

EU declaration on the Russia/Ukraine problem and energy security

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1. The present situation caused by interruptions of gas supplies from Russia via the Ukraine creates serious difficulties for a number of EU countries. Given the importance attached to solidarity within the EU, this is a problem for the EU as such. It is unacceptable for the EU to see its citizens and enterprises suffering from gas shortages due to the non respect by both partner countries of their contractual obligations.
2. With the first evidence of gas supply reductions in early January 2009, the EU has undertaken concerted efforts to facilitate the dialogue between Russia and the Ukraine. Both sides have to date shown insufficient determination to solve the problem, which damages their credibility. The EU, however, expects that the current negotiations will bring a quick solution. It urges Russia and the Ukraine to honour their obligations as supplier respectively transit country and to immediately resume normal deliveries to the European market.
3. The EU calls on both parties to accept independent monitoring of the actual flows of gas through the pipelines.
4. A special Energy Council will take place on 12 January in order to look at the situation on the energy market, including monitoring, and to discuss the concrete measures to be taken.
5. The EU also insists on the necessity to create the conditions for a long term solution, based on internationally recognized principles, thus putting an end to regularly occurring crises in the midst of winter.
6. Security of energy supply is a priority for the EU. It involves the responsibility and solidarity of all the Member States. Therefore, the EU will speed up work on the various energy security initiatives mentioned under paragraph 17 of the October EC conclusions. Particular emphasis will be put on priority interconnections both within the EU and with supplier and transit countries, increased transparency, and the developing of crisis mechanisms to tackle temporary supply disruptions. Energy security will be on the agenda of the upcoming General Affairs Councils with a view to reaching decisions at the Spring European Council.

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