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EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORUM



Monthly CEZ Bulletin

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DEAR READERS,

the start of October brought not only an Indian summer but also many interesting events in the European Union. Member countries and energy companies above all expressed their opinions relating to the third liberalisation package of the European Commission and mostly with no great enthusiasm. It is expected that the fate of the submitted draft legal regulations will be decided by the top representatives of the European Union member countries at the December European Council. In early October meetings were also held of various energy forums supported by the European Commission and you can find more information about their results in this issue. We also bring you information about the latest cases being investigated in the energy sector by the European Commission, particularly in the matter of long-term contracts in Poland. We bring you the latest information in nuclear energy about the forthcoming meeting of the first European Nuclear Forum at the end of this November and also about the approval procedure regarding the

nuclear power plant in Belene, Bulgaria, by the European Commission. This issue also looks at the closing report of the think-tank task force of the Centre for European Policy Studies entitled "Energy Policy for Europe" in the energy sector, the report of national regulators associated in the ERGEG applying to retail price regulation and also energy news in the European Parliament. As regards the ČEZ Group, we chose as the main item of news for this month the official opening of the Czech House and the new office of the ČEZ Group in Brussels at the address Rue du Trône 60 which took place on 11th October. Wishing you pleasant reading about October events in the energy sector

Yours EAS

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EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORUM

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RESPONSE TO THE 3RD LIBERALISATION PACKAGE

There was a wave of criticism from the biggest European Union member countries of the so-called third liberalisation package of draft legal regulations in energy after its publication by the European Commission on 19th September.



The main controversy, as expected, is the proposal for the performance of ownership unbundling, be it only at the level of transmission system operators. French Finance Minister Christine Lagarde, for example, announced that everything needs to be done to prevent the adoption of this proposal. EnBW CEO Utz Classen stat-

ed that it is unacceptable that the European Commission intends to disrupt the functioning sector only on the basis of assumptions and suspicion. On the contrary, a slightly more positive response came from German Economy Minister Michael Glos, who appreciated the European Commission's alternative proposal to ownership un-

bundling of the possibility to establish an independent network operator. Nevertheless, Germany's E.ON expressed the opinion in the sense that performing ownership unbundling was contrary to the German constitution, which considers the right of ownership inviolable and, if performed, would mean being incompatible with the principle of a free liberalised electricity market. On the other hand, the package was highly positively welcomed by Great Britain where ownership unbundling already exists. In the past the separation of transmission from other activities also came about in Italy and therefore the response is not surprising of Enel CEO Fulvio Conti that "the most important thing in energy is an independent network operator and an independent regulator". However despite the strong opposition from the two member countries with the most powerful energy companies, the proposal of the European Commission has

a chance to succeed. Its adoption will depend on support in the Council of Ministers whilst 8 member countries have already expressed their support in June of ownership unbundling, and according to their present declarations it can be assumed that further smaller member countries such as Cyprus and Luxembourg will join them as the final version of the new directive could contain an exception for them from the obligation of separating transmission from other activities. There are still voices calling for different modification of the electricity and gas sector. The guarantor of the third package Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs described this package as a sensitive issue which must be discussed at the European Council Summit, i.e. this December at the earliest. He expects the package will be adopted during the French presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2008.

For more information go to [↗](#)



OCTOBER MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council for Energy and Transport was held in early October and its main topic was the Galileo Project.

The respective representatives of the member countries have agreed that the agency managing this system will be temporarily located in Brussels and a tender was called for the respective work positions on the website of the European Commission's Directorate General for Transport and Energy. The Czech Republic is one of the countries applying for the permanent seat of this key EU project. However the more important question of the entire project – the question of financing – remains disputable and its final settlement was postponed again. The project should operate until 2013. For more information go to [↗](#)

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The topic of the meeting of the European Parliament in October was also the energy sector.

According to the report which the European Parliament adopted, the "Energy Charter Treaty should be the cornerstone of a common European foreign energy policy". The Euro MPs also drew up a request for the appointment of a special representative for foreign energy policy which would coordinate EU activity in this area. It is also recommended that the EU should diversify its energy supplies more and thereby improve its energy security. The European Parliament also voiced broad support for the European Commission's proposal on the establishment of the European Technology Institute. However the Euro MPs proposed that the name of the institute should contain the word "innovation" and the institute, according to them, not be established until the completion of the pilot stage during which two or three "knowledge and innovation communities" would examine whether it works properly and effectively.

