



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 10 May 2012**

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**NOTE**

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from:	General Secretariat of the Council
to:	Delegations
Subject:	Summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, 8 May 2012 <i>item 4: Visit of Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Energy, on the Structured Dialogue: European Parliament / European Commission</i>

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After a short introduction by the Chair, Ms. SARTORI (EPP), Commissioner OETTINGER informed the Committee about the state of negotiations with the Council. On energy efficiency, he said that he hoped for a conclusion by the end of the Danish Presidency. On the negotiations on the external aspects of energy policy, which could also be concluded in the coming months, he stressed the need to push for binding measures to enable the EU to speak with one voice. On the security of oil and gas platforms, he said that technical discussions were ongoing, but that most Member States preferred a Directive instead of the proposed Regulation. Finalisation was expected in the second half of 2012.

The Commissioner subsequently turned to initiatives currently under preparation. These included a report on the implementation of the internal market for energy, a Communication on the promotion of renewable energy and another on carbon capture and storage (CCS), on which he considered sufficient progress had not been made. He also referred to a forthcoming report on the nuclear stress test which had been slightly delayed and would not appear until September since it would also now cover the protection of nuclear plants against external events such as a plane crash.

Further initiatives would cover the aid framework for carbon leakage, the limits of state aid, and sectors to be covered, the standardisation of smart meters and grids, and a plan on "pan- European interests" to be published next year. This plan would cover cross-border energy transport in all sectors and include, inter alia, the transport of gas from the eastern Mediterranean to the rest of Europe.

Commissioner OETTINGER also strongly emphasised the importance of the ongoing financing discussions for investment in appropriate European energy infrastructure. Member States needed to be aware that the cost efficiency factor of European projects was much better than similar initiatives from Member States.

Replying to questions from Members, he confirmed that, for the establishment of energy road maps, demographic movements such as an ageing society and a possible decrease in the German population had been taken into account and that, as regards financing, the EU should not rely on overall growth since it had not been proved in the past that growth alone could address overcome all the problems. For the financing of networks, the limited budget of the EU and its Member States could not cover all investment and a strong private sector commitment was needed. He further considered that high energy prices combined with local levies, carbon leakage taxes, etc., reduced the profits of energy-intensive industries. This affected the EU's competitiveness compared to countries such as the US. As the transport of gas from the Eastern Mediterranean could also involve Turkey, he suggested that the Enlargement Energy Chapter be opened with this candidate country. This could even lead to a political rapprochement between Cyprus and Turkey. On nuclear safety, the Commissioner repeated that the stress test would be very thorough and that the situation in Japan, where there was still a significant risk for the population, would be addressed next month.

#### **Next meeting(s)**

- 30 May 2012, 9.00 – 12.30 and 15.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)
- 31 May 2012, 9.00 – 12.30 and 15.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)