

Brussels, 24 September 2010

Commission welcomes Ukraine in Energy Community

The European Commission has today welcomed Ukraine joining the European Energy Community. The Community extends the EU internal energy market to South East Europe and enhances the overall security of supply. The Protocol on the Accession of Ukraine to the Energy Community was signed today at the Energy Community Ministerial Council in Skopje (Macedonia).

Günther Oettinger, European Commissioner for Energy said: "This is a major step both for the Energy Community and for Ukraine. Ukraine will have access to a pan-European energy market, based on the principles of solidarity and transparency. For the Community, Ukraine is an important new member and security of supply further improved."

The accession Protocol was signed today by Mr. Yuriy Boyko, Minister of Fuel and Energy of Ukraine, and Mr. Fatmir Besimi, Minister of Economy of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, acting for the Presidency of the Energy Community. The Vice-Presidency (European Union) was represented by Mr. Fabrizio Barbaso, Deputy Director-General for Energy at the European Commission.

The Ministerial Council of the Energy Community had approved the accession of Ukraine in December 2009, but the signature of the Accession Protocol was made subject to the adoption of a gas law in compliance with EU relevant rules. Today's signature follows the enactment of the new Ukrainian gas law last July. The Ukrainian Parliament is now expected to ratify the Treaty establishing the Energy Community, after which Ukraine will become a member of this international organisation

Background:

The Energy Community entered into force on 1 July 2006. The parties have committed themselves to liberalise their energy markets and implement key EU legal acts in the area of electricity, gas, environment and renewable energy. The secretariat in Vienna monitors and assists in the implementation process. Full Members are: The European Union, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and Modova. Observer Status: Georgia, Norway and Turkey.

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