



Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt

Statsministeriet

Prins Jørgens Gård 11

1218 København K

13. March 2015

Re. European Council of 19-20 March – Energy Union

Dear Prime Minister,

During the forthcoming European Council, taking place in Brussels on 19-20 March, you will be discussing the recently published European Commission Communication on “A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy”.

We believe that the establishment of the Energy Union is an important opportunity to build a common vision for the European Union (EU) that will set in motion the transition to an efficient 100% renewable energy system and put an end to fossil fuel use by the middle of this century. A system that strikes the right balance between large-scale energy generation and transmission projects, and initiatives that stimulate a smart and distributed system based on small-scale generation. This transition is urgently needed if the EU is going to do its fair share of the effort needed to avoid dangerous climate change and keep global temperature rise well below 2°C.

Europe cannot afford to continue wasting hundreds of billions of euros on unnecessary infrastructure, while trying to reduce its exposure to fossil fuel volatile prices and its dependency on fossil fuel imports. Gas demand in the analysis for the Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) has been overestimated by over 70%, if a 30% improvement in energy efficiency is assumed. When cost/benefit analysis shows insulating buildings and making businesses more efficient is more cost-effective than building new power generation, efficiency must be prioritised. The Commission’s Communication stresses the need for energy efficiency to be treated on an equal footing with generation capacity. We think it is essential for the European Council to specifically support this principle.



The development of the Energy Union should prevent lock-in to a carbon future, which is incompatible with the EU's long-term greenhouse gas emission reduction objectives. In this regard, fossil fuel subsidies should be urgently phased-out and external costs should be fully internalised.

Reducing energy demand through the implementation of energy efficiency measures, and a broader and deeper deployment of truly indigenous and reliable European renewable energy sources is the most effective way to improve the EU's energy security of supply, competitiveness and sustainability.

We hope that you can take these considerations into account and have them included in the European Council Conclusions.

We thank you beforehand and remain,

Yours sincerely,

Wendel Trio
Director
Climate Action Network Europe

Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe is Europe's largest coalition working on climate and energy issues.

With over 120 member organisations in 30 European countries, CAN Europe works to prevent dangerous climate change and promote sustainable energy and environment policy in Europe.