

## **Athens Summit 2008 - Synopsis**

The 2008 Athens Summit on Energy Security and Climate Change was organized under the auspices of the President of the Hellenic Republic Dr. Karolos Papoulias from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of May, and it has been a pioneering event in the organization of international energy conferences. The organizers succeeded in combining a scientific conference that covered the entire range of the energy-environment debate with a unique networking opportunity for business and financial leaders as well as a venue for ministerial level policy debates.

The three day conference started officially in the afternoon of May 5<sup>th</sup> with four major policy addresses by the political leadership of the country that were received with great interest by the Summit's participants as well the local and international media.

After a short presentation by Minister of Environment and Public Works Georgios Souflias who stressed the need to examine the possibility of including nuclear power into the country's energy mix, Minister for Development, Christos Folias, who was the immediate host of the Summit and the main sponsor of its Ministerial Forum, presented the main priorities of the country's energy policy and its emerging role as a crucial hub for European oil & gas imports. A message underlying the initiatives undertaken on the energy and environmental sectors by the leader of the opposition Hellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) and President of the Socialist International Mr. George Papandreou, was read as part of the inaugural process. Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis explained in detail Greece's environmental and energy policies and was followed by President Karolos Papoulias, who officially inaugurated the Summit's proceedings.

The Summit evolved around the pioneering concept of a synergetic approach between the energy and environmental communities. It aspired to create bridges of understanding and complementary action within the framework of an environmentally sustainable international energy policy. This idea was enthusiastically saluted by nearly all policy participants and ministerial dignitaries, and was evident in both versions of the Summit's Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Energy Security. The Declaration is presently being considered for ratification by more than 45 governments in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Former Soviet Union. Session 5 of the main Conference Programme constituted the scientific underpinning of that synergetic approach. All participants from industry, policy, consultancy and academia agreed that common ground initiatives can be undertaken by the environmental and energy communities, especially over issues of energy conservation and the development of Renewable Energy Resources, which contribute directly to the effective combat of climate change.

## **Conference Highlights**

### **The Emerging Role of Greece as a Major Transit State in the East-West Hydrocarbon Corridor**

This session, organized under the auspices of the Minister for Development, concentrated on recent developments regarding the routing of major interstate export pipelines via Hellenic soil. Special emphasis was given on the Burgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipeline as well as the South Stream and the Turkey-Greece-Italy gas pipelines. All major governments and consortia were represented at a senior level. Panelists included Elsa Loberdou, the Special Secretary for International Energy Policy of the Greek Ministry of Development, the Charge d' Affaires of the U.S. and Russian embassies in Athens, Messrs. Tom Countryman and Michael Savva, the Managing Director of Bulgargaz, Mr. Lyubomir Denchev, the General Manager of the Greek consortium that participates in Burgas-Alexandroupolis, Mr. Christos Dimas, and the General Manager of the Hellenic Gas Transmission System Operator (DESFA), Gazprom's partner in South Stream, Mr. Konstantinos Maroulis.

### **The Evolution of Hydrocarbon Dependence and Conventional Power Generation**

These panels, concentrated on the critical challenges facing Europe's major hydrocarbon and electricity companies, such as the deepening deregulation and market liberalization processes across the European Union, increased concerns over the security of gas supply, the volatility and structural tightness of the global oil market, and of course the repercussions of E.U.'s strict environmental policies on the electricity and gas industry of the continent. Panelists included senior officials from the International Energy Agency, the International Energy Forum, and Eurelectric as well as senior executives from Total Gas, Petroleum Finance Company, Deloitte & Touche, the Center for Global Energy Studies, Wingas/Wintershall, Hellenic Petroleum, Endessa Hellas and the Hellenic Transmission System Operator (DESMHE).

### **The Prospects of Renewable Energy Resources in Greece and Europe**

These panels focused on the market development of RES applications, namely wind, solar and biofuels, primarily on a European level. Specific reference was made to the recent EU policy proposals known as Agenda 2020 and the ways in which they are likely to include RES penetration into the European electricity mix. Panelists included senior executives from PPC (DEH) Renewables, the European Photovoltaic Industry Association, the European Biomass Industry Association, the European Renewables Energy Council and the World Renewables Energy Council.

### **Ministerial Summit and the Athens Declaration Ratification Process**

The Greek Minister for Development Mr. Christos Falias has invited his counterparts from 60 countries from Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean Basin, as well as the wider Gulf and Caspian Sea region to join him in order to debate the signing of a non-binding resolution that would foster closer, deeper, and more effective co-operative relationships between the European Union and its Wider Neighborhood, regarding the attainment of reciprocal energy security and the joint combat against climate change. Delegations from over 36 countries attained the proceeding of the Summit and two separate resolutions were produced. Both versions of the final Declaration are currently under consideration by the respective governments. The ratification process is expected to be completed by early September 2008.

#### **Sponsors:**

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- Heracles General Cement Co., PPC Renewables, Hellenic Petroleum
- Polyeco S.A.

**Institutional Participants:** European Commission via Commissioner for the Environment Stavros Dimas, International Energy Agency, International Energy Forum, United Nations Environment Programme, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Black Sea Trade and Development Bank.

**Supporting Chambers of Commerce:** Arab-Hellenic Chamber, British-Hellenic Chamber, German-Hellenic Chamber, Italian-Hellenic Chamber. Russian-Hellenic Chamber and French-Hellenic Chamber.

**Media Sponsors and Communications Supporters:** CNN was the Summit's Exclusive International Broadcast Sponsor. Other media partners included, *Platts*, *Alexander Oil & Gas Connections*, *New Europe*, *Mega*, *Imerisia*, *Ta Nea*, *Athens News*, and *Energy Point*.