

Resolution: Towards a Genuine European External Energy Policy

The Congress of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party in Berlin on 18-19 October 2007,

- having regard to the resolutions of the 2006 ELDR Congress in Bucharest entitled 'Towards a Common Internal and External European Energy Policy' and 'The European Union needs a coherent energy policy towards Russia';
 - having regard to the conclusions of the June 2007 European Council that calls for a Union policy on energy in a spirit of solidarity between Member States, and creates a reinforced position of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security policy;
 - having regard to the recent appointment of Mr Jozias van Aartsen as European Coordinator for the Nabucco gas pipeline project;
 - whereas 80% of European energy use is based on oil, gas and coal;
 - whereas European energy import dependency is growing: from 50% today it could reach 70% in 2030 if nothing is done;
 - whereas 50% of EU gas consumption comes from three countries: Russia, Norway and Algeria;
 - whereas current trends show that gas imports will increase 80% over the next 25 years;
 - whereas oil and gas prices in the EU almost doubled in the past two years, and electricity prices follow the same trend;
 - whereas national external energy policies are no longer adequate to provide for a secure, sustainable and affordable supply of energy for Europe as a whole;
 - whereas some energy exporting countries, where the separation of the State and the energy exporting companies is less than full, have continued to show a clear tendency to use their position to exert undue political pressure on some consumer countries;
1. Reiterates its call for the establishment of a genuine common European external energy policy based on the principle of solidarity between the Member States and reciprocity with third countries;
 2. Calls on the Intergovernmental Conference convened in July 2007 to enhance the role of the European Commission in this regard under the effective control of the European Parliament;

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3. Considers that it is in the interest of Europe to create a transparent international energy market based on the highest possible level of competition within a framework of generally recognised rules of investment, trade and transit as outlined in the Energy Charter Treaty;
4. Strongly condemns the abuse of the position of energy supplier to exert undue political pressure on the consumer country, and calls on the European Union and its Member States to stand united in solidarity if another Member State falls victim to such an attitude;
5. Strongly opposes the creation of a global cartel of gas exporting countries or companies;
6. Encourages the European Union and its Member States to step up their co-operation in diversifying both sources and transit routes of energy;
7. Calls on the European Union and its Member States to vigorously pursue the designated European priority energy projects, including the Nabucco gas pipeline project;
8. Calls on the European Union to play a more active role in the resolution of conflicts in energy-rich areas;
9. Calls on the European Union to enhance its partnership with energy producer, transit and consumer countries, and include a reinforced energy co-operation component in the European Neighbourhood Policy and in its partnerships with Russia and the countries of Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America;
10. Supports the integration of additional countries into the Energy Community Treaty, including Norway, Ukraine, Turkey and Algeria;
11. Calls on the European Union and its Member States as a matter of urgency to minimise dependence on external suppliers and save money by reducing energy wastage, increasing energy efficiency and greater use of locally derived renewable energy sources.

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