Honourable Speaker of the Parliament and Acting President of the Republic of Moldova,

Distinguished Commissioner Öttinger,

Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to celebrate with you the fifth Anniversary of the Energy Community. Austria has always been a firm promoter of this project.

We are happy and proud of being the host country of the Community’s Secretariat, which is located in a beautiful place in the very heart of Vienna.

In the past five years the Energy Community has shown important efforts and activities to increase its role in the European energy policy. May I congratulate in this respect the Secretariat’s Director, Mr. Slavtcho Neykov, to his leadership.

Originally an offspring of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the Energy Community Process has shown vitality and strength. It offers a unique opportunity to the region to integrate fully into the internal market in the energy sector.

It serves both the region’s and the European Union’s interests. It demonstrates the political commitment to cooperation and regional integration and sends a very positive signal to those interested in investments and economic opportunities in the region.

It has established itself as a significant factor for the stability of South Eastern Europe. By extending the European acquis in the field of energy and environmental policies to non-EU-members, it also boosts the
impact of European energy policies and contributes to security of supply in wider Europe.

The Community has gained ground also in geographical terms by the accession of Moldova in April 2010 and of Ukraine in February 2011. Let me take this opportunity of congratulating both to their accession and Moldova in particular to its present role as Chair-Country in Office.

The political will towards enlargement continues even further. This fact is clearly reflected in the group of observers, which are Georgia, Norway, Turkey, and also Armenia.

Austria is proud of hosting key international institutions and serving as a hub for ideas and policies in the field of global governance. On the global agenda, we face important challenges, for which energy is a key subject. Reaching the Millennium Development goals and combating Climate Change can only be managed by bringing about a major shift in how we generate, transmit and use energy.

The Energy Community is one of eight Vienna based International Organisation’s with an energy component in their mandate. By coordinating an informal platform for the exchange of views on energy between these organisations, the so-called Vienna Energy Club, the Community has contributed to Vienna’s potential as a meeting-place for dialogue. This Vienna Energy Club is certainly beneficial to Vienna’s role as a place for dynamic and forward-looking solutions.

Let me, therefore, on behalf of the Austrian government and myself, extend to the Energy Community the sincerest congratulations. As a close witness of your convincing record and your impressive achievements, I would like to wish you all success in your on-going important mission.