



Message of the Advisory Board (delivered by Alexander Ablaza)

Good morning, good afternoon and good evening to the member ESCO associations across the globe.

The Global ESCO Network was established with the vision to be the global driver and inspire government actions for scaling up the contribution of ESCOs to the global response for mitigating the threat of climate change and the goals set out by the Paris Agreement.

To realize this, it is the critical mission of the Global ESCO Network to add to and reinforce existing efforts of National and Regional ESCO Associations to promote increased activities by the ESCO Sector at a global scale.

Everyone in this meeting will agree that ESCOs deliver some of the best returns on investment, reducing energy consumption while combating excess GHG emissions as a significant co-benefit. Yet, ESCOs are not always well recognized as an industry, nor entrenched in national policies. Nowhere has their full potential been unleashed and, in many places, they still struggle to find sufficient foothold.

Several of the ESCO Associations represented today work to promote the interests of their members for the establishment of business conditions commensurate with the immense economic and GHG mitigation potentials of energy efficiency, for countries and industries alike. While the associations do cover the most energy-intensive economies, they remain a minority that may benefit from expanding the group of ESCO Associations in order to raise a global voice in global forums in support of Energy Performance Contracting. Therefore, the Global ESCO Network works to elevate issues and concepts related to ESCOs to the highest possible level on the international climate policy agenda.

The Network Chair Søren Lütken and Co-Chair Pierre Langlois have been convening the Members of the Advisory Board, Paolo Bertoldi, Stuart Galloway, Dilip Limaye, Mark Lister, Tim Unruh and myself, in the last two years. The latest of these Advisory Board meetings was held last Thursday, and during that meeting, it was clear that the last two years of the Network created for us a springboard which could lend impetus to the next two years of carrying out and growing our mission as a global network.

We are encouraged by the strong support from ESCO associations throughout the world – many have expressed that we are filling a gap.

We have managed to place the Global ESCO Network on the map as a representative of the ESCO sector – although there is a lot of work to be done.

We are aware that most ESCO associations are resource-constrained, but we believe that there is strength in numbers.

We hope to engage you further in our work and invite you to come forward.

We equally want to provide concrete support and invite you to reach out - our aim is to provide policy advocacy and we welcome opportunities to underpin your work.

We aim to expand our community and welcome opportunities to support the ESCO industry also where there are no ESCO associations. There has in fact been recent outreach from Uganda and Bosnia & Hercegovina.

While keeping our focus on ESCOs and EPC, we aim to expand our community beyond ESCO associations and involve financiers, donors, think tanks and policy makers.

We aim to make this an annual event – and a stand-alone event expanded to include the broader group of ESCO industry stakeholders.

We are happy to welcome Carlos Ballesteros from ANESE onto the Advisory Board of the Global ESCO Network.

Our vision for the Network is to become the go-to source of policy advice for policy makers when they feel compelled, through our advocacy, to engage the ESCO industry in a reinforcement of the global energy efficiency agenda.

The work of the Global ESCO Network has received increasing traction and attention, both within and outside the network members, especially in the area of cross-fertilization of experiences and information sharing through webinars and events, policy advocacy and strategic partnerships.

These efforts are welcome and should be intensified, and this is exactly why we are gathered here today.

The Network secretariat will be proposing plans and action steps later in this meeting, and we need to receive your inputs, so that the Network's outputs become more useful to your local ESCO community, and to the long-term aspiration of the Global ESCO Network to position ESCO sectors around the world as a more effective channel of transformation of energy efficiency markets.

I join my colleagues in the Advisory Board in welcoming you in physical and virtual attendance to this biennial gathering and in wishing a productive discussion for all.