

## ROMANIAN ENERGY DAY 2018 – PANEL 4

### ROMANIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU / PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The 4<sup>th</sup> panel of this year’s Romanian Energy Day addressed the topics of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU. Moderated by Mr. Ioan ROSCA, Vice-president of CRE, the session benefited from the keynote addresses of Mr. Andrei Petrisor MAIOREANU, State Secretary in the Ministry of Energy of Romania, Mr. Tudor CONSTANTINESCU on behalf of Mr. Dominique RISTORI, Director General at DG ENERGY, European Commission and Mrs. Luminita ODOBESCU, Ambassador at Permanent Representation of Romania to the European Union.

Mr. Ioan Rosca introduced the topic of the panel, pointing out that Romania will take over the presidency of the Council of the EU during times of great challenges for the future of European projects. The slogan of the Romanian presidency is “Cohesion, a common European value”. Moreover, Mr. Rosca highlighted the top European priorities that



will shape the first semester of 2019, namely preparation of the new multi-annual financial framework, the end of the mandate for the European Commission and the European Parliament, European parliamentary election, designation of the new commissioners, president and its political priorities for 2019-2024, concluding the BREXIT process, special summit of European council in Sibiu in March 2019. According to Mr. Rosca, “*Romanian presidency of the Council of the EU will need to be very well organized and to present high administrative and political skills to act as an impartial mediator and consensus facilitator*”. Moreover, a strong focus should be placed on the European future post BREXIT, the settings for the new legislative and budgetary programming period, as well as the topics of interest and priorities which should be in full compliance with the principles set out in the European Treaty and serve the interests of all

European citizens and the European common values, respect for human dignity and rights, liberty, democracy, equality and justice.

Moreover, the Romanian presidency must ensure a smooth transition of the last trio agenda, Estonia-Bulgaria-Austria and of the ongoing files and legislative processes. Another challenging issue for Romania will be the subject of funding and the approximately 11 billion EURO gap due to UK's withdrawal from the EU. Also, Romania must continue the Coal Regions in Transition initiative, European program designed to support coal and carbon intensive areas and to create jobs and growth opportunities, as well as focusing on developing projects of common interests.

During his keynote address, Mr. Andrei Maioreanu presented the main aspects defining Romania's energy profile in the region as well as the guidelines for the Romanian presidency. According to the State Secretary Maioreanu, Romania has the suitable position for being an energy security provider in the region,



the national energy system remaining steady during the last very cold winters and very hot summers, therefore, contributing to the regional energy stability. Mr. Maioreanu highlights Romania's balanced and diversified energy mix as well as the presence of important domestic energy resources, such as oil, natural gas and coal. Moreover, Romania remains firmly committed to achieving the objectives of the energy union across all five directions and actions, energy security, internal market, renewable sources, energy efficiency and decarbonization. Additionally, Mr. Maioreanu affirms the Energy Ministry's concern to diversify the energy sources and transport routes in order to consolidate Romania's and European's energy security.

Another important message from Mr. Maioreanu's statement is the strong focus of the Romanian Ministry of Energy in finalizing the national energy strategy which will be consolidated on seven goals: (1) To increase Romania's energy contribution to the regional and European markets by

capitalizing on the national primary energy resources; (2) To consolidate Romania's regional energy and security provider status; (3) To develop competitive energy markets which are the basis of a competitive economy; (4) To progress in the clean energy and energy efficiency terms; (5) To modernize energy governance system; (6) To ensure electricity and heat access to all consumers; (7) To ensure the vulnerable consumer's protection and to reduce energy poverty.

Furthermore on the keynote addresses, Mr. Tudor Constantinescu reviews the progress carried out regarding the Clean Energy Package, the deal on the energy efficiency and renewable directives expected by the end of Bulgaria's presidency and the electricity regulation and directive to be concluded during the Austrian presidency. Regarding the



transition to a low carbon European economy, Mr. Constantinescu points out the importance of paying attention to all member states, their opportunities as well as vulnerabilities, mentioning specific initiatives such as the Coal Regions in Transition and the Energy Poverty Observatory. Moreover, Tudor Constantinescu highlights the discussions over the new budget and the cohesion policy, main instruments supporting the transition to low carbon economy. EU's long term decarbonization strategy is set to ensure carbon neutrality by mid-century, in a cost effective manner. The new energy system becomes more complex and relies on two major components, flexibility and adaptability. Investments in the energy transition should be done in a collective manner, being about modernizing the European economy and making the future more sustainable. Last but not least, Mr. Constantinescu mentioned another important European initiative, namely the Sectorial Integration, making the renewable electricity as a way to decarbonize the heating systems, the heavy industries and the refining and fertilizers ones.

Ambassador Luminita Odobescu agrees on the importance of Romania's priorities in Brussels, country which has been a constant advocate of the Energy Union project and of the need to strengthening the energy security pillar. Mrs. Odobescu also pointed out the negotiation phases

of the Clean Energy Package and the dossiers on governance, renewables and energy efficiency currently under debate. Moreover, the Ambassador highlights the European Council and European Parliament responsibility to decide on the appropriate set of measures to achieve the political objectives of EU for 2030, the development of the European energy infrastructure, reaching the energy and climate objectives and achieving the transition to a low carbon economy. According to Mrs. Odobescu, key elements in the energy transition are expanding the interconnection capacities, diversification of energy sources and transport routes, alongside the completion of internal energy market, through solidarity and trust, also priorities for Romania's presidency.