For more information go to [↗](#) and [↗](#)



EREGG ON THE REGULATION OF RETAIL PRICES

The European Regulators' Group for Electricity and Gas ERGEG in its report entitled "End-user Energy Price Regulation" called on member countries for a complete end to the regulation of retail prices or their full harmonisation with the conditions on the wholesale market.

The European Union of the Electricity Industry Eurelectric also supports this standpoint and defends the idea that the electricity market will function properly only if retail prices will reflect wholesale prices. The ERGEG report follows the study conducted across the EU in which it was found that prices for 80% of customers are regulated in seventeen member countries, and this includes medium and large businesses and industrial customers despite the fact that retail markets had already been

opened to large customers "a long time ago" and opened to all other customers as of 1st July this year. Although the application of regulated prices for large customers is currently the subject of proceedings for the European Commission's non-fulfilment of its obligations, the traditional arguments presented for the support of household price regulation are based on the protection of so-called "vulnerable customers". Nevertheless, the ERGEG notes that the protection of this group of customers should not be confused with price regulation for all customers. Therefore the ERGEG called on the member countries concerned to publish a report on the end of the application of these prices and a time schedule for their cancellation by 1st July 2008. However in this respect there is disappointment over the third liberalisation package, which against expectations, does not harmonise the authority of regulators in this area. The regulators may only issue recommendations for the cancellation of regulated prices for industrial customers.

RUSSIA ANALYSES THE LIBERALISATION PACKAGE

According to Sergei Ryabkov, director of the Foreign Ministry's European Cooperation Department, Moscow is not dramatising the planned restriction of the EU applying to foreign investments.

Part of the proposed third liberalisation package of the European Commission is also a proposal for the obligation of ownership unbundling to also apply to foreign investors operating within the European Union. Ryabkov declared that Russia is analysing the entire proposal and in view of the fact that this is still only a proposal, it does not consider it of any greater importance. Moreover, the proposal will be discussed at the European Council Summit and may be further amended. However according to Russian government First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, the proposals of the European Union to impose restrictions are a breach of the principles of an open market and in case they are adopted, Russia would have to consider restrictions on foreign investments in Russia.

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN BELENE

The European Commission has not yet expressed its opinion concerning the construction of a nuclear power plant in Belene, Bulgaria.



According to Feran Taradelas, the press spokesman for Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, Bulgaria has presented to the European Commission additional information which will now be considered. The entire process may last longer than normal because in the case of Belene this involves the first case of the construction of a nuclear power plant in the European Union with a refined type of Russian nuclear reactor. In

view of the fact that this type of reactor could also be used for further nuclear power plants, the assessment of the European Commission will, in the words of the spokesman, “also apply in the future”. Nevertheless it is expected that the European Commission will approve the construction project after the company which was selected for constructing the power plant, the Russian Atomstroyexport controlled by Gazprom, received a certificate of compliance with nuclear security requirements for the technology of the Belene Nuclear Power Plant for the third generation reactor.

CEPS ENERGY REPORT

Brussels' think-tank CEPS has published the final version of its energy report.

The task force of this think-tank established in 2006 has crowned its activity and appended its recommendations and interim report published this year. The final report will focus on six key areas and deal above all with the internal aspects

of European energy policy. The main areas on which present EU energy policy should focus according to the report is energy efficiency, investment into production and networks, free access to the market and climate change. One part of the report also deals with how to minimise costs which will have to be spent on strengthening European Union energy security and achieving the objectives of energy policy in the environmental sphere, particularly as far as renewable energy sources and greenhouse gas emissions are concerned. The motto of the entire report is how to implement the vision of the European Union expressed at political level in the spring by credible and realistic strategies in member countries in practice. The answer to this question in the light of the objectives published in the spring (20% of renewable energy sources in 2020, 20% energy savings and a 30% reduction of emissions) appears to be very complicated.

The report is available at [↗](#)

NEW IMPULSE FOR A SINGLE ENERGY MARKET

The merger of two of the biggest energy exchanges in Europe, namely Germany's EEX and France's Powernext, could prove an important step for creating a single European energy market in the European Union.



Both exchanges stated that during this October they intend to merge their spot transactions. The new director of the merged entity should be the current EEX director, Hans-Bernd Menzel. Powernext already has experience with merging as it is already a part of the trio of markets of France, Netherlands and Belgium which Germany and Luxembourg is to join next year. As far as the full merger of these two biggest electricity exchanges is concerned, this would result in the establishment of certainly the most influential entity of this type in Europe transmitting important price signals to other markets. This could also lay the seed for a joint electricity exchange.

