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INFORMATION NOTE

from : General Secretariat of the Council

to : Delegations

Subject : Energy Summit "Natural Gas for Europe: Security and Partnership"
Sofia, 24-25 April 2009

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Bulgarian delegation.

ENERGY SUMMIT
“NATURAL GAS FOR EUROPE: SECURITY AND PARTNERSHIP”
24 – 25 APRIL 2009

Energy security is becoming increasingly important. Concerted action is undertaken at all levels and the March European Council is expected to take stock on the Second Strategic Energy Review.

The *Energy Summit “Natural Gas for Europe: Security and Partnership”* will be a timely opportunity to continue the energy security dialogue with the EU main partners in energy co-operation.

Bulgaria’s initiative to organize a Summit on the above topic has its roots in the active energy dialogue between the President of Bulgaria, H.E. Georgi Parvanov, and the Heads of State of Caspian and Central Asian countries during the last two years. The talks revealed that the partnership between key producers, transit countries and consumers, which is coveted by all, should be stimulated by a trustworthy and high-level dialogue among all interested countries.

The Energy Summit in Bulgaria will contribute to this goal. We have invited 28 countries from South-Eastern Europe, the Black Sea and Caspian Sea region, Central Asia, EU Member States with a stake in the development of the Southern Gas Corridor, the U.S. as well as the EU Presidency and the European Commission.

A debate on the Second Strategic Energy Review has begun in the European Parliament and the EU Member States. The Sofia Summit will, in practice, turn into a continuation of this debate, with the advantage that it will involve major energy suppliers, both current and future.

The Summit is intended to engage EU’s partners in energy co-operation – like Russia and the U.S., Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Turkey, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Egypt – in a dialogue on the approach of the EU to energy security. For their part, the EU Member States will be able to ascertain the degree of political will of producer and transit countries to realize their interests on the basis of the new EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan.

Bulgaria proposes that the Summit discuss the economic and political context of the EU's growing needs for natural gas. In this context, a task of the day is the elaboration of what the European Commission calls a new generation of provisions on "energy interdependence" in agreements with our respective partners.

Bulgaria's energy policy is interlinked with its regional policy, both in South East Europe and the wider Black Sea region. We believe that regional cooperation schemes facilitate and serve the EU conflict prevention efforts vis-à-vis these regions. This issue is not part of the Summit's agenda but it should be borne in mind.

We propose that the working part of the Summit proceeds in two sessions: the first to be devoted to *trends, principles and policies for enhancing European energy security*; the second, to be devoted to the discussion of *the Southern gas corridor* in its totality and variety. We are all interested in arriving at a common vision on the scale and interrelationships in the Southern European gas corridor.

We would also work for the adoption of a Concluding Statement of the Summit. Where the Summit will bring added value to European energy debate is the initiation of prior discussions among experts from participating states (the modalities for these will be announced in due course).

An important addition to the Summit will be a parallel business forum proposed at a date close to the date of the Summit.

It would seem that the Bulgarian Energy Summit has its distinct features which make it different from the other two energy fora organized by our partners in Budapest and Prague. Bulgaria has suggested that all three be complementary and duly coordinated.

It is encouraging that a number of energy important countries have found the Bulgarian President's initiative an appropriate and timely undertaking. The preparations for the Summit are well underway and we expect a stimulating Summit, which will contribute to the energy security of the EU and the region of SEE.