Press Release

Tbilisi, 10 March 2017

European Union, Energy Community and the Ministry of Energy of Georgia mark the opening of EU4ENERGY regional office in Tbilisi to support energy reforms in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan

Today marked the official opening of the EU4ENERGY Governance project office in Tbilisi. The regional office will coordinate the project’s activities aimed at improving the energy legislative and regulatory framework in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The project is funded by the European Union and co-financed and implemented by the Energy Community Secretariat and the Energy Charter Secretariat.

Opening the ceremony, Mr Kakha Kaladze, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Energy of Georgia said: “Georgia has already defined its energy future and after three years since the signing of the Association Agreement we are acceding to the Energy Community Treaty. We believe that the incorporation of binding commitments in Georgia’s energy sector and reformative efforts along with South and East European Countries will bring benefits not only to the sector but will speed up our European integration process and get us closer to succeeding on this path.

However, establishment of main postulates of EU energy market in the energy sector of Georgia in most cases is limited and even impossible without close cooperation with neighboring countries. At this point, we consider that the Eastern Partnership Platform framework involving the EU, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia creates a fertile ground for the development of regional energy cooperation in the South Caucasus based on EU best practice.

With this in mind we attach great importance to the opening of the EU4ENERGY Governance regional office in Tbilisi administered by the Energy Community Secretariat”.

Delivering her keynote speech, Katarina Mathernova, Deputy Director-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations at the European Commission underlined:

“EU4ENERGY will support Georgia in its endeavour to become a full member of the European energy family. With Georgia preparing to adopt EU standards in the energy sector, the launch of this project is as timely and relevant as ever. Even more, as the European Commission is here in Georgia with our partners, the international financing institutions, to support the need of greater energy efficiency in construction of new buildings - both private and public. We are glad
to see that the joint efforts between the Georgian Government, the EU and the Energy Community Secretariat are helping to advance this process, as well as serve as a focal point for EU4ENERGY in Azerbaijan and Armenia."

Director of Energy Community Secretariat, Janez Kopač, said: “The Energy Community Secretariat is the natural partner in assisting countries in the EU’s neighborhood in reforming their energy markets. In the case of Georgia, the Energy Community Secretariat strives to maximize the synergies between the EU4ENERGY Governance project and the Secretariat’s ongoing support to Georgia in its accession to the Energy Community, expected later this year. The project’s activities will focus on liberalization of the electricity and gas markets in line with the Third Energy Package and development of legal frameworks in the areas of energy efficiency, environment and oil stocks as required by Georgia’s commitments under the Energy Community Treaty. The project will also aim at providing technical assistance on key energy infrastructure strategic projects. The reforms foreseen as a result of our activities, to be conducted in full partnership with all relevant country stakeholders, will bring real improvements to the quality of life of the citizens”.

EU4ENERGY Governance component is a 6,8 million EUR programme for the EaP countries. It is part of the wider EU4ENERGY 21 million EUR initiative, which also includes Central Asian countries. The objective of the EU4ENERGY Governance project is to improve the legislative and regulatory environment and enhance the investment climate for key energy infrastructure projects. A second regional office which will cover Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine will operate in Kyiv.

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