For more information go to [↗](#)

"ENERGY" CONFERENCE IN MADRID

In early October a high level energy conference was held in Madrid attended by the president of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso and Commissioners Andris Piebalgs and Neelie Kroes.

A conference was held further to the recent draft of the third liberalisation package of the European Commission and in the context of the preparations of several fundamental legislative proposals – the strategic energy plan for technologies, a new general directive for the utilisation of renewable energy sources and the revised directive on trading in greenhouse gas emission allowances. These proposals should be published this December. All top representatives of the European Commissions stressed the need of the EU's quick response to the increasing prices of primary energy sources, increasing consumer demand and the related greater dependence of the EU on external sources from third countries and the unquestionable impact of

climate change. They also stressed that the Commission's energy package submitted this January gained strong support from the EU member countries – the specific output is contained in the conclusions of the European Council and transmits a clear signal for the adoption of binding objectives to reduce CO₂ emissions, increase in the share of renewable sources and increase in energy efficiency. President Barroso and Commissioner Piebalgs voiced their clear support for introducing so-called clean coal technology including support of CCS. President Barroso also mentioned the question of nuclear energy whilst he stressed that its utilisation within the energy mix depends on the member countries. He sees the role of the EU more in research and related security issues. Commissioner Kroes dealt in more detail with the description of the last liberalisation package with regard to competition and explained the main aspects of ownership unbundling. All three speeches of the top representatives of the European Commission clearly confirmed that energy is one of the fundamental priorities of the EU. For more information go to [↗](#)



AMSTERDAM FORUM

About 60 participants from the European Commission, member countries, industry unions and non-government organisation attended the meeting of the Sustainable Energy Forum held on 2nd October in Amsterdam.

The participants of the forum were welcomed by Dutch Minister Pieter Boot whose speech was followed by that of European Commission representative Fabrizio Barbaso, who stressed the five points of the draft directive on renewable energy sources which is to be published by the European Commission on 5th December this year (divid-

ing 20% of objectives between the member countries, gradually achieving these objectives through mid-term objectives, simplifying permit proceedings, trading in renewable energy sources, harmonising origin guarantees). One of the main topics of discussion at the meeting was the possibility of trading in renewable energy sources – particulars applying to who should be authorised to trade, what sources the transaction would apply to and whether it would be possible to purchase electricity from renewable sources even outside the EU – which, however, appears to remain unclear. The member countries during the meeting supported maintaining the national system in the area of renewable sources but its gradual harmonisation should, however, arise at European level in future. The participants also agreed of the need for further investments in connection and also removal of excessive administrative barriers in this area.

For more information about the Amsterdam Forum go to [↗](#)

FLORENCE FORUM

The so-called Florence Forum, specialising in a factual debate regarding issues of regulation on the national electricity market, met for the fourteenth time from the 24th to 25th September.

This meeting focused on the recent 3rd liberalisation package. What was interesting was also the attendance of representatives of the candidate countries Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey, just as representatives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Switzerland and Norway. All participants welcomed the initiative of the European Commission to create further legislation to complete the creation of a common European energy market. The Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) particularly welcomed the proposal for strengthening the role of national regulators and for creating the European Regulatory Agency. France and Germany expressed their clear disapproval of the question of ownership unbundling. This meeting also dealt with regional activities within the EU.

For more information go to [↗](#)



BERLIN FORUM

A meeting was also held in October of another European forum – the Berlin Fossil Fuels Forum.

The meeting focused on the utilisation of fossil fuels in the European Union in connection with climate change, security of supplies and external dimensions of the European energy policy. The European Commission participants in the forum, member countries and representatives of industry also discussed the European Commission's plans of the capture and storage of carbon (CCS), which the European Commission intends to present on 5th December this year. However it would appear that CCS will not be stated as being mandatory in the December proposal.

For more information go to [↗](#)

RUSSIA AGAIN WARNED UKRAINE

The Russian company Gazprom warned Ukraine in early October that it would stop natural gas supplies if Ukraine does not pay its debt.

