



9th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting on
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
18th November 2009, Parliament of Belgium, Brussels

DECLARATION OF BRUSSELS 2009

on

“Moving towards a sustainable energy system in Europe”

EUFORES,

- having regard to its Budapest Declaration 2008
 - having regard to its Berlin Declaration 2007
 - having regard to its Edinburgh Declaration 2005
 - having regard to its Athens Declaration 2003
 - having regard to its Santiago de Compostela Declaration 2002
 - having regard to its Madeira Declaration 2000
 - having regard to the Madrid Declaration 1994
- A. whereas Europe is facing an economic crisis, which will inevitably affect the real economy and particularly affect the poorest households; whereas energy poverty is likely to grow;
- B. whereas climate change still remains the biggest threat facing mankind today;
- C. whereas the EU's dependency on fossil and nuclear energy and on a limited number of energy producers is a serious risk to its stability and prosperity;
- D. whereas energy efficiency has a crucial role to play in reducing the EU's dependency on energy imports, in enforcing competitiveness and in limiting the effects of climate change;
- E. whereas only a truly transparent and liberalised market with independent grid operators can favour the integration of renewable energy into a pan-European smart grid;

General remarks

1. Considers it as crucial that particularly in these times of an economic crisis energy efficiency measures and renewable energy be supported; is convinced that investing in improved energy efficiency and turning to energy from renewable sources will reduce Europe's energy bill and import dependency and have positive impacts on job creation and economic growth in Europe; emphasises energy efficiency and renewable energy measures as the engines out of the current crisis;
2. Underlines in this regard the utmost importance of a successful post-Kyoto protocol to be agreed in Copenhagen;
3. Stresses that a growing number of EU citizens are unable to afford their energy bills and that vulnerable customers, including the elderly, disabled and low income families, are those most affected; fears that, as a consequence of the economic crisis, energy poverty is likely to grow in Europe;
4. Underlines that energy efficiency reduces the overall demand for energy and that therefore renewable energy and energy efficiency always have to be considered jointly;
5. Believes that a clear shift of Europe's energy supply from an energy wasting fossil fuels-based economy to an energy efficient renewable energy-based economy is vital to secure Europe's energy supply;
6. Underlines that energy prices for conventional fuels still do not reflect the ecological truth; therefore calls for a transparent and fair pricing of all energy and other natural resources by internalising external – in particular social and ecological - costs gradually and over time;
7. Urges for proper and immediate implementation of existing legislation on energy efficiency and renewable energy; underlines that ambitious legislation will remain meaningless without the strong commitment of national, regional and local stakeholders, coherence between those stakeholders and clear implementation on the ground;
8. Underlines the importance of the Covenant of Mayors and its ambition to go beyond the EU's 20-20-20 in 2020 commitment; invites the Covenant of Mayors for an intensified exchange of views and a stronger collaboration with us, the Members of Parliaments;
9. Calls for the inclusion of common renewable energy and energy efficiency targets in combination with principal environmental, water and human security aims into the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean"; emphasizes that this could enhance cooperation in the areas of renewable energy and human security in the Mediterranean region;

New Renewable Energy Directive

10. Encourages EU Member States to start implementing the new Renewable Energy Directive, which sets a binding target of at least 20% RES in energy end use by 2020, including a binding target of 10% RES in transport;

11. Urges EU Member States specifically to deliver timely, ambitious, comprehensive and effective National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPs) by June 2010 as requested by the RES Directive;
12. Considers it crucial that Member States deliver convincing answers to the requirements of the RES Directive in the following sectors:
 - National binding target for 2020 and its distribution on sector targets
 - Clear and ambitious trajectory of the RES share development towards 2020
 - Grid access for RES-Electricity and the facilitation of the inclusion of biogas into the grids
 - Use of RES in Buildings, with a particular focus on the public sector as a role model
 - Training and accreditation
 - Sustainability criteria for biofuels
13. Strongly encourages Member States to go beyond their national overall and interim targets as set out in the RES Directive;
14. Strongly encourages Member States to fully explore their domestic potential, to give first priority to domestic implementation of the RES Directive and only to use flexibility mechanisms as a second option; reminds the fact that renewable energy sources are in large parts indigenous sources of energy; underlines in this regard that in particular in these times of economic crisis the benefits of a domestic implementation are jobs and economic welfare; Member States shall fully exploit the large potential of job creation and economic welfare of the RES and energy efficiency system and its supply chains;
15. Strongly encourages the Commission and Member States to adopt binding and ambitious legislation on sustainability criteria for biomass and on the inclusion of indirect land use change in the GHG savings calculation of sustainability criteria for biofuels; reminds to take care of potential conflicts of biomass production with food and water markets;

