

Press Release

EUROGAS held its General Assembly in Brussels

The General Assembly of EUROGAS met in Brussels on 3 December and debated security of supply and EU policies issues. Eurogas positions are expressed in a position paper and in amendments to the draft security of supply regulation.

The General Assembly also reviewed Eurogas's priorities. A clear focus was given to the wide recognition in most public and private scenarios that natural gas is a major point of destination in the future diversified energy mix. The Copenhagen climate change negotiations should aim at ambitions and achievable targets in allowing natural gas to play a key role in climate protection policies issues.

The recent International Energy Agency energy outlook was introduced by Mr. Didier Houssin, Director of Energy Markets and Security.

A high level panel composed of Mr. Domenico Dispenza, President of Eurogas, Mr. Jean-François Cirelli, President, GDF SUEZ, Mr. Martin Herrmann, Vice President Czech Gas Union and Mr. Fabrizio Barbaso, Deputy General Director, European Commission DG Transport and Energy debated security of supply issues and economic perspectives.

In his statement to the General Assembly, President Dispenza welcomed the acknowledgement by the Commission of the key role played by the industry and market in responding to the early 2009 gas transit disruptions. Mr. Dispenza and number of senior industry speakers warned about the likely impact of the current economic downturn for example on upstream and midstream investments. He called for an active dialogue with producing countries and EU authorities. In his conclusions he said that security of supply can be guaranteed by a combination of market principles, solidarity and a well focused promotion of investments in interconnections, reverse flows and commercial storage.

According to Mr. Cirelli *"there will be no security of supply without strong European operators which will have to contract over the long term, make significant investment, bear huge risks ..., to that extent the EU should assess the need to facilitate the tasks of its operators to access to new gas sources and to build the required gas infrastructures"*.

Mr. Herrmann referred to the complementarity of the responsibilities between public authorities and industry by underlining that security of supply is mainly the gas industry's responsibility, not the public authorities'.

Calling for a continuous dialogue with Eurogas, Mr. Barbaso addressed the proposal for a security of supply regulation, the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EERP), the new Infrastructure Instrument (TEN-E review) and the external dimension (Ukraine, Russia, multilateral framework/Energy Charter).

Eurogas has worked on amendments of the **draft security of supply regulation** and proposes the following two step approach: rather than setting up mandatory European Standards at this stage, Member States should be required to carry out a risk and impact assessment analysing the situation on the basis of a sound common methodology. This could pave the way for exploring a later more prescriptive approach at European level.

For Eurogas the entrepreneurial flexibility is essential and the spirit of cooperation between Commission, Member States and Industry which prevailed during the early 2009 transit crisis should be fully supported in any legislation. Amendments reflect our view that the Gas Coordination Group should have stronger advisory and coordinating roles than presently envisaged. Eurogas is also continuing to work on the technical issue of the n-1 rule indicator, which according to experts needs further clarification.

Mr. Jean-Marie Devos, Secretary General of Eurogas presented the freshly published Annual report that summarizes the main key policy developments and the activities of Eurogas including important statistical data. The document will soon be posted on our website (www.eurogas.org)

Eurogas is a Brussels based non-profit making organization and has the following members : Asociación Española del Gas – SEDIGAS (ES), Association Française du Gaz – AFG (F), Bulgargaz (BU), Bord Gáis Éireann – BGE (IRE), BOTAS*(TR), BP plc (UK), Bundesverband der Energie - und Wasserwirtschaft e.V. – BDEW (DE), Centrica plc (UK), Czech Gas Union – CPU (CZ), DEPA (GR), DONG Energy A/S (DK), E.ON Ruhrgas AG (DE), Edison (IT), Distrigas (BE), Electricité de France (F), Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft Laufenburg AG – EGL AG (CH), EnergieNed (NL), ENI S.p.A. (IT), European Gas Research Group – GERG (EU), Fachverband der Gas- und Wärmeversorgungsunternehmen – FGW (AT), Galp Energia (PT), Gas Natural SDG (ES), GasTerra (NL), Gasum Oy (FIN), GDF SUEZ (F), GAZBIR*(TR), Geoplin d.o.o. (SI), HNG (DK), IZGAZ*(TR), Marcogaz, (EU), MGE – Hungarian Gas Association (HU), OMV Gas and Power GmbH (AT), Polish Oil and Gas Company – POGC (PL), Romgaz*(RO), Russian Gas Society*(RU), RWE Supply & Trading GmbH (D), Slovak Gas Industry – SPP (SK), SOTEG s.a.(LU), South Hook Gas Ltd (UK), Swedish Gas Association (SE), Swiss Association of Gas Industry (CH), Swissgas (CH), Total s.a. (F), Febeg (BE), Union Fenosa Gas S.A. (ES), Verbundnetz Gas AG – VNG AG (DE), WINGAS GmbH & CO. KG (DE).

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