Gazprom representatives stated on 2nd October that “unless Ukraine pays the debt by the end of October, they will stop natural gas supplies to Ukrainian consumers “. The situation is very similar to the events of spring 2006, when Gazprom ceased to supply gas to Ukraine and this was also significantly displayed in supplies to the EU. On 3rd October Ukrainian Energy Minister Jurij Bojko went to Moscow to meet the head of Gazprom Dmitry Medvedev. Both representatives stated that a common will exists to settle the dispute and stressed that it will not affect supplies to the European Union in any way as was the case in 2006. On 11th October Ukraine agreed to settle the debt of two billion dollars. Ukraine also reassured the European Union. At a conference in Vienna Energy Commissioner Piebalgs declared that he hopes that the entire matter will finally be settled.

PSUPPORTING INVESTMENTS IN THE BALKANS

Energy Ministers from Contracting Parties and Observers to the Treaty establishing the Energy Community met in Athens at the end of September.

The subject of discussion with investors was the support of invest-

ments in the energy sector in the Balkans. It was the first meeting of its kind directed at investments into energy after the signing of the Treaty in 2006. Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs and Serbian Mining and Energy Minister Aleksandar Popović presided over the conference and its host was Greek Minister of Development Christos Folias. The main topic of the

meeting, which attracted over two hundred participants, was the need for investments into the energy infrastructure for the purpose of increasing competition and efficiency, securing supplies and reducing consumer prices. This conference also provided the opportunity for representatives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav republics of Macedonia and Serbia as well as Moldavia and Turkey to outline their future energy projects before a group of the international investor community. The energy community is a project which attempts to extend the European internal market into the region of south-east Europe. For more information go to [EU](#)



THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NEW ČEZ OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

The representation of the ČEZ Group has been working at its new address in the so-called “Czech House” in Brussels, Rue du Trône 60 since 11th October.

The Brussels representation of the ČEZ Group has significantly contributed to ČEZ becoming very well prepared for the membership of the Czech Republic in the European Union and in today's

“energy tense” period this is absolutely necessary with regard to the strengthening of communication with European Union institutions, particularly with the European Commission for the preparation

of new legislation and drawing up European energy policy. Today energy issues are one of the priorities of the EU and today the company ČEZ is one of the important players of community events in the energy sector. It was also one of the first Czech companies from the Czech Republic to establish a representation office in Brussels in 1999. This arose from the needs of the company to communicate with EU bodies operating in energy and above all to prepare the company for the Czech Republic's entry in the EU. Currently the Brussels representation of the ČEZ group is a valid and active part of the entire structure of energy and business institutions such as the European Union of the Electricity Industry which directly participates in the creation of EU energy policy.



APPLICATION OF COMPETITION LAW IN ENERGY

The European Commission, as the supervisory body, has recently been engaged in the observance of competition law in several cases in the energy sector.

Based on the rules of cartel law the European Commission commenced formal investigation proceedings against the German company E.ON and the French company Gaz de France due to an alleged breach of Article 81 on the Treaty on the EC which prohibits restriction of trading practices. The case continues on from the inspection performed on the premises of both companies in 2006 and the subject of proceedings is a possible agreement or concerted mutual conduct. According to the regulation on the merger of companies the Commission permitted the takeover of the Spanish company Viesgo controlled by Italy's ENEL, and further companies belonging to Spain's ENDESA, including Endesa Europa, which controls the activities of ENDESA in France, Poland,

Italy and Turkey, by Germany's E.ON. The European Commission also informed the Spanish government that Spain preliminarily breached Article 21 of said regulation that it imposed on ENEL and Acciona a series of conditions for their takeover of Spain's ENDESA not compatible with European law. According to the rules on state assistance the Commission informed Greece that it must apply for the return of illegally provided state assistance through tax exemption provided to some companies in some sectors including electricity production. As regards the national market rules the Commission closed its investigation concerning Poland due to the fact that it had not adjusted its electricity tax in accordance with community law and filed an action at the European Court of Justice against the Polish state.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION AGAINST LONG-TERM CONTRACTS

The latest proceedings initiated by the European Commission are proceedings against Poland due to its persisting "illegal" rules in the energy sector.

On 27th September the European Commission called on Poland to inform it by the end of this year of how it wants to abolish the system of long-term contracts for the purchase of electricity due to the fact that this is illegal and incompatible state assistance. According to the Commissioner for Competition Neelie Kroes the end of such con-

tracts will mean a key step towards the liberalisation of the electricity market in Poland. According to the rules set in the 1990s, i.e. prior to the accession of Poland to the EU, the Polish company PSE was entitled to conclude long-term contracts with electricity suppliers ensuring that it would purchase a set quantity of electricity at a fixed price. These contracts were signed in the years 1994 to 1998 and the final contract would expire in 2027. They roughly cover half of all electricity produced in Poland. At the same time, the European Commission during its investigation reached the conclusion that this system of long-term contracts closes a considerable part of the Polish electricity market to new companies and for this reason is illegal. It called on Poland to abolish this system by 1st April 2008 at the latest.



