

03 Jan 2006 -11:56

OSCE - Gas

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Brussels, Jan 2, 2006 OSCE BELGIAN CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE KAREL DE GUCHT, CALLS FOR "PREDICTABLE, RELIABLE AND ECONOMICALLY ACCEPTABLE ENERGY SUPPLY" The Belgian Chair-in-Office, Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht is concerned about the lack of agreement between the Russian Federation and Ukraine regarding the conditions under which gas will be supplied in the future to Ukraine. This is also relevant for future energy supplies to Europe. In this respect, the Chairman-in-Office would like to recall the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted in Maastricht (the Netherlands) in December 2003, which contains a number of principles that can be helpful in the present case. Among others, it emphasizes that a high level of energy security requires a predictable, reliable, economically acceptable, commercially sound and environmentally friendly energy supply, which can be achieved by means of long-term contracts in appropriate cases. The OSCE is there to encourage energy dialogue and efforts to diversify energy supply, ensure the safety of energy routes, and make more efficient use of energy resources. It should also be recalled that according to WTO-rules prices should over time reflect those prevailing on world markets. To find an agreement that provides security and predictability of energy supplies is in the interest of all OSCE participating States. Karel De Gucht : "I encourage all parties to pursue their discussions and to explore, in a constructive manner, all options that could bring about a mutually satisfactory solution". The Chairman-in-Office recalls that, within the OSCE, thoughts have already been given to the idea of an OSCE conference on energy security. The OSCE Chairmanship stands ready to pick up anew on this idea and to assist participating States, if they so request, to set up such a conference.

FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development  
Cooperation - Press service (P&C/P)  
Rue des Petits Carmes 15  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium  
+32 2 501 81 11  
<http://diplomatie.belgium.be>

Karl Lagatie  
Spokesperson  
+32 477 40 32 12  
[Karl.Lagatie@diplobel.fed.be](mailto:Karl.Lagatie@diplobel.fed.be)

Arnaud Gaspart  
Deputy spokesperson  
+32 2 501 87 66  
[Arnaud.Gaspart@diplobel.fed.be](mailto:Arnaud.Gaspart@diplobel.fed.be)