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Luis Bertrán Rafecas Assumes Position of IGU Secretary General



Barcelona, 3 November 2016 - The International Gas Union (IGU) is pleased to announce that as of 1 November 2016, Mr. Luis Bertrán Rafecas has assumed the position of Secretary General, taking over from Mr. Pål Rasmussen.

This transition comes at a pivotal time for the global gas industry. There is increasing understanding of the unprecedented role natural gas can play in the global energy transformation. Natural gas is a vital energy source on its own and in its unique ability to enable and support the greater deployment of renewable energies.

The enhanced use of natural gas in power generation, heating and industry will not only drive economic growth, but also reduce carbon emissions as well as emissions of harmful air pollutants.

With the change in leadership, the IGU's Secretariat has also relocated from Oslo, Norway to Barcelona, Spain, with Gas Natural Fenosa and Sedigas becoming the new Secretariat host organizations. [Read more...](#)



[Contact details of the new Secretariat can be found here.](#)



In addition to Luis Bertrán Rafecas, the Secretariat team in Barcelona will consist of Rafael Huarte (Director), Antonia Fernández Corrales (Chief Advisor), Luisa Peris (Executive Assistant), Hyunchang Kim (Advisor), Taeksang Kwon (Senior Advisor) and Anette S. Nordal (Coordination Committee Secretary/Information Consultant)



Amsterdam Council Meeting - A celebration of IGU's 85th anniversary and the final meeting under the Norwegian Secretariat

The venue of the last IGU Council meeting under the Norwegian Secretariat term was Amsterdam. The meeting was superbly hosted by KVGN - the Royal Dutch Gas Association, with IGU Honorary Member Robert Doets ensuring that every detail was looked after in order to deliver an outstanding meeting.

Photo: Swimmerguy269 via Wikimedia Commons, [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)]

Iran to host IGU Research Conference (IGRC) 2020

Amsterdam, 25 October 2016 - The International Gas Union (IGU) is pleased to announce that at its annual Council Meeting it selected Iran to host the 16th International Gas Research Conference (IGRC), which will be held in Tehran in 2020.

In awarding the IGRC to Iran, one of the leading natural gas producers and consumers in the world, the IGU is looking forward to gaining further insights into how natural gas' role in the global energy mix can be enhanced as governments around the world look to curb greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. The IGRC 2020 will be hosted by the NIGC (National Iranian Gas Company).

[Read the press release](#)



Informative and engaging meetings

The Council week provided the opportunity for discussion, debate, and engagement on some very important industry issues. Agenda items for both the Executive Committee and the Council meetings included the emerging issue of methane emissions and how to continue to evolve the IGU in the future consistent with the Union's vision and mission.

Methane emissions

The level of activity and debate regarding this issue amongst governments and policy shapers and makers has intensified over the past 6 months and this issue is clearly evolving as one of the most critical challenges for the future growth of industry despite the fact that the methane emission levels from the oil and gas industry are relatively small in terms of the overall natural and anthropogenic emissions. Nonetheless, the issue of methane emissions is being used to discount the advantages of replacing coal with natural gas at a time countries are making their fuel choices under COP21. The gas industry has made substantial progress in measuring, documenting and cost effectively reducing methane emissions, however, these efforts must be sustained and intensified. The IGU will be stepping up efforts in this area.

Building for the Future

IGU, after completing the first two phases of the Building for the Future initiative has embarked on the most challenging phase. Phase 3 will review and explore potential governance related changes including the possible establishment of a permanent secretariat at the conclusion of the Spanish Secretariat term. A full assessment and recommendation will be tabled at the Tokyo Council meeting in the fall of 2017.

The Dutch Gas Industry Workshop

The IGU Council week in Amsterdam offered three workshops to the delegates. The first was the traditional host country gas industry workshop, where the gas industry of the host country provides the latest industry developments. On the panel was Gertjan Lankhorst, CEO of GasTerra, and until recently, President of the Dutch Gas Association and IGU Regional Coordinator for Europe; Thijs Starink, Director Asset Management at the Dutch company EBN; and Coby van der Linde, Head of Clingendael International Energy Programme and IGU Wise Person.

[Read more about the Dutch Gas Industry Workshop.](#)

IGU Council Workshop: Measure, Document and Reduce - the Gas Industry's Commitment to Managing the Methane Challenge

The second workshop focussed on a deeper discussion relating to the issue of methane emissions.

The workshop speakers for the technical and economic issues were: Prof. Pieter Levelt, Head of KNMI R&D Satellite Observations Department & Professor at Delft Technology University; Roy Harstein, Vice President, Strategic Solutions, Southwestern Energy; Paul Balcombe, Faculty of Engineering, Department of Chemical Engineering Research Associate, Imperial College of London; Dr Konstantin Romanov, Head of Division, Gazprom.