REJECTION OF THE ACTIONS IN THE CASE OF NAP II

In early October the European Court of First Instance rejected another action against the decision of the European Commission in the matter of the national allocation plan.

This was an action filed by the Slovak company US Steel Košice, s.r.o. against the decision applying to the Slovak NAP based on the fact that this decision is illegal because the

Commission carried out a totally independent calculation of the relevant total emissions in the Slovak Republic and made this binding for the Slovak Republic, and also took over the authority of the member countries based on articles 9 and 11 of Directive 2003/87/EC. Just as another action rejected by the Court in September filed by the German company Fels-Werke GmbH, by which this company demanded that the Court cancel the Commission's decision on the NAP announced by Germany to the scope in which it declares the allocation guarantees of the first trading period which are stated in chapter 6.2 of Germany's national allocation plan to be incompatible with Directive 2003/87/EC because according to the claimant it does not represent allocation guarantees for new facilities which the Commission criticises, state assistance in accordance with Article 87 (1) EC, the "Slovak" action was rejected as inadmissible due to lack of active legitimacy of the claimant. The Court had not made a decision in the case of actions filed by member countries against respective decisions made by the Commission.

For more information go to [↗](#)

INCLUSION OF EMISSIONS FROM AIR TRANSPORT IN THE EU ETS

Emissions from air transport mean a significant increase (by 87% since 1990); this trend would result in a total reduction of greenhouse house emissions as part of the EU's Kyoto Protocol obligation by 2012 by more than a quarter.

It is for this reason that a draft directive was submitted by the European Commission (CION) for incorporating emissions from air transport into the EU ETS. Currently this draft was discussed in the first reading in the European Parliament and in the EU Council. The desire of the Portuguese presidency is to achieve political compliance with a draft for the Council for the Environment's December meeting. As arises from existing discussions of the draft and results of voting in the Committee for the Environment in early October, fundamental differences exist between the position of the Council and Parliament and the possibility of achieving compliance in the

first reading is more a theoretical issue. The main topics of intensive discussions is the geographic extent of the draft – inclusion of carriers of third countries (the assembly of International Civil Aviation Organisation) adopted a negative standpoint in September 2007 at its assembly to the CION draft), date of commencement/inclusion of air emissions in ETS (the original CION draft is 2011 for flights within the EU, 2012 for all carriers landing/taking off from airports on EU territory), the total level of allocation – the so-called "cap" and above all the method of allocation, or rate/quantity of allowances which will be allocated through auctions (i.e. not free of charge) and the criteria for allocation through benchmarking (based on performance and expected future development of production). Individual aspects of the draft have a close link to the future form of the present ETS – the revised draft directive should be submitted by CION in December 2007 and the international trading system as part of the Kyoto Protocol – as emissions from international air transport are not covered by this protocol.

RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE SET-PLAN

The European Commission should be adopting the first European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan) at the end of this year.

Its objective is to support the utilisation of low carbon and effective energy technologies. This spring the European Commission announced public consultations regarding this plan published in the January package, the results of which were published in September. Some 604 subjects participated in the consultations – most of them supported the adoption of the SET-plan and recognised the growing importance of new technologies for the purpose of fulfilling objectives in CO₂ emissions, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. 41% of the consultation participants stated that the existing technology will not enable the fulfilment of all the ambitiously set objectives and it is necessary for the EU to support new technologies. The precise results

of these public consultations are contained in the European Commission report from which it arises that the European Commission greatly appreciates the consultations and all the involved subjects should make use of this tool.

The report is available at [↗](#)

EUROPEAN ENERGY AND TRANSPORT FORUM

The European Commission called a tender for the renewal of the membership of its advisory body in the energy and transport sector.

The European Energy and Transport Forum is the advisory committee established by the European Commission consisting of top representatives of all parts of the energy sectors. The Forum has 34 members who were appointed in 2004 and is part of the initiative of the European Commission to improve the transparency and dialogue between the European Commission and involved parties. **For more information about the tender go to [↗](#)**

NUCLEAR ENERGY IN GERMANY

Germany will have to maintain the operation of its nuclear power plant if it wants to meet its environmental objective.

