

PRESS RELEASE

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF EUROGAS
IS ADDRESSED BY MATTHIAS RUETE, GENERAL DIRECTOR DG TREN**

Eurogas, the European Union of the Natural Gas Industry, held its General Assembly this morning at the Renaissance Hotel in Brussels.

In his speech, Willy Bosmans, President of Eurogas mentioned the challenges that gas companies have been facing in 2006 and will continue to face in the near future.

Firstly, he referred to the **concerns on security of supply**. Winter 2006 events, which were both political – tensions between Russia and Ukraine - and extreme cold winter conditions in Russia have raised a number of concerns about security of supply of natural gas. Europe has significant public debate on European energy dependency. A stable and predictable political and regulatory framework conducive to new investments and diversification is needed.

Secondly, the **concerns on climate change and energy efficiency** were debated. Natural gas is undoubtedly in a better position than other fossil fuels in terms of CO2 emissions. Eurogas members wish to move proactively by improving energy services and contributing to energy efficiency improvements through R/D and new technologies.

Thirdly, the **upcoming EU Policy Review and Green Paper of March 2006** were mentioned. Eurogas offered its long term views and analysis through its report "The European Gas market – Eurogas views on the way forward". This report offers a global vision and a contribution to the future Strategic Energy Review and presents Eurogas perspectives on the long-term gas market developments in the context of wider considerations.

Finally, the European gas companies' **objective to improve competitiveness within the market** was addressed and debated.

In the conclusions of the General Assembly, the need for **consistency and continuity in policies and the need for secure and economically attractive conditions for European consumers and industry** were underlined. To achieve this, Europe needs competitive companies on the global natural gas scene.

In its interactive policy session, the General Assembly welcomed **Mr. Matthias Ruete, Director General of DG Transport and Energy**. He presented aspects and relevant key issues of the forthcoming EU Strategic Review.

The session following his intervention and moderated by Prof. Jonathan Stern, Director of Gas Research, Oxford Institute for Energy studies, focused on the new security environment for European gas. The panel was composed by Mr. Taisto Turunen, Director General, Finnish Ministry of Trade and Industry, who spoke about the EU Council Presidency dialogue with Russia and other producing countries, Mr. Gertjan Lankhorst, CEO, GasTerra, who presented industry views and involvement in the dialogue and Mr. Christian Cleutinx, Director, DG TREN who highlighted the future intentions of the Commission in relation to the EU-Russia dialogue and the planned new partnership agreement.

For more information, please contact Simona Basiu at: Avenue Palmerston 4, B-1000 Brussels
Tel: 32(02).237.11.21 E-mail: simona.basiu@eurogas.org - Website: www.eurogas.org