The second part of workshop was focussed on policy and regulatory issues and included panelists: Muhunthan Sathiamoorthy, GHG and energy efficiency expert, safety and operational risk, BP (CCAC Initiative); Joel Bluestein, Senior Vice President, ICF International; Mr Tim Gould, Head of Division, World Energy Outlook at IEA and Dave McCurdy, President and CEO of the American Gas Association.

[Access presentations and read more about the Methane Emissions Workshop](#)

IGU Diplomatic Gas Forum - Amsterdam

The final event of the meetings was a Diplomatic Forum with the theme of "Energy Transition in the EU: the role of natural gas in the energy future". Many members from European embassies based in the Netherlands joined the Council members.

The forum was an opportunity for the industry and the diplomats to engage and discuss the role of gas today and how the improvements and contributions of the gas sector can bring about solutions to the EU's and world's energy and environmental challenges.

[Read more about the IGU Diplomatic Gas Forum](#)

IGU COMMITTEE CORNER

Bugs Used to "Collar" Methane Leaks from Underground Storage Facilities

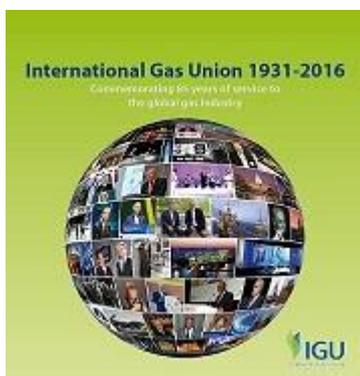
A leading technical diagnostic firm has come up with an interesting approach to the challenge of methane leakage: using natural microorganisms that feed on methane to "collar" those leaks. Moscow-based Energodiagnostika LLC recently applied for a patent to build soil collars around critical areas in underground storage facilities. The collars would be filled with methanotropic bacteria suspended in a saltwater solution. Because methane is the bacteria's sole energy source, the collars would reduce the amount of one of the most hazardous greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere. The firm is proposing to install the technology at Gazprom facilities as well as the facilities of other natural gas companies

[Read the article prepared by the R&D and Innovations Committee.](#)

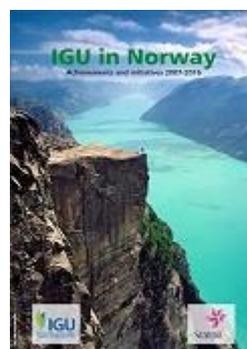


Hidden talents - an IGU band!

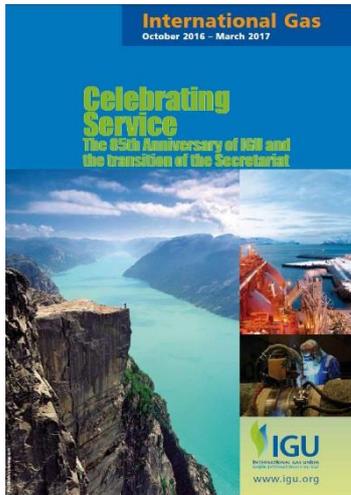
The Council meeting week also offered surprises. An IGU band was put together for the occasion featuring such talented musicians as Hansch van der Velden, Chris Gunner, Terry Thorn, Jay Copan, Barbara Jinks and Gerald Linke.



On the occasion of the IGU's 85th anniversary, the IGU history book has been updated for the Council meeting



A brochure summarizing the nine years of the Secretariat in Norway was prepared and distributed to the Council delegates



New Issue of the IGU Magazine

The second issue of the IGU magazine is available at www.igu.org.

The title of this issue is Celebrating Service. The 85th Anniversary of IGU and the Transition of the Secretariat.

[Read more on this and much more, including interesting articles from the IGU committees.](#)

Time to Say Goodbye

The Norwegian IGU Secretariat team says goodbye after nine good years in Oslo! Many have contributed to the Secretariat over the years and almost all secondees were gathered in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

"I wish Luis and his team all the best in their efforts to mature IGU to be even more relevant in the future," says Honorary Secretary General Pål Rasmussen.



From the right, Pål Rasmussen (Secretary General), Torstein Indrebø (Honorary Secretary General), Hans Riddervold, Kristin Sande, Jeanet van Dellen, Erik Gonder, Barbara Schmidt, Florijana Dedovic, Carolin Oebel, Ksenia Gladkova and Mats Fredriksson.

Khadija Al Siyabi and Sjur Bøyum were not able to attend, while Taeksang Kwon and Anette Nordal will continue to work with the Secretariat in Spain.



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