It has not been so long since the commitment not to build a new nuclear power plant and to decommission the existing nuclear reactors by 2020 was voiced in the common programme declaration made by the German coalition government. Although there is talk in all developed countries about the possibilities of a revival of nuclear energy, relatively strong opposition to nuclear energy prevails among the general public in Germany. This August the federal government announced a highly ambitious plan to reduce CO₂ emissions which we informed you about in the last issue of our bulletin. Of course, this week it published the study of the German industrial group BDI in cooperation with the consultancy firm McKinsey, which claims that this objective cannot be achieved without retaining the existing share of energy produced at nuclear power plants. In more specific terms,



German CO₂ emissions cannot be reduced by more than 31 percent by 2020, unless the existing nuclear power plants remain in operation or unless this measure does not have a negative effect on the German economy or standard of living. This reduction in emissions by 31 percent would probably require additional investments into technology and costs would rise per ton of CO₂ from the present 20 EUR to 175.



ON 19TH SEPTEMBER the President of the European Commission Barroso and the President of Uruguay, which now (on a rotating basis) presides over the Latin American association Mercosur, agreed on the need for close cooperation in energy and the environment, as part of the forthcoming UN December Conference on new objectives for the reduction of emissions.

ON 26TH SEPTEMBER in a speech at the UN General Assembly French President Sarkozy confirmed the shift in French foreign policy with regard to Iran; according to Sarkozy this country has a right to nuclear energy, however allowing it to produce nuclear weapons would pose a great risk. So the French have support the American call for sanctions against Iran.

ON 10TH OCTOBER the European Commission announced its support of a 470 million EUR investment in technology for the production of hydrogen energy. The funds will be provided from sources of the 7th Research and Technological Development Framework Programme.

ON 11TH OCTOBER talks were held between RWE and the biggest British nuclear power plant operator, the company British Energy. According to the media Great Britain is preparing to make a decision about whether it will continue using nuclear energy in its “new generation” facilities.

ON 12TH OCTOBER the first meeting was held of the top level Group for Nuclear Security established in July. For more information go to [↗](#)

ON 23TH-24TH October the ESCO Europe 2007 (Energy Service Companies) Conference was held in Nice, France. Politicians, experts, representatives of energy companies and financial institutions talked about topics such as energy policy and regulation, access to financing investments, new technology and so on. For more information go to [↗](#)

ON 5TH-6TH NOVEMBER a conference will be held in Prague in the Kampa Hotel sponsored by the ČEZ Group on a highly current topic – energy security. At the two-day conference participants from all over Europe will discuss the issues of the European Union’s energy security, the future of European energy policy as well as the concept of the so-called “sustainable energy mix” of the European Union member countries and its structure. Representatives of the European Commission will directly represent European energy policy at the conference.

More information at [↗](#)

ON 11TH-15TH NOVEMBER the 20th World Energy Congress will be held in Rome attended, for example, by Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, Russian Energy Minister Viktor Christenko and Algerian Energy and Mining Minister Chakib Khelil. More information at [↗](#)

EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORUM

The first meeting of the European Nuclear Forum will be held at the end of November.

We already informed you of the Czech and Slovak initiative to set up a discussion forum on the utilisation of nuclear energy in the spring. In the meantime, talks between the Czech and Slovak side and the European Commis-

sion reached a successful end, and so on 26th and 27th November of this year the first meeting of the European Nuclear Forum will be held in Bratislava under the auspices and attendance of the President of the European Com-

mission José Manuel Barroso and the Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs. The Czech and Slovak prime ministers, Mirek Topolánek and Robert Fico, will also attend the meeting. The second meeting of the Forum will be held next May in Prague. The main topics of the meeting, which will be attended by representatives of the political sphere, industry and non-government organisations, will be the future of nuclear energy in the European Union, the risks of its utilisation, informing the public and transparency with regard to disclosure of all relevant information applying to nuclear power plants. It must be stressed that the European Nuclear Forum has no platform directed at the wholehearted support of extending nuclear energy, but a place for the open and objective discussion of experts, politicians, scientists, representatives of industry and non-government organisations on

the topic of how nuclear energy may contribute towards achieving the objectives of European strategy for the sustainability, competitiveness and security of energy supplies. The result of the talks should be specific recommendations and conclusions for the European Commission, or the European Union applying to the further procedure in nuclear energy. In recent years it has been shown in several EU member countries that the topic of nuclear energy is of special importance not only to the Czech Republic and that the utilisation of nuclear energy may significantly contribute to fulfilling the ambitious objectives of the EU in energy and environmental policy.

