



Opening Statement
Hearing on the Domestic and Global Energy Outlook
Chairman Lisa Murkowski
February 28, 2018

Good morning, everyone. The committee will come to order. This is the second hearing of the week, so we're moving along aggressively, which is a good thing. But, we're here this morning to consider the perspective of the International Energy Agency on global energy markets.

It's been a busy couple of weeks here, we've done some scene-setting hearings covering the energy and minerals sectors. We've discussed the outlook for domestic policy, we've looked to the future of innovation, and we've examined the very real and persistent cyber threats to our critical infrastructure.

This morning we're very pleased to welcome back to the committee Dr. Fatih Birol, the Executive Director of the IEA, he has had an opportunity to be before this committee on numerous occasions, I am always very pleased with the opportunity that we have to ask you your views, your perspectives, and for the information that you're able to provide to all of us for this global outlook for the year. The IEA is one of the world's premier organizations for energy information, insight, and analysis. So, again, the opportunity to discuss the agency's new World Energy Outlook is greatly appreciated.

The good news for us right now is I think we are in a pretty good place. Over the past decade, the United States has transformed into a dominant player in global energy markets. Breakthroughs in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling have allowed the United States to avoid building LNG import terminals up and down our coasts and instead export to our friends and allies.

We ended the arbitrary prohibition on domestic crude oil exports a few years ago. Since then, we have watched our exports take off and OPEC's power start to decline—all while prices remained at low to moderate levels.

New technologies have substantially reduced our nation's greenhouse gas emission levels. And that points to our most reasonable path forward on climate change, which is lowering the cost of clean technologies – as opposed to burdensome new taxes, or endless regulations.

We have also continued our strong commitment to research and development, which allows the United States to be a technology driver with an impact that reaches far beyond our borders. As more of the world electrifies, we have an opportunity to build a supply that is more resilient, more affordable, and more reliable. I was pleased as I looked at the Outlook, Dr. Birol, that you take a very close look at the global power sector for these trends.

Key to so much of this is the interconnectedness of our energy systems. No longer do we need to wonder what is happening on a pipeline or wind turbine in a remote part of the world – we have sensors that can provide its status almost instantly. While this technology is remarkable and transformative, it is also critical to ensure that worldwide networks are protected against evolving cyber threats and other vulnerabilities as interconnectedness grows in the energy sector.

I am certainly among those who looks to the IEA on energy policy. And what I find and hear from the IEA helps ensure that our policies here are well-considered. I appreciate that the agency has branched into sectors beyond oil and gas, which had been that focus historically. I would also note that IEA's membership has now grown to 30 countries, each with dynamic and diverse energy portfolios.

So again, Dr. Birol, it is wonderful to have you here, we appreciate your leadership. We know that Paris is a long way away and we appreciate that you take the time to come here to Washington, D.C. and particularly that you accept our invitation to speak before the Energy and Natural Resources committee. You provide a very valuable perspective to the committee, this is a hearing that I look forward to each year, and again I welcome you.

Senator Manchin?

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