New European Energy Efficiency Action Plan

16. Calls on the European Commission to publish its new European Energy Efficiency Action Plan (EEAP) at the very beginning of 2010;
17. Calls on the Member States to adopt as soon as possible a binding target for energy efficiency of 20% by 2020 to signal the key role of energy efficiency measures for security of energy supply, economic growth and environmental protection;
18. Calls on MS to publish their 2nd National Energy Efficiency Action Plans (NEEAPs) timely and with more ambition to implement energy efficiency effectively;
19. Suggests a recast of the Energy Services Directive (ESD);

Promotion of CHP and biomass

20. Emphasises that the modernisation and extension of central district heating systems and the gradual increase of the share of energy from renewable sources in these systems are key elements for helping European countries, and especially Central and Eastern

European countries to meet their goals of combating energy poverty, reducing energy import dependency and cutting down greenhouse gas emissions; believes that exchange of best practice, in particular with Scandinavian countries, with regard to the phasing-in of biomass into district heating networks is of great added value; asks for the set-up of a EU budget financed centre of excellence for biomass in one of the Central and Eastern European countries; urges to give priority to local biomass production in order to assure climate effectivity and enable local job creation;

Realising the potential of the North and Baltic Sea

21. Underlines the enormous potential for renewable energy in the North Sea and Baltic Sea region through the combination of the huge potential of on-shore and off-shore wind in combination with the large-scale storage capacities of existing hydroelectric reservoirs; welcomes the ongoing integration of the North Sea and Baltic Sea region through new direct current cables and large-scale joint wind off-shore projects like the Danish-Swedish-German "Kriegers Flak" project; calls for a North Sea and Baltic Sea region roadmap combining the potential of offshore wind, marine and hydro power to be developed in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, in particular between all the EU North Sea border countries and Norway and between all Baltic Sea countries;

Promoting the Euro-Mediterranean region

22. Believes that a European-Mediterranean Renewable Energy offensive is needed in order to facilitate and promote the necessary infrastructure and investment for capitalising on the enormous solar and wind power potential to benefit both sides of the Mediterranean; calls on governments, industry and civil society stakeholders as well as the financial community to elaborate a new partnership between the EU and its Mediterranean partners;
23. Urges all relevant stakeholders to adopt binding targets for renewable energy comparable in ambition to the EU target in the framework of the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" in order to enhance investment security and creating a mechanism for financing e.g. through the European Development Bank, or bilateral development programmes.

Pan-European Smart Grid

24. Recalls that renewable energy sources are often local and variable; therefore believes that the transition to an energy efficient and renewable energy-based economy is highly dependent on the development of a decentralised smart grid infrastructure; urges Member States and transmission and distribution system operators to guarantee the priority access, connection, transmission and distribution of electricity produced from renewable energy sources; calls for enormous and strategic investment in local grid infrastructure and massive research and development to be allocated to the development of "super grids";
25. Adds the importance to create an independent Pan-European Grid which shall be linked with the decentralized smart grid. Cooperation among the different levels of grid operators shall be intensified in order to develop the pan-European Smart Grid which lays the ground for the future European energy infrastructure and develops adequate answers to the needs of the future energy system;

Renewable Energy Storage Capacity

26. Underlines that the existing hydro-electric storage plants and existing demand and grid management technologies are largely sufficient to integrate large volumes of renewable energy electricity into the existing electricity system; urges, however, for better research and development financing of renewable energy storage, which is vital for both energy security and climate protection; regards the development of a range of cost-effective, flexible renewable energy storage systems as an important mean to enhance network flexibility in view of a 100% renewable energy electricity system;

Enhancing Energy End-use Efficiency

27. Regrets that many National Energy Efficiency Action Plans (NEEAP) display a disappointing lack of ambition, ignoring the immense energy efficiency potential in Europe - as an analysis of the Energy Efficiency Watch, which was initiated by Members of Parliament and is coordinated by EUFORES, has shown; underlines that in most cases the relationship between technical energy efficiency potentials, energy efficiency targets and energy efficiency improvement measures to be implemented is weak or not transparent;
28. Calls on Member States to implement, monitor and improve energy efficiency improvement measures listed in their respective NEEAP; urges for a "dynamisation of standards" approach - namely an optimised regular revision of standards; calls for the introduction of performance based standards and measures; takes the view that national action plans have to be turned into a real European energy efficiency strategy;

Energy Efficient Buildings first – the New Energy Performance in Buildings Directive (EPBD)

29. Underlines that improving energy efficiency in buildings is the most cost-effective measure and provides the greatest benefits for society, addressing critical issues such as security of energy supply and energy poverty; stresses that with new buildings representing on average 1% of the buildings stock, and a renovation cycle for existing buildings being not less than 25 years, there is no time to lose in implementing building regulations for both new and existing buildings;
30. Is convinced that the speeding up of technological progress on new buildings and increasing the renovation rates in existing building stock can be achieved by a combination of new and ambitious legislative measures, an easier access to European funding instruments and related support instruments and organisations (e.g. EIB, structural funds, KfW), coordinated tax measures and an EU coordinated training programme to develop the necessary skills; stresses that such training programmes shall focus on new concepts combining sophisticated architecture, insulation materials and decentralised renewable energy sources for heating and cooling;
31. Urges for a full-system approach, taking into account energy efficiency and RES measures in order to turn the energy-consuming buildings of today into highly efficiency energy-producers of tomorrow; requests the switch to a more holistic approach in the understanding of buildings, which shall not be seen as a loose collection of goods and materials, but as a complex system which shall be optimised intelligently and as much as possible;

