



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION *SD*

Brussels, 17/12/2012
C(2012) 9690 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Narodno Sobranie for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing decision no 1364/2006/EC {COM(2011) 658 final}.

The Commission welcomes that the Narodno Sobranie strongly supports the aims and main provisions of the Regulation and that it considers the draft legislative act to be a prerequisite for the establishment of a stable regulatory and financial framework for the development of the relevant energy infrastructure of the EU. The Commission takes note of the endorsement, by the Narodno Sobranie, of the twelve trans-European priority corridors and areas in general, and those concerning South-Eastern Europe in particular as well as of the recommendation to prioritise the implementation of the interconnections with the neighbouring countries and the Southern Gas Corridor projects.

As regards the Narodno Sobranie's suggestion that projects involving Member States and a neighbouring third country could also qualify as projects of common interest, the Commission would like to emphasise that this is already possible according to the proposed Regulation, provided that such project has a positive impact on at least two Member States.

On your recommendation that hydro-pumped electricity storage projects be eligible for the status of projects of common interest, the Commission is pleased to confirm that this is also possible according to the proposed Regulation. However, such projects would be excluded from grants for works given their commercial nature, competition with other market players and absence of a regulatory framework.

Finally, the Commission agrees with the Narodno Sobranie that the Connecting Europe Facility is a necessary complement to the proposed Regulation in view of the implementation of key energy infrastructure projects. In this context, the Commission is committed to ensure that energy sector companies should remain the main source for investments in energy infrastructure and that public financing should be called upon only when projects of common interest demonstrate societal benefits beyond commercial market interests.

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The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the observation made by the Narodno Sobranie in its Opinion and looks forward to continuing our policy dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*