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European Commission to launch EU Network of Energy Security Correspondents 10th May

On 10th May, the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner will host the first meeting of the Network of Energy Security Correspondents (NESCO) in Brussels. The Commissioner for Energy, Andris Piebalgs will also participate in this event. This new network was endorsed by the European Council in December 2006, as a new instrument to step up the Union's capacity to collect information and provide early warning of potential threats to the security of energy supply. The network, which consists of representatives of the European Commission, Council Secretariat and EU Member States, will also be a forum which can provide shared assessments of external factors impacting on Europe's energy supply.

Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner said: "The new EU Network of Energy Security Correspondents is a crucial step forward as we develop an effective European external energy policy. Its contribution to the exchange of information exchange will help the EU to speak with one voice on the most sensitive energy issues. In addition, through the early warning mechanism we will be able to respond better to, or indeed pre-empt, brewing crises. The fact that I am able to launch NESCO just five months after the decision by the Heads of State and Government, is only one indication for the importance that the EU now attaches to external energy security".

Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs said: "The EU external energy policy has to be based on a clear and common prior identification of EU interests and reliable risk assessments, with the necessary monitoring capabilities to provide an early warning. It is precisely in this context that the network of energy correspondents is going to play a fundamental role. "

In order to identify and assess external factors affecting the EU security of energy supply, NESCO will undertake a continuous monitoring and exchange of information, which will operate through a dedicated web portal with controlled access, to guarantee secure communication. The Commission will coordinate input from 130 Delegations, the DG RELEX Crisis Room as well as Commission's advisory bodies to complement the input from members of the network. Face to face meetings will be held as appropriate..

The role of NESCO will be to support decision making and develop increased co operation between all EU energy actors. Its work will also contribute to speedy implementation of the Energy Policy Action Plan adopted at the European Council in March 2007, with a view to increasing EU energy security.

More information on EU's external energy policy is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/energy/index.htm