32. Requests an ambitious and speedy implementation of the recast Energy Performance in Buildings Directive which could achieve 11% CO₂ emissions reduction by 2020; stresses the need for solutions taking care of indoor climate quality;

Sustainable Transport Systems

33. Underlines the need for a comprehensive approach towards the entire transport system, in particular in goods transport; calls therefore for a coordinated effort between European, national and local authorities; stresses the need for an energy-efficient transport policy giving preference to public transport, cycling and walking in urban areas; understands the Covenant of Mayors as an important initiative to link the EU's climate change strategy with local climate change strategies; stresses that an enhanced possibility of cities to access structural funds and EIB loans as well as incentives for the expansion and use of public transport are key; calls for a modal shift from private road transport to public transport and other CO₂ friendly means of mobility;
34. Regrets that in the transport of goods in the EU, rail accounts for only 10%; stresses in this regard that no other sector of the European economy causes more problems in terms of oil dependency and raising greenhouse gas emissions than goods transport; calls for a modal shift from road transport to rail and waterways; urges for an enhanced approach towards an optimal linkage between rail, maritime and road transport;
35. Urges concerted action on efficient cars by combining ambitious legislation on CO₂ and cars with fiscal incentives (e.g. tax reduction for best performing cars), a harmonised EU labelling scheme for efficient cars on the clear A to G format used in appliance labelling and a common EU platform to develop cars, which are powered by renewable energy electricity or hydrogen as well as the second and third generation of sustainable biofuels in accordance to the position of the EU-Parliament; calls in this regard for a front-runner approach for cars in order to help the EU automotive industry to regain part of the competitive edge against Asian car manufacturers;

Smart Products

36. Considers the speeding up of the market transformation for appliances, office equipment, lighting and consumer electronics as vital; stresses in this regard the need to better combine legislative measures (e.g. eco-design directive), coordinated information policies (e.g. eco-labelling) and financial incentives (e.g. reduced VAT for energy-efficient products) and thereby enforce synergies between these measures; urges the establishment of a clear timetable for the withdrawal from the market of all the least energy-efficient items of equipment, appliances and other energy-related products;

Using synergies through ICT

37. Emphasises the promotion of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a key element in driving forward energy efficiency in various sectors such as transport, construction, energy and manufacturing; calls upon the Commission and the Member States to endeavour to increase awareness of the importance of ICTs for improving energy efficiency in the EU economy; urges Member States which have not yet devised a Green IT/ICT Strategy capable of contributing to a progressive reduction in the EU's greenhouse gas emissions to do so;

Broader Framework

38. Calls for an independent scientific support to and assessment of the upcoming 2nd national Energy Energy Action Plans (NEEAPs); emphasises the importance of involving more regional and local actors as well as energy efficiency stakeholders in the upgrade of the National Energy Energy Action Plans; asks EUFORES to continue its work in the Energy-Efficiency-Watch Initiative in order to play a coordinating role in this regard;
39. Calls on Member States and the European Commission to intensify their support to the newly created International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA); stresses the need for such an international body in order to promote the use of Renewable Energy on a global scale and to play an active role in the creation of a post-Kyoto regime with a special focus on sharing Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency technologies with the least developed countries;
40. Calls on Member States to undertake all necessary steps to make the climate change negotiations of Copenhagen a success. A strong and binding common commitment of the international community shall be found and pursued. Failure is not acceptable and climate change is not waiting. In case of a failure, the European Union shall nevertheless continue and intensify its commitments and activities in order to further improve its leadership in the fight against climate change.

Commitments

We, MPs and MEPs, commit:

- to bring these issues forward in our respective regions, countries and Parliaments by means we feel adequate:
 - specific discussions within our related parliamentary committees,
 - organising parliamentary hearings,
 - bringing them forward to our respective governments,
 - promoting public debate,
 - using the new provisions of the newly established Lisbon Treaty for the closer integration of national parliaments into the European institutional system,

- and more specifically
 - to promote the upcoming development of the National Renewable Energy Action Plans and the implementation of the Framework Directive for Renewable Energy Sources in our own Parliaments and to work with our respective national governments as well as with business and civil society to set up ambitious National Renewable Energy Action Plans, which will make sure that as a strict minimum the national renewable energy targets are met;
 - to support and facilitate the implementation of national energy efficiency policies and especially to work for the improvement of the second round of national Energy Efficiency Action Plans;
 - to request from our governments to stand strong in the climate change negotiations. We as Members of Parliaments are ready to do the necessary in order to fight climate change with all necessary and intelligent measures.