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EC-Norway Energy Dialogue: boosting cooperation in the internal energy market, offshore wind and Carbon Capture and Storage projects

Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs and Norwegian Minister of Petroleum and Energy, Mrs Åslaug Haga, met in Brussels today to exchange views on various energy related issues of mutual interest. Particular emphasis was placed on bilateral cooperation, liberalisation of the energy markets and focus on renewable energy and the commitment of both sides to promote Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) projects. Norway is the EU's second most important supplier of oil and gas – gas imports from Norway are expected to reach 100 BCM this year.

"EU-Norway cooperation in the field of energy is marked by excellent relations both bilaterally as well as in international fora and industrial ventures. We would like to see this relationship continuously developed both bilaterally and within the framework of the European Economic Area Agreement and through common commitments in the fight against climate change", declared Commissioner Piebalgs.

"I agree with what has been stated by Commissioner Piebalgs. The EU is Norway's by far largest market for oil and gas and energy issues are interlinked not least concerning energy security. The world will be dependent on fossil fuels for decades to come. At the same time we need parallel efforts in developing renewable energy and energy efficiency. CCS is an important element in making fossil fuels more environmentally friendly. Norway has 12 years of successful CO₂ storage experience and is presently developing a test centre and two full scale CCS projects. This Government's policy is that all new gas-fired power plants should be based on CCS technology", said Minister Haga.

The counterparts discussed progress in their collaboration in Carbon Capture and Storage projects and reaffirmed their interest in furthering their cooperation in this field. Norway's 3 CCS projects could be defined as part of the 12 projects the EU intends to develop in order to prove the viability of this technology.

As a part of the existing cooperation on renewable energy between the EU and Norway, Commissioner Piebalgs and Minister Haga agreed to look into future cooperation in offshore wind developments. A proposal for such cooperation will be worked out based on common interest in the visions for offshore wind developments.

Mr Piebalgs also outlined the progress of the EU's third internal energy market package and welcomed Norway's participation therein.

The meeting concluded with an exchange of views on international energy issues.