



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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PRESS RELEASE

Extraordinary Council meeting

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

Energy items

Brussels, 21 March 2011

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P R E S S

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Main results of the Council

In the light of the recent developments in Japan and North Africa, the Council took stock of the state of play in the energy sectors in these regions and of their possible impact on energy markets and EU supplies. The Commission briefed ministers on the latest developments. The Council discussed the response at EU and member state level. The Presidency will report to the President of the European Council on the exchange of views and it intends to return to this topic at the June Energy Council meeting.

CONTENTS¹**PARTICIPANTS**..... 4**ITEMS DEBATED**Recent international developments and their impact on world energy markets and the EU
energy sector 6**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED***none*

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
 - Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
 - Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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Member

ITEMS DEBATED**Recent international developments and their impact on world energy markets and the EU energy sector**

In the light of the recent developments in Japan and North Africa, the Council took stock of the state of play in the energy sectors in these regions and of their possible impact on energy markets and EU supplies. The Commission briefed ministers on the latest developments. The Council discussed the response at EU and member state level.

At the end of the discussions, the Presidency highlighted the following messages:

- the priority is, first and foremost, to provide these countries with humanitarian as well as technical assistance;
- while international developments are affecting world energy markets and EU supplies, member states have so far been able to cope with the consequences for the gas and oil markets;
- however, the Council stressed the need to keep these markets and their impact on the EU under close watch, including as regards price developments;
- the Council underlined the need to fully implement the orientations agreed for the new Energy 2020 strategy ([6207/1/11](#), [EUCO 2/11](#));
- when conditions permit, the EU partnership with southern countries should be taken forward;
- as far as nuclear safety is concerned, the priority is to ensure that the highest standards are in force; improving safety is a continuing process;
- the Council welcomed voluntary steps taken by national authorities and industry operators regarding the review of the safety of nuclear facilities;
- there is a shared willingness to launch a process for defining a comprehensive risk and safety assessment ("stress test") of nuclear plants in Europe;

- the importance of transparency regarding both the outcome of this assessment and measures taken by member states at national level was underlined;
- member states and the Commission invited ENSREG (European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group) and other relevant bodies to define the scope and modalities of such tests, making use of the available expertise and in due course of the lessons to be learnt from the recent accident;
- the Council took note of the possible areas (flood risks, seismic risks, back-up systems, emergency procedures) that could be the basis for this assessment;
- the Council underlined the need to involve neighbouring third countries in a similar safety and risk assessment for existing and future plants.

The Presidency will report to the President of the European Council on the exchange of views and it intends to return to this topic at the June Energy Council meeting.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

none
