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European Commission outlines a vision of 80% renewable energy by 2050

Brussels, 16th November 2009. Over 550 high-level political decision makers at EU, national and regional level, representatives of the renewable energy industry, NGOs and scientists gathered in Brussels for the 3rd European Renewable Energy Policy Conference, organized by EREC as an official event of the Swedish EU Presidency. The conference showed a broad consensus that renewable energy will be the mainstream source of Europe's energy supply by 2050.

Deputy Head of Cabinet Peter Vis delivering the speech on behalf of Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs: "I am confident that the policy framework of renewable energy targets, carbon pricing and funding for R&D will lead to the development of a tremendously significant new energy sector." Looking at 2050, Christopher Jones, Director for New & Renewable Energy Sources at the European Commission, referred to a share of 80% renewable energy in final energy consumption in Europe.

The Commission's views were echoed by several Members of European Parliament present as well as by the industry. Prof. Arthouros Zervos, EREC's President stated: "Already today the European Renewable Energy Industry is providing more than 450.000 jobs and has an annual turnover exceeding 45 billion EUR. Renewable energy already contributes to one-quarter of the EU's 20% greenhouse gas commitment and has reached a share of about 10% in final energy consumption. I am convinced that the new Renewable Energy Directive with its national binding targets for each of the 27-EU Member States will enable Europe to reach even more than the minimum target of 20% by 2020. Renewable energy is the competitive advantage of Europe and the key to a sustainable 21st century economy. We have to make renewable energy the mainstream source of our energy system."

ERECE, the European Renewable Energy Council, is the umbrella organisation of the major European renewable energy industry, trade and research associations active in the field of photovoltaics, small hydropower, solar thermal, bioenergy, ocean & marine, geothermal, wind energy, solar thermal electricity and biofuels. It represents an industry with an annual turnover of more than 45 billion € and more than 450.000 employees.