



EUROPEAN UNION

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The EU-U.S. Energy Council Brussels, 5 December 2012 Joint Press Statement

The fourth EU-U.S. Energy Council met today in Brussels and was chaired by EU High Representative/Vice President Catherine Ashton, Commissioner for Energy Günther Oettinger, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman. The Energy Council, a central component of the EU-U.S. energy relationship, promotes transparent and secure global energy markets; fosters co-operation on regulatory frameworks that encourage the efficient and sustainable use of energy; and identifies joint research priorities that promote clean energy technologies. These actions help to boost economic growth, reduce carbon emissions and create new jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Energy Security

The Energy Council recognised the ongoing work in consolidating the EU internal energy market, which has greatly reduced the vulnerabilities of EU member states to gas supply disruption, diversified choices for electricity and gas sources and routes, and improved the opportunities for renewable energy producers.

The Energy Council recognised the expansion of shale gas and shale oil production in the United States, which is having a profound impact on global energy markets. The Council also acknowledged the continued importance of exchanging information on best practices and regulatory requirements, in particular within the framework of the high level platform on unconventional gas best practices planned by the International Energy Agency.

The Energy Council took note of the positive cooperation between the EU and United States in pressing Iran to meet its international obligations. The EU and United States affirmed their commitment to a two-track policy of engagement and pressure, including sanctions on the export of Iranian crude oil and petroleum products.

P R E S S

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The Energy Council highlighted the importance of mutually-beneficial energy relations with Russia based on transparency, a level-playing field, fair competition and continued cooperation to ensure the safe and secure supply of energy.

The Energy Council welcomed Ukraine's progress on reforms towards meeting its Energy Community obligations while stressing the need for these reforms to continue.

The Energy Council also noted progress on the realisation of the Southern Gas Corridor, which remains a pivotal opportunity to diversify supply and allow new providers to participate in the EU energy market. The Council welcomed Turkey's support towards the project and observed that the offer for Central Asian producers to link up to the Southern Gas Corridor is as valid as ever.

The Council noted that the significant current and future Eastern Mediterranean gas discoveries could enhance the energy security of the countries in the region. The EU and United States are ready to assist interested countries in using their energy resources to best serve their national and regional economic interests.

The Energy Council acknowledges discussions over the past year on hydrocarbon exploration in Nigeria, Libya, and Iraq, concerning global markets, good-governance, development, and investment. Furthermore, the EU and U.S. acknowledged our mutual commitment to the importance of good governance, transparency, universal access, improved energy efficiency, and a greater share of renewable energy in the energy sector on a global scale, including through important initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) (and relevant mandatory reporting requirements) and the UN's Sustainable Energy for All initiative.

Energy Policy

The Energy Council stressed the ongoing good co-operation on global oil and gas markets, including the role of unconventional gas and promoting competitive global energy markets as a means to enhance energy security and to create a climate conducive to economic growth. The Council welcomed in particular the exchange of experience with U.S. representatives in the EU's Gas Co-ordination Group and looks forward to continuing this dialogue in frameworks such as an international conference organised by the European Commission during 2013 on the economic aspects of shale gas.

With regards to Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) demonstration projects, the Energy Council acknowledged the importance of a wider global knowledge sharing between regions bilaterally, including the need to address investment and public perception challenges and looks forward to receiving the respective proposals of the Global CCS Institute and the European CCS Demonstration Project Network as well as continuing global knowledge sharing collaborations in the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum. The Council noted the eight fully integrated active demonstration projects in the United States using advanced Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC), post-processing/combustion oxycombustion; saline storage and enhanced oil recovery (EOR) technologies to develop and enhance new opportunities for carbon usage as an important economic bridge for advancing large-scale carbon capture technologies.

The Energy Council recognised the importance of increasing collaboration on intelligent energy networks and, in this context the United States welcomed the EU joining the International Smart Grid Action Network (ISGAN) shortly. The Energy Council also welcomed the excellent collaboration on smart grids and eMobility standards and interoperability, also in the context of the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC).

The Energy Council welcomed the ongoing co-operation in the field of energy efficiency and, in particular, the renewed agreement between the EU and United States on common energy efficiency specifications for office equipment and the common use of the ENERGY STAR logo.

The Energy Council recognised the importance of the EU and the United States leading the way in promoting high levels of safety and minimising the environmental effect of energy technologies across the energy mix, welcoming continued engagement on the coordination and harmonisation of regulatory and technical views in the areas of nuclear power plants, offshore oil and gas exploration and production.

The Energy Council welcomes the continued success of the Solar Decathlon Europe competitions, including the Solar Decathlon Europe 2012 event in Spain, U.S. Solar Decathlon event in California in 2013, France's commitment to host Solar Decathlon Europe 2014, and agreed to explore future co-operation opportunities.

Energy Technology

The Energy Council reaffirmed the importance of EU-U.S. cooperation in energy research and innovation, which promotes energy security and helps drive sustainable economic growth through the development of new, clean and low-carbon technologies for a diversified energy system.

The Energy Council welcomed the work carried out by the Technology Working Group to enhance collaboration and finalisation of a Joint Rolling Action Plan to guide cooperation through joint and coordinated research, twinning of projects and exchange of researchers focused on the four priority areas endorsed by the Council in 2011: smart grids including energy storage; materials including critical materials; nuclear fusion; and hydrogen and fuel cells. The Council called for further action in these areas over 2013, as well as continued work on existing and new cooperative activities in the working group's overarching nine technology areas.

The Energy Council expressed support for laboratory-to-laboratory cooperation and efforts to foster research partnerships across the Atlantic, including academic, industry, and government discussions between Department of Energy's national laboratories and recently created Energy Innovation Hubs, and the EU's European Energy Research Alliance laboratories and the Joint Research Centre. The Council also expressed its ongoing support for the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project.

(Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the start of the EU-US Energy Council)
