

**OSCE CONFERENCE
“Strengthening Energy Security in the OSCE area”**

ENGLISH only

Bratislava, 6 – 7 July 2009

Closing Remarks

**by Ambassador Urban Rusnak, Special Representative
of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs for External Energy Security - Bratislava**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Dear Guests,

we just spend 1,5 day in discussing different facets of one the most complex issue of today's international politics. Energy security, unlike to any other issue in Europe, combine wide range of security, economics, ecology implications with direct impact to the daily life of millions of Europeans regardless of their nationality, wealth or confession.

Disruption of supply chain of the natural gas, as one of the most visible form of energy insecurity, hit Slovakia at the beginning of this year. With a small exaggeration this was like an earthquake which hits foundation of the national economy, changed dramatically pattern of decision-making process on the national level as well as individual households. You have had, distinguished guests, opportunity to hear some details from the side of the Government in the presentations of H.E. Minister Lajčák. Later the same day, Mr. Wagner, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Slovak Gas Industry – the SPP described the crisis experiences from the corporative side.

What are the lessons we could learn from the events that occurred in January? This was clearly the loss-loss situation in which none of the participants was able to impose his view to others. When the crisis came to its end, everyone was counting their financial loss. To decrease probability of repetition of such situation, there are two competing strategies in discussion. Planning and building new pipelines bypassing some of transiting countries would strengthen mutual interdependence between main producers and consumers of resources. However, if it is done without proper legal framework and communication with other states, such projects may turn to controversial ones rising trust and confidence among limited beneficiaries only. Entire neighbourhood of such a project could be for good or bad reasons alienated. The second strategy is to look forward for the diversification of sources and routes as quick as possible. This step would imply less interdependence, more flexibility and market like approach.

Are those two approaches in conceptual contradiction? Not really, if we will address this issue on a higher and wider level. Instead of sole national or narrow regional approach, we have to address vulnerabilities on Pan European level. Security in Europe should be indivisible – that is in theory. As far energy security concerns we learn a bitter lesson that shows us that technical determinants like interconnections could limit any effort of European solidarity.

We believe that issues of energy security should be addressed in a structured manner at the OSCE. As minister Lajčák said in hi opening remarks, Slovakia **calls on the participating countries to continue dialogue using the comparative advantage of the OSCE as the only security organization in Europe that brings together, on one platform, the key countries of production, consumption and transit of the energy media.**

I was really satisfied that the messages from key note speakers did fit the same logical framework. As Secretary General Mr. De Blichambaut stated the OSCE can be helpful in mobilizing political will in the area of energy security. As was stressed by many participants we need both – proper legal framework and adequate political will to implement agreed rules. It's obvious that existing multilateral legal framework needs to be updated which may be a good opportunity to reassess conceptual proposals of Russian president D. Medvedev. Current situation in energy security unlike oil shocks in the XX.th century consists also of ecological imperative. I completely agree with Mr. Gallogly that we are facing two major long-term energy challenges: the need to deliver secure supplies of clean energy at affordable prices and climate change, which requires a cut in damaging emissions.

We do fully support EU efforts in this regard. Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan is one of the fundamental papers that strengthen energy efficiency, energy infrastructure, spread external relations, and lay on oil stocks and gas crisis mechanism. In the reaction to combined challenges of infrastructure insecurities and economic crisis, the European Economic Recovery Plan reinforces the EU's energy supply and 3 x 20 objectives.

I share some optimism in relation to the nuclear energy. Nuclear energy is also one of the most economic energy sources, less vulnerable to fuel price changes, thereby protecting EU economies against raw materials price volatility. It also increases the security of energy supply in Europe, since uranium sources are widely distributed around the globe, in geopolitically stable areas.

I appreciated very today's interventions addressing vulnerabilities of energy dependence.

Dear participants,

I expect that we would be able to come back to the energy security discussion within the OSCE format in autumn. This conference proved high interest of participating states to the issue of Energy Security. Moreover, such interest could be transformed to the preparation of the Ministerial Decision on Energy Security for the up-coming Ministerial meeting in Athens. This would be a natural development based on 2006 Brussels decision and recent challenges in this field.

I personally believe that in OSCE we should have regular formalized meetings as well as ad hoc activities in case of emergency. I use this opportunity to call upon forthcoming Kazakhstan Chairmanship to include the topic of energy security along with their main priority – Transportation - into their Agenda during 2010.

In conclusion of my remarks, let me express my gratitude to the Greek Chairmanship for co-organizing and US Delegation for financial support of this event. Substance of the conference, contribution of speakers and participants formed a solid ground for follow up in the coming months.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the team of the OSCE Secretariat and my colleagues from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for excellent cooperation in organizing the conference.

Dear Friends, I hope that despite a summer rain yesterday in the afternoon you had at least in the evening an opportunity to enjoy downtown of Bratislava.

I wish you safe trip back home or to Vienna.