

**Günther OETTINGER**

EU Commissioner for Energy

Check Against Delivery  
Seul le texte prononcé fait foi  
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

Speech at the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between Sonelgaz and Desertec Industrial Initiative

Brussels, 9 December 2011

Ladies and gentlemen,

Major changes are thus affecting both shores of the Mediterranean. I am convinced that these evolutions provide for an historic opportunity to develop a new dimension in our energy partnership.

In its recent Communication on the external dimension of the EU energy policy, the European Commission proposes to aim at comprehensive energy partnerships with the Southern Mediterranean countries including the development of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. I am planning to address this issue also in the forthcoming Communication on renewable energy, provisionally scheduled for the second quarter of next year.

These partnerships need to be based on concrete cooperation initiatives at all levels: political, institutional and at the business level. This is why we support all initiatives leading to a better understanding and to concrete cooperation projects around the Mediterranean. Today's signature between Sonelgaz and DII is an excellent example.

It is now my pleasure to invite Minister Yousfi to take the floor.