE side also inquired about future of the nuclear energy in the EU to which DG Juul-Joergensen replied that nuclear will remain part of the energy mix with some MS planning to extend capacity in this field.

7. Meeting **Mr. Francesco La Camera Director-General of the IRENA**, DG Juul-Joergensen praised the Organisation's work on renewables. She underlined the importance of joint action in the run-up to COP28 particularly in promoting the Global Pledge initiative. Mr La Camera draw the attention to the recently established Global Renewables Alliance [redacted]

8. In her meeting with some **European companies active in the energy sector in the UAE** (Technip, Ansaldo, Siemens) it has become clear that European technology and engineering companies are very active in the UAE and in the wider region. At the same time it appears that in the UAE there is an accelerating drive towards energy transition (renewables) also with COP 28 approaching [redacted] EU companies would welcome the elaboration of an EU-UAE framework [redacted] to create a platform for cooperation in the energy sector and [redacted] sharing best practices on EU regulatory approaches [redacted]

9. At the meeting with Abdulaziz Al Obaidi, the Chief Operating Officer of Masdar UAE's leading renewable company it was explained that the recent decision to restructure the

company shareholders (involving ADNOC and TAQA) reinforced the company's position as a driver on renewable both globally and in the local context. Masdar is technology agnostic investing in all sectors be it wind, solar, geothermic, waste energy etc. There was an agreement that energy will be central for the success of COP28 and to ensure efficient and just energy transition global partnerships will be required and in this area there is a huge potential for joint action. Masdar consider the European market including in green hydrogen as very predictable and booming market, with presence in Spain, Denmark and the Netherlands and also active in Morocco thus welcoming the further development of the trans-European network with better connections to the Iberian Peninsula.

Sign off: Lucie BERGER, Head of Delegation

Electronically signed on 08/12/2023 13:11 (UTC+01) in accordance with Article 11 of Commission Decision (EU) 2021/2121