Dear Chairman
Dear Excellencies
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen
Dear Colleagues

Let me first express my deep appreciation of being invited to this honorable Forum. It is a very special pleasure for me – as President of the ECRB – to present the results of our work as regulators to you.

As you certainly know, the ECRB operates as institution of the Energy Community based on Article 58 of the Energy Community Treaty. The very core function of the ECRB is to act as a coordination body for national regulators.

I trust we all agree that a regionally coordinated approach is the key challenge for the development of our region. Only were we act in a streamlined way we can provide a framework that is able to attract investments, build a competitive market and ensure security of supply.

As much as coordination is required for our legal framework, it is also a challenge for regulators. Aligning regulatory measures and providing a stable regulatory market framework remains a key promoter for a number of core objectives of the Energy Community Treaty – such as market integration, facilitation of investments, competition and security of supply.

The first objective of the ECRB therefore is to support the harmonized development of regulatory rules in the Energy Community and work on common best practice solutions for implementing the Energy Community Treaty.

The second role of the ECRB is to provide a platform for exchanging knowledge and share experience.
As an institution of the Treaty the ECRB operates in the overall framework of the Energy Community. We regulators are of course very well aware of the need to actively coordinate and cooperate with the other institutions of the Energy Community Treaty and align our considerations with the overall developments. Ladies and Gentlemen, let me underline that such coordination remains of utmost importance also for our work - any regulatory activity, both on national and cross-border level, can only start from broader energy policy decisions and build on existing legal powers and framework rules. Against this background I can only repeat my appreciation for being invited to participate at today's meeting and inform you about the recent developments of the ECRB.

In addition to coordinating our positions with the overall developments of the Energy Community we - as general working principle - also aim at streamlining our considerations with European discussions. I personally think that this is a very relevant aspect of our work. By signing the Energy Community Treaty the Contracting Parties committed to implement part of the European Union’s acquis communautaire. When implementing the acquis, streamlining with best practice experience already gained on European level seems not only useful from an efficiency point of view but for me, personally, is also a must when we think of market integration. Of course - alignment with European experience of course needs to take into account national and regional specificities of the Energy Community.

In praxi coordination of ECRB activities with European developments is guaranteed via:

- the coordination function of the European Commission, acting as Vice-President of both the ECRB and the European Regulators Group for Electricity and Gas (ERGEG)
- In addition the Participating Countries to the Treaty are at the same time member of the ECRB and ERGEG
More specific exchange of information and streamlining in relation to regional market developments is also provided by ECRB participation in the ERGEG Regional Initiatives.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me move to some details now. I trust, I have your understanding that I can not go into details of all single items of our work – I can be proud to say that this would certainly exceed the timeframe of my presentation. Those of you should be interested in some more details, might want to refer to our activities’ report that you received in preparation of this meeting or – of course – our publicly available Annual Reports and Work Programmes. Our 2010 Work Programme, for example, has been recently published.

The work of the ECRB focuses on three main areas: electricity, gas and customers. For each of these topics we have a Working Group. A forth Group, the so-called Implementation Group for the SEE Coordinated Auction Office, is exclusively dedicated to providing a platform for regulators, TSOs and users for discussion the development of the SEE Coordinated Auction Office.

The individual Working Groups are responsible for developing the deliverables foreseen in our Work Programme – which are then approved by the ECRB Plenary before published.

- For electricity we focused in 2008 and 2009 on congestion management and transmission capacity allocation; regional balancing; compliance monitoring; wholesale market opening and compatible market rules; harmonization of trading licensing regimes and cross border cooperation of regulators related to cross border investments.

- The activities of our Gas Working Group concentrated on a similar topic - namely on regulatory instruments for facilitation of regional gas investments in the Energy Community. This work provides very relevant input to the discussions on building a Gas Ring in the Energy Community.
Finally, our customer related work included protection of vulnerable household customers; quality of electricity supply and commercial services and transparency in and development of electricity and gas tariffs and prices.

Finally and in addition to the specific areas of work, there are of course also some more general activities dedicated to preparing an Annual Report and a summary report on the development of the 8th Region.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings me already to the end of my presentation. I hope, I was able to give you an informative overview about our activities and also a flavor of our goals and work approach. Personally, I am already very much looking forward to our activities in 2010 and hope we can continue our good cooperation with all other institutions and especially this honorable Forum.