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For two days, the 7th Energy Community Gas Forum gathered in Bled. It focused on the concrete developments, concerning key gas infrastructure projects. Representatives of Shah Deniz II Consortium, Ionian Adriatic Pipeline, Trans Adriatic Pipeline, Nabucco, LNG Croatia, Moldovagaz, Srbijagas and Gazprom debated actively with the participants. They were challenged to take stock and evaluate the projects' importance for the Energy Community and their timely development. Also, the status quo of the gas markets, the difficulties faced by gas traders, the implementation of the Third Energy Package and security of supply and demand stood high on the Forum agenda.

The Regional Centre for Energy Policy Research (REKK, Hungary) presented the Forum a new Danube Region Gas Market Model on gas market integration and supply security. The model concludes that the implementation of the EU's North-South Gas Corridor projects will have a positive impact on regional gas market integration and price convergence. To this end, the expanding interconnections and constructing new LNG terminals is decisive. In this context, the European Commission, which chaired the Forum, made reference to its public consultation on possible North-South gas projects, which runs until 4 October 2012. Afterwards, the Commission plans to prepare a final list of projects of common Interest, which might be released by the end of 2012.

Further, ENTSO-G presented its Ten Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) 2013-2022. The TYNDP has now a better coverage of the Energy Community area. The Forum stressed that a thorough assessment should cover whole Europe and not only the EU.

The Forum thanked WBIF for funding the regional study on Gas to Power and urged the Parties to take actively part into the initiative. The Energy Community Secretariat briefed the Forum on the developments steps of the Energy Community Strategy. The strategy will result in a more streamlined approach to investments. The process of identifying Projects of Energy Community Interest (PECIs) has already started. There is an agreement that the assessment will be based on a similar methodology as the EU Projects of Common Interest. Whilst the collection of project proposals will start late 2012, the tentative list of PECIs is to be drawn up in 2013.

The Forum concluded that particular attention should be paid to the Contracting Parties, which do not have access to gas yet or have limited gas markets.

"As for me, the agenda of the 7th Gas Forum is a manifestation of deepened co-operation. All the sessions dealt with different aspects of regional co-operation in very practical terms. It is amazing to see how the scope of involved stakeholders is broadening, which is particularly relevant about the business; this underlines the increasing importance of the Forum", stated the Director of the Secretariat Slavtcho Neykov. The 7th Gas Forum brought together more than 135 participants, representing the industry, ministries, regulators, donors, NGOs and academia.

*Source energy-community*